

THE FUTURE IS A CHOICE

The Oxfam Framework and
Guidance for Resilient Development



OXFAM

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The future is a choice

T.H. Inderberg, S. Eriksen, K. O'Brien and L. Sygna in *Climate Change Adaptation and Development: Transforming Paradigms and Practices*.¹ Oxford: Routledge

1 INTRODUCTION

*'Without learning new ways – changing attitudes, values and behaviours – people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in new environments.'*²

Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky

1.1 Purpose of the guide

Resilience is a cross-cutting theme of the Oxfam Strategic Plan.³ It is particularly relevant to Change Goal 3 (saving lives, now and in the future); Change Goal 4 (sustainable food); Change Goal 5 (fair sharing of natural resources); and to our current campaigns on rights in crisis, inequality and food and climate change.

The goal of the resilience framework and guidance is to inform our programming, influencing and campaigning work, and to provide an introduction for Oxfam staff on how to design projects and programmes that contribute to resilient development outcomes.

1.2 Contents and structure of the guide

This guide is divided into four sections. Following the introduction, Section 2 describes the thinking behind Oxfam's resilience framework and Section 3 sets out the resilience framework in detail. The document ends with a checklist, and there are a number of supporting appendices.

These guidelines are designed to complement other tools and sources of information. In particular, readers will have access to additional information from Oxfam's Resilience Knowledge Hub and other global and regional knowledge hubs.

1.3 How the guide was developed

The guide was requested by the Oxfam resilience working group in response to requests from staff for clarity on Oxfam's approach to resilience. It is a product of collaboration between staff working in humanitarian and long-term development, and draws on the thinking set out in the Oxfam paper *No Accident: Resilience*

*and the inequality of risk.*⁴ An iterative process of consultation with various teams in regions, countries and headquarters has informed its development.

1.4 How to use the guide

The global framework presented here is not a template to be strictly followed but a guide to frame Oxfam's collective thinking, planning and learning. Our programmes and campaigns still need to be based on context-specific theories of change. The framework is designed to inform, guide and frame them.

Regional strategies such as those for Asia, Horn, East and Central Africa and Southern Africa have adopted aspects of the framework as appropriate to their contexts. For example, the Asia team has identified extreme weather events as a critical risk and is harnessing the innovation potential of the region's growing private sector. The Southern Africa team has developed its framework through a multi-agency, collaborative approach and uses three 'building blocks' (enhanced productivity, access to basic and social services, and social protection) and two processes (people-centred empowerment and accountable governance) to build its context-specific approach.

This guide and framework will help us to identify our Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) and research needs, including where we need rapid learning loops and longer-term monitoring and evaluation. Our collective learning will be supported and enhanced by the common language and approach presented here. As a consequence, we will be better able to identify the approaches that work in specific contexts, develop more robust theories of change, and share this learning to enhance the impact of our own and others' interventions. This is a living document and will be added to and improved as Oxfam learns from its resilience programming.

2 THE THINKING

Oxfam defines resilience as the ability of women and men to realize their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses and uncertainty.

2.1 Oxfam's vision

We want a just world without poverty. Today we work towards this vision in a context of new and changing risk. This means our work must address risk and its causes, as well as the inequality of power that unfairly exposes poor people and makes them vulnerable to shocks, stresses and uncertainty. Resilience is not our ultimate desired goal or outcome. Rather, we want **resilient and sustainable development**, i.e. development that does not cause or increase risks, stresses and volatility for people living in poverty, and which makes progress towards a just world despite shocks, stress and uncertainty. We cannot achieve our vision if we do not integrate a resilience approach into our thinking, ways of working and all our interventions.

2.2 A rights-based approach to risk

Oxfam believes that risk and its impacts on people living in poverty is 'no accident', but the result of inequitable and unsustainable development that fails to address poverty, creates vulnerability and lets the burden of risk unfairly fall on the poorest and most vulnerable people.

Growing inequality, unprecedented climate conditions, faster change and greater uncertainty are new, and require new knowledge and ways of working. The existing capacities of people living in poverty to prepare, cope and adapt are stretched, and some existing strategies may increase vulnerabilities in the medium and longer term. Therefore, existing absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities need to be recognized, supported and enhanced.

This is an urgent and transformative agenda that requires collective action. Governance systems, duty-bearers and citizens need to adopt sustainable and equitable development pathways that address current risks and vulnerabilities

and do not create new ones so that poor and vulnerable people can realize their rights despite shocks, stresses and uncertainty.

Therefore, while we acknowledge that resilience has different meanings, Oxfam defines resilience as: **'the ability of women and men to realize their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses and uncertainty'**.

Our approach affirms people's right to determine their own futures by enhancing the capacities of people and institutions to address the causes of risk, fragility, vulnerability and inequality.

2.3 A long-term, process-orientated approach

Our approach recognizes that resilience needs to be enhanced **continuously over time**; in other words, it is not a fixed or end state, but an ongoing process of social change. Our framework describes six closely linked social change processes that, when integrated into our interventions, will enhance absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities at different levels of society and across multiple sectors. We have adapted the local adaptive capacity framework of the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA) programme to develop these six processes.⁵

Oxfam's role, in partnership with others, is to enhance these six processes through our programmes, including our influencing and campaigning work. This does not mean that we should always be leading or facilitating these processes. We must also participate **in processes convened by others** that can contribute to our vision and learning from others. This approach fits well with Oxfam's role as a catalyst of change. Processes are ongoing in any community, institution or system and will continue after we have left and into the future.

2.4 A gender justice approach

Oxfam puts women's rights at the centre of all its programming, recognizing that promoting women's rights is necessary to achieve gender justice. This is also critical if we want to achieve resilient development outcomes.

Women and girls face daily and regular hazards inherent in their life cycle as well as structural inequality through discriminatory gender norms and gender stereotypes based on patriarchal societies. These increase the exposure and vulnerability of women and girls, and limit their ability to participate and exercise their agency and leadership capacity. We need to understand both the existing capacities of women and men as well as their specific and different vulnerabilities. And we need to understand how vulnerabilities are caused by inequality and exacerbated by risks.

Our resilience programming should aim to develop 'win-win' solutions that respond to women's immediate needs, address the systemic causes of their vulnerability, and enhance their capacities, agency and leadership.

2.5 A systems approach

To address the causes of multiple risks, fragility and vulnerability without causing new risks and vulnerabilities, resilience programming requires a 'systems approach'. A systems approach recognizes and works with the relationships between the complex causes of risk and poverty, and avoids approaches that are siloed by sector, discipline or organizational structures which are very likely to increase vulnerability. It also requires teams to adjust strategies based on feedback from monitoring, evaluation and learning. A systems approach recognizes the limitations of short-term, technical fixes. Technical solutions are still important, but alone they are insufficient to build resilience to ongoing change. We also need to change the social systems that create risk, fragility and vulnerability.

'What matters in a holistic approach is not the inclusion of all the parts of a system, no matter how comprehensive, but the fact that they relate to each other; the emphasis on the relationships; the understanding that it is such relationships that define the 'parts' of a system, and no 'part' exists or can be correctly analysed if separated from the relationships that define it. A programme that focussed on only one area of intervention could qualify as holistic if such an area was understood by its relationships with the relevant context. A programme that combined a large diversified portfolio of activities covering all possible sectors of intervention, but which still understood each of them as a discrete set of problems and solutions, would remain sectoral.'⁶

A systems approach is not new to Oxfam. We already draw on systems thinking in our water, value chain, markets, gender justice and governance work, to name a few. As an organization that works from local to global levels through a 'one-programme approach', Oxfam is uniquely positioned and obliged to use its power and position to bring about systemic change and build the capacity of others to **think and act systemically**.

This framework integrates a systems approach by:

- recognizing and enhancing existing capacities and opportunities
- promoting collaborative ways of working across disciplines, sectors and levels of governance (people, communities, local to national government, global institutions)
- ensuring we work with stakeholders to develop a rich understanding of the context
- encouraging learning, experimentation and adaptive management
- looking beyond short-term technical solutions and taking a longer-term view which knits together our projects, programmes and campaigns to build resilient development over realistic timescales

2.6 A one programme approach

Oxfam's one programme approach brings together our humanitarian, development and influencing programming to make a joined-up system capable of addressing current crises while delivering deep, systemic and long-term change at scale. Resilience programming can only be delivered through a one programme approach that enables us to address the immediate impacts of risks as well as their systemic causes and the causes of vulnerability. The one programme approach is a work in progress that requires ongoing organizational learning and change, and commitment at all levels to develop and embed joined-up ways of working. We must guard against creating a third silo, i.e. humanitarian, resilience and development. Rather, resilient development requires that our humanitarian and development interventions work together in the immediate and long term. Annex 2 summarizes what we are learning about bridging the humanitarian and development silos.

'Oxfam's humanitarian and development teams have historically pursued clear but distinct theories of change and approaches. The humanitarian imperative has driven direct delivery in that sector, while long-term programming aims (for transformation) through systemic changes, focusing on transforming systems and structures that enforce vulnerability. Bringing together the expertise, thinking and strategies of humanitarian, development and advocacy teams can generate new, innovative strategies...Oxfam will need to support this process through its organizational and operational structures and practices, encouraging closer collaboration and cooperation.'⁷

2.7 An approach that recognizes a social foundation and environmental limits

We live on a finite planet. The Stockholm Resilience Centre has defined nine planetary boundaries that allow humanity to develop and prosper.⁸ Together they comprise the 'environmental ceiling'. Today, according to the Centre, we are living far beyond three of the nine boundaries, which include the nitrogen cycle and loss of biodiversity.⁹

It is also possible to have a world that is environmentally safe but deeply socially unjust, leaving people in deprivation and poverty. The 'social foundation', below which life is unacceptable for humans, is defined by the top 11 social concerns identified by the Rio+20 conference, including hunger, income poverty and gender inequity.¹⁰

Between the environmental ceiling and the social foundation is the 'safe and just space for humanity' – this is the space for **inclusive, sustainable and resilient development**.¹¹ See Annex 1 for a diagram illustrating the social and environmental limits.

2 The thinking behind Oxfam's resilience framework



Photo: Tessa Bunney/Oxfam

Conflict has played a painfully relevant role in people's lives for decades in several areas of Mindanao, the Philippines, and has challenged families in many ways by causing forced migration, family rupture (such as men going into hiding from insurgent groups or from authorities, fearing for their lives), trauma in children, and limited agricultural production.

Communities are forced to address conflict before they can meaningfully engage in agricultural adaptation technologies, ensure food security or participate in communal decision making processes. Women have played the main role in conflict resolution through women-led discussion groups that bring together disputing parties. In so doing they have maintained the unity of the family, prevented communities from falling further into violence, and creatively provided stability, food, income and livelihood options for family members.¹²

Photo: Members of the local farmers group tend to the strawberry plants. Lilia Malinao runs the local Women's farmer group and is also President of the Women's Rural Improvement Club. Mindanao, Philippines.



1
2
3
4

ANNEX
NOTES

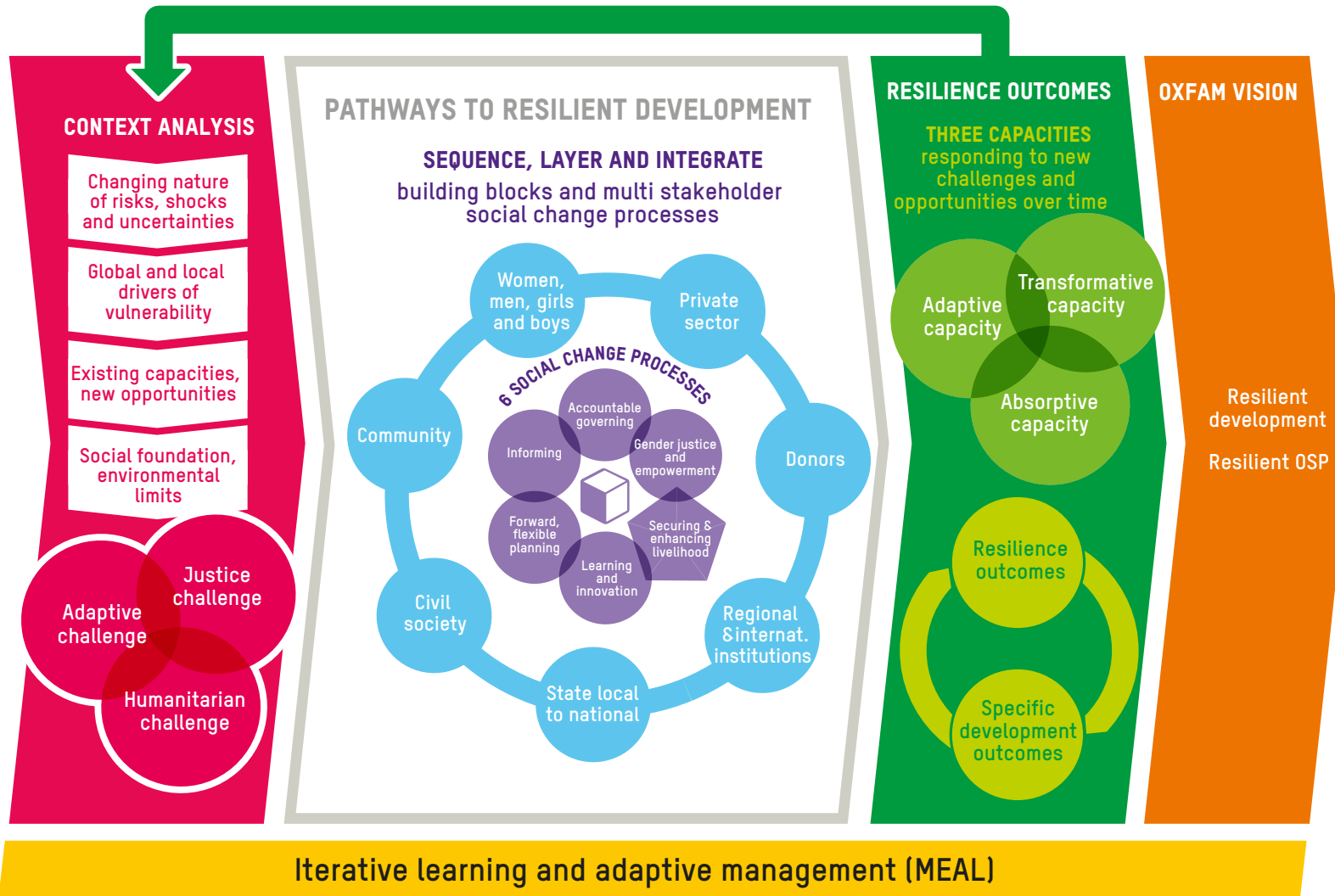
2.8 Key messages

| What resilience programming <i>is not</i> about: | What resilience programming <i>is</i> about: |
|--|---|
| 1. surviving in unjust and difficult contexts or coping with shocks, or adapting to whatever is coming | 1. rights, dignity and well-being |
| 2. bouncing back and accepting the status quo; keeping people resilient in poverty and unsustainable livelihoods | 2. bouncing forward by addressing the causes of risk and vulnerability, and using shocks to change systems so they benefit people living in poverty |
| 3. only short-term interventions that treat the symptoms of risk | 3. short- and medium-term solutions which are embedded in long-term development pathways that address the causes of risk and vulnerability |
| 4. purely technical and/or technocratic fixes | 4. addressing unequal power and enhancing people's capacities |
| 5. siloed approaches that fragment efforts and promote maladaptation, and create barriers to systemic change | 5. collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches that reduce maladaptation and support systemic change |
| 6. the top-down application of 'good practice' | 6. innovation of context-specific solutions at all levels (bottom-up and top-down) |
| 7. permanent 'one-off' solutions | 7. processes which continuously evolve and modify practices, standards and social norms based on emerging evidence. |
| 8. rigid and fixed logical frameworks with limited flexibility and end-of-programme quantitative evaluations | 8. a focus on theories of change; being flexible about activities; learning by doing; quantitative and qualitative evaluations |

3 OXFAM'S FRAMEWORK FOR RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

*'In a rapidly changing context the quality and range of relationships that have been built will determine what is possible.'*¹³

OXFAM'S FRAMEWORK FOR RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT



This diagram shows all the elements required to integrate a resilience approach into our interventions.

The three vertical sections are explained in Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

3.1 Illustrating the framework: Oxfam Kenya case study

Context analysis

The Kenya context comprises a complex range of interacting challenges. Around 85 percent of Kenya's estimated population of 36.1 million people (2006 census) live in rural areas and depend on the land for their living, and around 25 percent live in vast arid and semi-arid lands.¹⁴ Oxfam's humanitarian and social protection initiatives have been focused on the arid lands of the Turkana region in northern Kenya. The **justice challenges** facing this region include marginalization of communities by successive governments and a lack of investment, resulting in poor infrastructure and services as well as inequalities. Semi-arid and arid regions are highly vulnerable to climate variability and change, leading to far-reaching **adaptive challenges**, especially for pastoralists. Successive humanitarian interventions have been required, posing significant **humanitarian challenges** for the national government and international community.

Land grabs, population growth and climate change are exacerbating factors. The recent discovery of oil is potentially a disruptive factor that can create both challenges (environmental risks and exacerbated inequalities) and opportunities. In the urban slum areas of Nairobi, communities are vulnerable to the rapid increases in food prices brought on by global and national factors. **Opportunities** include a new constitution, and new government policies to increase devolution and prioritize development in arid areas.

Timeline

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1999–2001 | Major drought affecting 4.5 million people |
| 2005 | Major drought affecting 3.5 million people |
| 2007 | Post-election violence |
| 2007 | Creation of Ministry of State for Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands |
| 2008–2009 | Food shortages affecting 9.5–10 million people (4.1 million in urban slums) |
| 2010 | New constitution |
| 2011 | Major drought affecting 12–13 million people |
| 2013 | Adoption of National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands |

Pathway to resilient development

The entry point of Oxfam Kenya's pathway was service delivery to local communities on behalf of the government, particularly in northern Kenya. Starting here, the pathway developed by Oxfam Kenya combined the **building blocks** of cash transfers and market-based solutions with these processes:

- During the **processes of informing**, Oxfam collated evidence on existing mechanisms, highlighting barriers to cash transfers such as the need for identification cards (which excluded women) and the irregular and unpredictable dispersal of funds. This enabled Oxfam, other donors and the government to develop a common understanding of, and to target, people's specific vulnerabilities.
- The **process of securing and enhancing livelihoods** (with a focus on women's livelihoods) involved enhancing human capital through market skills development; social capital by linking traders and communities, and maintaining existing markets during crises; and financial capital by providing cash and saving mechanisms. Critical to developing these new solutions was collaboration with local traders and the mobile network operator Safaricom. Scaling up required collaboration with multiple donors, namely DFID, ECHO and USAID.
- **Processes of accountable governing** were enhanced by capacity building and advocacy, resulting in social protection services being delivered by government.

This pathway has enabled Oxfam Kenya's country programme to progress from INGO-delivered, short-term responses to crises, to new local and national responses delivered by the private sector and government agencies in collaboration with local and international NGOs. Working systemically, Oxfam

has strengthened the way that markets, institutions, policies, processes and communities interact.

It is likely that the following capacities have been enhanced:

- **absorptive capacity** at scale, due to the development and extension of social protection mechanisms that have been adopted by other donors and government agencies
- **adaptive capacities** of vulnerable people, market traders and government agencies through the creation of new mechanisms, networks and relationships, and market skills enhancement
- **potentially transformative capacities** by embedding new social protection mechanisms into government policy and practice and into new networks, relationships and collaborations

Details of the programmes that contributed to the pathway

The Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) is a major cash transfer programme designed to reduce extreme poverty in northern Kenya and to pilot cash transfers in Nairobi's urban slums. Oxfam identified three categories of social protection that targeted different vulnerabilities:

1. social protection for people who need longer-term support, as they have limited possibilities for meaningfully escaping poverty, e.g. elderly women
2. social protection as a mechanism to rise out of poverty when integrated with market skills development
3. social protection as an early response mechanism for people who are extremely vulnerable to shocks (through temporary scale-up of HSNP)

This targeted and integrated approach was used during the 2011–2012 drought, when nearly 600,000 people in northern Kenya were threatened with famine. Oxfam collaborated with 115 local traders who operate in very remote areas to deliver cash to 5,000 vulnerable households, 82 percent of which were female-headed. The programme helped the traders retain and build their businesses, thereby ensuring continued access to food and other essential goods through the market. Evaluations showed that people who were not targeted for cash transfers also benefited from the programme.

The next stage was made possible through collaborating with the mobile network provider Safaricom. Vulnerable households were provided with electronic cards that could be topped up automatically to enable large-scale cash transfer. The programme then collaborated with a range of donors (DFID, ECHO and USAID), who adopted the HSNP programme as their early response mechanism through a unique joined-up strategy.

The urban cash transfer programme was developed when rapidly increasing food prices in Nairobi's slums exacerbated existing vulnerability and placed 4.2 million people at risk of starvation. Concern Worldwide, Care, Oxfam and local partners collaborated to develop a programme which was implemented in two slums, aimed at improving immediate access to food and improving income and livelihood opportunities in the longer term. Advocacy has led to third phase activities by strengthening government capacity to design and develop an urban social protection programme. The advocacy objective has already been achieved, in that the Kenyan government adopted the programme's insights and extended the programme to target 10,000 households in the slums of Mombasa, eventually setting up the Kenyan Urban Food Subsidy Cash Transfer Programme in both Mombasa and Nairobi. This is now reaching over 100,000 households in Nairobi slums alone.

Under the urban cash transfer programme, long-term economic and private sector linkages and business development ran alongside the development of a government-backed social protection programme. Households that no longer need cash transfers are linked to business entrepreneurship, skill building, micro-finance institutions, cash-for-work projects and so forth. For the more vulnerable households who are less able to move on to livelihoods programming, and who need cash transfer or social protection for a longer period, Oxfam is engaging with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development to ensure that they will continue to be supported through the Kenyan government's social protection programme.

Summary

| Building blocks used | Processes used | Multiple-stakeholder collaboration | Capacities enhanced |
|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● cash transfers ● markets systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● informing ● securing and enhancing livelihoods (human/social/ financial capital) ● accountable governing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● donors ● INGOs ● national NGOs ● private sector (local traders and mobile network provider) ● government agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● absorptive capacity ● adaptive capacity ● transformative capacity |



In Katiko, Turkana, Oxfam supported two cash for work activities for 100 households. The local community chose which activities they wanted to do. People received 3,000 Kenya Shillings (approx £22) a month for four months. One of these activities was basket making. Material for baskets was found locally and was free. When the baskets were completed people sold them and kept the money. June 2012.

Photo: Jane Beesley/Oxfam

Developing the pathway to resilient development

1. Building blocks

Additional building blocks that could be considered by the programme include:

- **In northern Kenya:** long-term climate change adaptation while strengthening early warning systems
- **In Nairobi:** employment creation (possibility focused on women and youth)

2. Processes

Additional processes that could be considered and integrated include:

- **Informing:** processes that develop information and knowledge on longer term drivers of stress and instability in Northern Kenya and Nairobi
- **Flexible and forward-looking planning:** processes that build on existing stakeholder collaboration to explore ways of addressing the longer-term drivers of fragility and stress
- **Learning:** processes that enable the stakeholders to learn from this experience – in particular the donors, government agencies and INGOs – with a view to adapting it in other regions and countries

3. Stakeholder collaboration

The programme could strengthen and widen stakeholder collaboration to address longer-term drivers of fragility and stress. For example, there may be a role for increasing the collaboration between national academic institutions and civil society to work together on understanding ongoing and complex challenges and a role for the private sector in offering innovative solutions to them.

3.2 Resilient development outcomes: absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities

Oxfam Country Strategies (OCS), which are aligned with Oxfam's Strategic Plan (OSP), set out the specific development outcomes of country programmes. We need to **integrate resilience outcomes** into these strategies and programmes if we are to achieve our goals and vision in the context of increasing shocks, stresses and volatility.

Resilience outcomes comprise these three capacities: ¹⁵

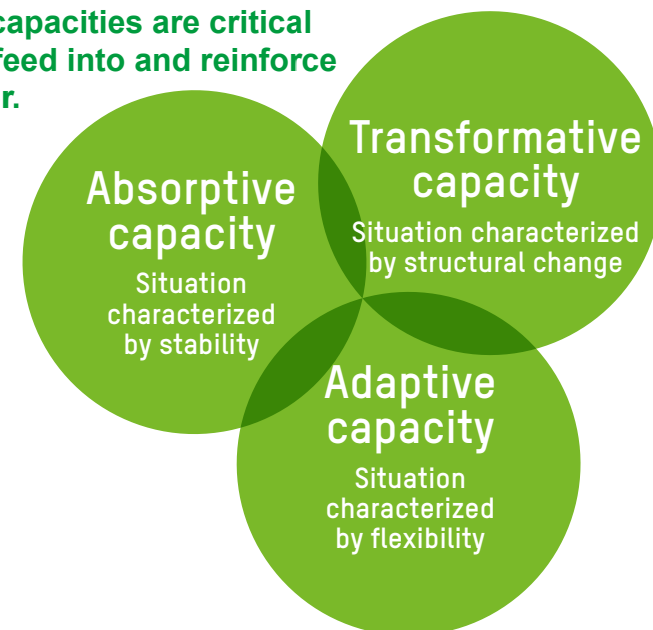
- **Absorptive capacity** is the capacity to take intentional protective action to cope with known shocks and stresses. It is necessary because shocks and stresses will continue to happen, for example due to extreme weather events, protracted conflict and natural disasters
- **Adaptive capacity** is the capacity to make intentional incremental adjustments in anticipation of or in response to change, in ways that create more flexibility in the future. It is necessary because change is ongoing and uncertain, and because intentional transformation takes time and sustained engagement
- **Transformative capacity** is the capacity to make intentional change to stop or reduce the drivers of risk, vulnerability and inequality, and ensure the more equitable sharing of risk so it is not unfairly borne by poor and vulnerable people. It is necessary because resilience is not about surviving in unjust contexts or adapting to whatever is coming. Resilience is about justice and inclusive development

There is a need for all three capacities; in other words, transformative capacity is not the 'gold standard'. Absorptive capacity is required to address ongoing shocks and prevent vicious circles of chronic poverty and inequality from becoming entrenched. It creates enough stability for planned adaptive and transformative

change. Adaptive capacity is required to adjust to ongoing change, as no system can be stable for long given climate and other changes. Transformative capacity needs to be exercised with awareness of the new risks and uncertainties that transformational change will trigger.

Shocks are themselves transformative and will disrupt existing systems, including Oxfam's existing relationships with affected communities, civil society and governments. These moments of disruption can open up opportunities to create more or less resilient futures, depending on who it is that captures the opportunities. Oxfam's capacity to capture these opportunities will depend greatly on its existing knowledge and relationships and capacity to maintain our long-term vision while addressing immediate needs.

All three capacities are critical and they feed into and reinforce each other.



3.3 Pathways to resilient development outcomes

Resilience is a short, long-term and ongoing agenda so it is useful to think of **pathways to resilient development** over the longer term, e.g. **20 years**. Our shorter-term projects and programmes need to be designed to make a contribution to the pathway and its long-term vision. At the same time, pathways to resilience will be **non-linear** as they must respond to emerging risks, needs and opportunities.



Pathways to resilience comprise

WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

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to understand the issues and co-create solutions

Building an understanding of the context, including local, national and global drivers of **RISK, FRAGILITY AND VULNERABILITY**, and their impacts on specific people and groups of people living in poverty

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Designing for the **LONG TERM** through a sequenced and integrated combination of building blocks and social change processes

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Iterative learning and **ONGOING ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT** so that our interventions can adjust in a timely and appropriate way to the changing context and the impact of our programmes (MEAL)

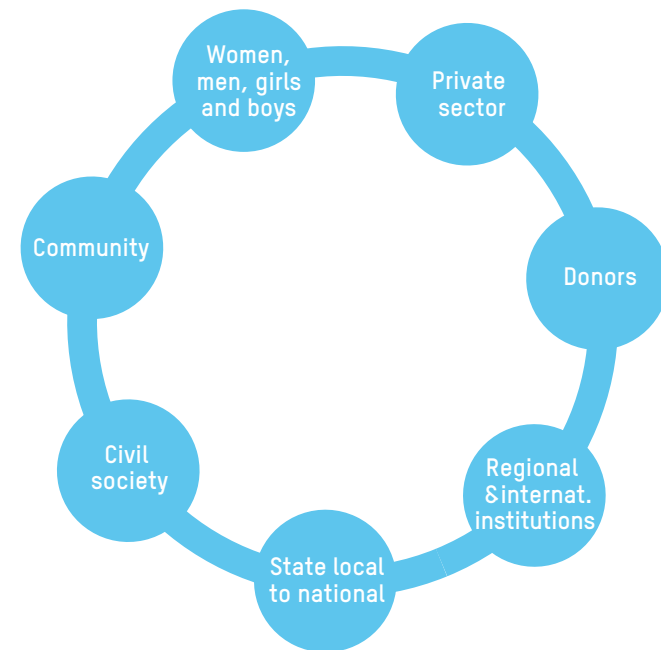
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3.3.1 Working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders

No one institution or agency can understand all the challenges of increased risk and vulnerability or find and implement the answers. We therefore need to develop collaborative relationships between women and men, communities, civil society, the private sector and different levels and sectors of government to build resilient development.¹⁶

Oxfam is well positioned to build connections between different groups and to help bring the qualities of trust, problem solving and creativity to these relationships.

This does not mean we have to involve all stakeholders at all stages of an intervention. Nor does it exclude campaigning and holding those with power to account. Ensuring accountable governance is a core process of building resilient, inclusive development. However, if we are to achieve transformative and long-term change we need to work towards bringing more people around the table to co-create solutions and share a commitment to learning and bringing these solutions into practice.



Oxfam's and our partners' role in facilitating multi-stakeholder processes may include:

- **enhancing the capacity of marginalized and vulnerable people** to use their voice, knowledge and power in collaborative decision making
- **supporting national civil society** to share knowledge and organize together
- **designing processes** that facilitate links between stakeholders – communities, civil society, government bodies and the private sector
- **convening and facilitating special events**, such as multiple-stakeholder scenario-planning workshops, to address specific issues
- **convening national platforms** which enable stakeholders to create shared visions and solutions and meet regularly to learn and support systemic change processes
- **participating** in processes convened by others and learning from them

3.3.2 Understanding the context

Our interventions need to be informed by an understanding of the causes of risk, fragility and vulnerability, and how risks affect specific groups of people living in poverty as well as the systems (natural and social) that support them. At the start our aim is to get a 'good enough' understanding to make explicit our assumptions and design a theory of change and coherent programme of activities with stakeholders, i.e. our analysis needs to be participatory, involving stakeholders.

*'Before you disturb the system in any way, watch how it behaves. Learn its history. Ask people who've been around a long time to tell you what has happened... learn to dance with the system.'*¹⁷

Donella H. Meadows

As there will always be unknowns, we should also develop processes that enable our partners, our stakeholders and us to develop and share our understanding as we work together on implementing our programmes. This is

part of what it means to take a systems approach – understanding is an ongoing process and not a one-off activity undertaken at the start of a programme.

As many drivers of vulnerability, such as donor or trade policies, sit beyond national boundaries, we need to look beyond the local level and ask why national and global development strategies are currently failing vulnerable people.

3.3.2.1 In analysing the wider context we need to understand:

Existing capacities and emerging opportunities

People everywhere are inherently creative; they have developed effective coping and adaptive strategies in the past and are always trying new ideas and new activities. Our approach to resilience recognizes and enhances existing capacities to cope with and adapt to stress and change. Countries such as Bangladesh are moving faster on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR) than many in the global North, and are leading on adopting green technologies.

In every context there will be new opportunities emerging. Mobile technology and IT offer new ways to connect and share information. New social technologies are being developed to enhance collaborative ways of working, and new forms of business are emerging such as social enterprises, crowd sourcing and the gift economy. The resilience agenda itself is opening new spaces to talk about inequality, risk and vulnerability, and is shifting development and humanitarian practice to be more integrated and focused on the drivers of inequality.

The realization that shared resources are also shared risks may motivate people and governments to address complex issues, such as the governance of trans-boundary water systems. And by 2020 it is hoped that the Green Climate Fund will channel up to \$100bn of climate finance to enable 'a paradigm shift towards low emission and climate resilience development pathways'.¹⁸

We need to understand and use the opportunities emerging in our specific contexts. For example, the Asia Resilience Strategy recognizes economic growth and the rise in IT use in much of Asia, and is targeting private sector engagement to find efficient, scaled-up and innovative ways to address the increase in extreme weather events that are very likely to affect the whole region.

The humanitarian challenge

We need to understand and address the causes of humanitarian crises at local, national and global levels, including the failure of development to address the needs of chronically poor communities. We know that humanitarian crises will increase as more poor people are exposed to more frequent extreme weather, economic shocks, fragility and conflict. There is also likely to be an increase in smaller-scale, Category 3 humanitarian events spread around the world.¹⁹

Combined, these humanitarian events will stretch and possibly breach the capacity of poorer countries to protect their own citizens. Even the humanitarian system as it is designed and functioning today will not be able to respond to these increasing needs. This will severely challenge the ability of international humanitarian actors such as Oxfam to meet their humanitarian obligations. The humanitarian challenge is described fully in Oxfam's humanitarian strategy.²⁰

The justice challenge

Financial wealth is being concentrated in the hands of fewer people and natural resources are increasingly controlled by multinational corporations. Globally, seven out of 10 people live in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last 30 years.²¹

An aspect of this pattern of growing inequality is that risks are offloaded onto people already living in poverty. This unfair distribution of risk is increasing the gap between the rich and the poor, and setting up a vicious circle of poverty. We therefore need to understand and address how power is used to increase poor people's vulnerability and exposure to risk.

The adaptive challenge

The interaction of global and local drivers, more intense, scattered and frequent shocks, and chronic and protracted stress create high levels of volatility and uncertainty. This is a challenging context for decision makers at all levels of society from household to states, for civil society and for the private sector. We therefore need to understand the nature of uncertainty and volatility within our specific contexts and support people, institutions and states to develop their capacity to adapt to change.

'Consider the following three ingredients: a mega-city in a poor, Pacific Rim nation; seasonal monsoon rains; a huge garbage dump. Mix these ingredients in the following way: move impoverished people to the dump, where they build shanty towns and scavenge for a living in the mountain of garbage; saturate the dump with changing monsoon rain patterns; collapse the weakened slopes of garbage and send debris flows to inundate the shanty towns. That particular disaster, which took place outside of Manila in July 2000, and in which over 200 people died... starkly illustrates the central point that disasters are characterised and created by context. The disaster was not inherent in any of the three ingredients of that that tragedy; it emerged from their interaction.'²²

ODI (2008) Exploring the science of complexity: Ideas and implications for development and humanitarian efforts. B. Ramalinga, H. Jones with T. Reba and J. Young. Available at: <http://www.odi.org/publications/583-science-complexity> (last accessed May 2015)

3.3.2.2 Existing tools for context analysis (see Annex 2)

Oxfam and other agencies have designed a range of tools to support context analysis, including political economy analysis, risk and vulnerability analysis and power analysis. The decision about which tools to use at what times is best made with partners and stakeholders. The choice will be influenced by the entry point of the intended intervention, and its intended scope and scale. Combining information from humanitarian, development and influencing teams working in the same context will enable a richer, whole-system picture to emerge:

- **Humanitarian** teams' contingency analysis and planning, including Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability analysis (PCVA), maps known risks and vulnerabilities. More recently, 'fresh analysis' maps the wider humanitarian system, including DRR policies and governance and the drivers of risk and vulnerability, especially in fragile and conflict contexts. Humanitarian teams also have tools for analysing post-disaster contexts and rehabilitation and reconstruction needs, including through market analysis and household economy analysis.
- **Influencing** teams' analysis of power dynamics, political space and policy frameworks, and research into specific issues, deepens our understanding of the politics affecting our context and the power and policy frameworks that we can engage with to bring about change at scale. Influencing strategies often build strong alliances with national civil society and can create political space and relationships for multi-stakeholder processes.
- **Development** teams engaged in longer-term programming can convene processes that bring together a range of stakeholders to co-create shared understandings of complex challenges, and co-design processes of experimentation and learning to address them. Development programming should be characterized by influencing and ongoing learning that develops

more complex strategies with stakeholders from across the whole system. The Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (VRA) methodology takes a system-wide view of the drivers of risks and vulnerability, enhances women's empowerment and engages multiple stakeholders in identifying and working towards shared solutions.²³

Gender analysis

The systematic adoption of gender analysis that looks at contexts, conditions, policies and structures of governance and provides a richer picture of the overall context, exposes assumptions and enables stakeholders to work out specific solutions. Disaggregation by gender is required to understand who is vulnerable to what, and who can best contribute to a proposed solution. A target group should never be 'women' or 'men' but should be more specific, for example 'fishermen who go to sea in wooden boats', or 'girls attending school', or 'women agricultural labourers' in comparison to 'men agricultural labourers' or 'divorced women with no land entitlement'.



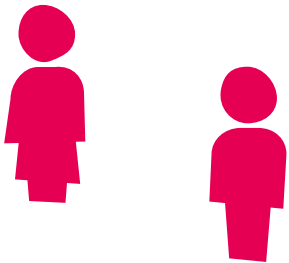
Mirza and Zarkhara Bakhishov and their family pose with a week's worth of food outside their home in Shahveller village, Azerbaijan. 'Our small cattle and poultry is everything for us. All our income and livelihood is dependent on them.'

Photo: David Levene/Oxfam

Understanding the context using risk and vulnerability analysis: participants share their reflections after a VRA event in Bobirwa, Botswana

Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions (ASSAR).

Photo and quotations from ASSAR website: <http://www.assar.uct.ac.za/VRA%20workshop>. Used with permission.



3.3.3 Integrating social change processes and building blocks

We do not describe the 'building blocks' in detail in this guide. They include our established areas of practice such as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), climate change adaptation, natural resource management, market development, DRR, social protection, insurance mechanisms, and safe migration and remittance mechanisms.

Think about designing your pathway by sequencing and layering building blocks and processes one on top of another, so that they support and amplify each other.

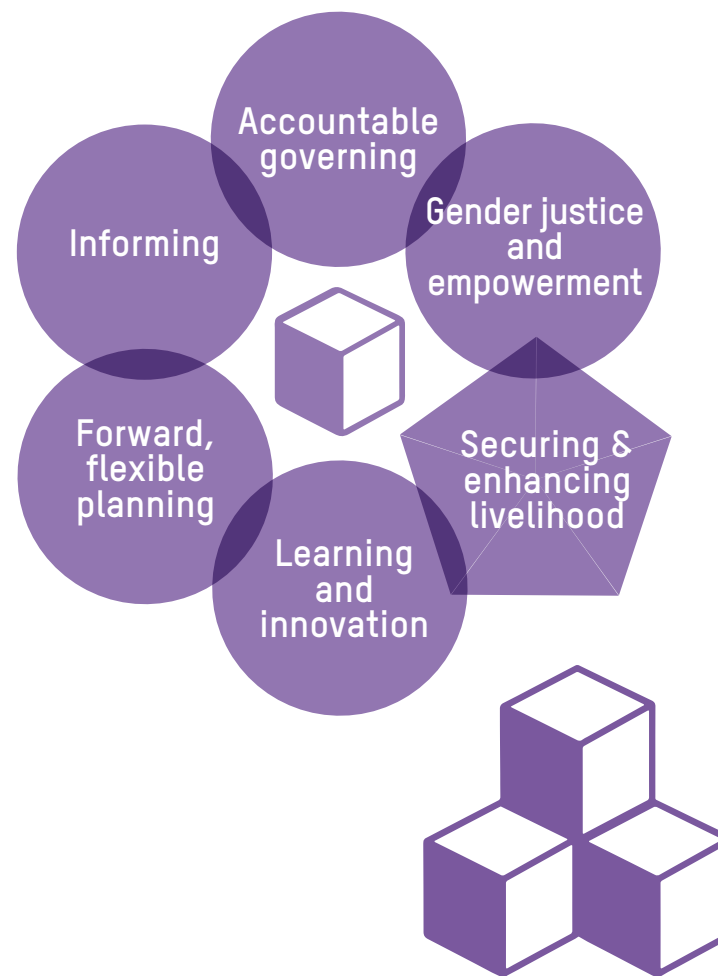
Resilience requires that we give **explicit attention to the processes of social change** that build capacities within communities, institutions and civil society. What building blocks and processes

we embed, and the sequence in which they are embedded, will depend on the context of our programmes.

It may be appropriate to start with one process – for example, processes of empowerment that enhance voice and participation – before integrating processes that develop information and knowledge, and accountable governing.

Some existing frameworks integrate a number of approaches and provide a good starting point for more integrated programming. For example:

- adaptive social protection,²⁴ which integrates disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and social protection
- landscape-based approaches which integrate governance, natural resource management, climate change adaptation, DRR and market-based approaches
- frameworks which combine the 'push' (e.g. asset transfers) and 'pull' (e.g. creating livelihood options) principles in programmes²⁵



The six social change processes

There are six closely connected social change processes that together develop absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities. Our role, in partnership with others, is to enhance these processes through all our programmes.

The processes are:

- **Gender justice and empowerment:** processes for promoting gender justice and enhancing voice, empowerment and participation, including processes of conflict resolution
- **Securing and enhancing livelihoods:** processes for securing and building human, social, natural, physical and financial capital and household assets, based on the sustainable livelihoods framework²⁶
- **Informing:** processes that develop information and knowledge to support decision making and action
- **Flexible and forward-looking planning:** processes that enable and enhance collective, forward-looking and flexible decision making
- **Accountable governing:** processes that secure accountable and enabling states and institutions
- **Learning:** processes that enable people to learn together, support experimentation and increase the potential for innovation (social and technological)

Community-based water resource management

Oxfam and WaterAid's approach to community-based water resource management builds links between stakeholders and combines processes of empowerment, learning and innovation, securing natural capital and accountable governing.

Communities are first supported to generate information using household- and community-level surveys, risk assessments and scenario planning. This enables communities to understand and explore together the sources of their water availability, how they collectively use water, the inequalities in water use across their village, and potential future risks and scenarios.

The information generated by communities empowers them to collectively agree limits for water usage, establish operating principles for the management of water, and identify what tasks can be shared between them and regulating authorities.

Finally, a system is created that gives communities information about the status of their water resources. This feedback enables communities to adjust and adaptively manage their water usage. The programme involves local authorities in these processes. This promotes collaborative relationships between communities and local authorities, which can support the ongoing adaptive management of water resources over time as well as accountable governance.²⁷



3.3.3.1 Gender justice and empowerment

Oxfam recognizes four types of empowerment: personal, social, political and economic. Processes of empowerment enhance individual and collective voice and agency, and address the unequal distribution of power. They can enhance the capacity of marginalized and vulnerable people to use their voice, knowledge and power in collaborative decision making, and support vulnerable communities to articulate and claim their rights. They play an important role in enabling people to innovate and take on new risks and they are critical to advancing gender justice.

Detailed information, approaches and tools on gender justice and empowerment can be found via Oxfam's Knowledge Hubs.

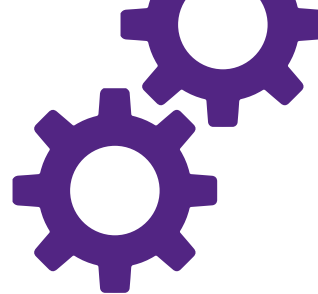
Raising Her Voice (RHV)

Oxfam's RHV programme increased the voice and influence of over one million marginalized women. It proactively sought to understand and address power relationships, operating at multiple levels by:

- **developing broad-based, creative alliances, including with influential men**
- **strengthening personal knowledge and confidence among marginalized women, including tackling gender-based violence**
- **developing women's leadership at community level**
- **increasing women's representation in political spaces**
- **facilitating structural change (e.g. gender-sensitive legislation and investment)**



Women participate in a meeting of the 'Nari Utthan' (women ascending) Community Discussion Class. These women's groups are the primary tool in the Raising Her Voice programme. They are an opportunity for women to share and discuss issues affecting them, learn about their rights and legal protection afforded under Nepali law, and to find solidarity and support amongst each other.



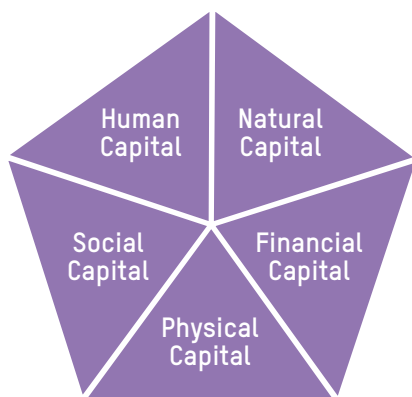
3.3.3.2 Securing and enhancing livelihood

Based on the sustainable livelihoods framework, the following 'capitals' are all essential: human, social, natural, physical and financial capital, including household assets.²⁸

- **Human capital** includes skills, knowledge, good health and ability to work. It is closely linked to empowerment, but includes nutrition and health.
- **Social capital** refers to the social resources that people draw on for their well-being and includes family, friends and neighbours where there are strong relationships of trust, reciprocity, cooperation and exchange; community groups such as religious/spiritual groups, women's groups, farmers' groups and recreational groups; and institutions beyond the community, e.g. cooperatives, local markets and systems of informal dispute resolution.

In places likely to experience frequent shocks, adopting processes that sustain and build social capital for marginalized groups is likely to be a key strategy (see the Kenya case study, where social capital was built by connecting vulnerable households and local traders). Social capital may also facilitate innovation and risk-taking, thereby enhancing adaptive and transformative capacities.

As social capital is not evenly distributed across societies, understanding the existing social capital within marginalized groups, as well as how these groups are isolated from wider social networks, is important in developing strategies to enhance resilience.



In a study of communities that have experienced disasters (the 1923 Tokyo and 1995 Kobe earthquakes, the Indian Ocean Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina), communities with robust social networks were better able to coordinate recovery. Social capital enables people to engage in 'positive, networked adaptation after a crisis'.²⁹

- **Natural capital** includes the natural resources and ecosystem services on which people rely for their well-being. In many places where we work, natural capital is already undergoing rapid change due to unsustainable use and climate change. This is increasing risks for communities that directly depend on the environment and its services for their livelihoods and wider well-being. The importance of resilience increases the already pressing need to ensure the environment is used sustainably. A new focus on resilience among donors and governments creates new policy frameworks to promote the fair use of natural resources.
- **Physical capital** includes secure shelter and buildings, affordable transport, adequate water supply and sanitation, and clean, affordable energy. In places that are vulnerable to extreme weather events, physical assets need to be designed to withstand shocks. This applies to urban and peri-urban landscapes as well as to individual households and rural infrastructure.
- **Financial capital** includes household savings, access to financial loans, livestock and household wealth.

3.3.3.3 Informing

This includes processes that develop information and knowledge to support intentional and well-informed decision making and action. There is a big demand for information about risk and vulnerability, and this is likely to grow even as knowledge and information are developed.



Photo above: A visual created by the Watershed Organisation Trust to show water availability in the village and what farmers have agreed to plant. The Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR), a not-for-profit NGO operating in seven Indian states, created a visual in the heart of the village which shows the water available for household and agricultural use, and what farmers have agreed to plant based on water availability, weather forecasts, agricultural pests and market prices. This information comes from different sources – some is gathered by communities, and some is relayed by local authorities to community leaders through mobile phone technology.³⁰

Photo credit: H. Jeans/Oxfam

Oxfam's role is to support the development of relationships, technologies and processes that enable appropriate information to be developed, made accessible and used. These could include:

- multi-disciplinary processes that enable the integration of knowledge from a range of sources, sectors and stakeholders, including from people living in poverty
- supporting decision makers to value and understand the knowledge of people living in poverty
- enabling resource users to understand changes within critical ecosystems to inform adaptive management
- promoting the use of mobile technology for data collection, analysis and communication, and developing processes for the analysis of 'big data' and identification of trends
- brokering relationships between vulnerable communities and government agencies to enable the two-way flow of important information about markets and weather, including early warning systems
- building relationships between research institutions and other actors to support the development of useful knowledge and its uptake into policy and practice
- promoting and using systems that support the sharing of information, including through open source software and social media
- presenting information in ways that make it accessible and enable stakeholders to engage with it and explore alternative scenarios to support learning and innovation
- undertaking research that can be used to hold those in power to account

3.3.3.4 Flexible and forward-looking planning

This includes processes that enable and enhance collective and forward-looking, flexible decision making.³¹ Our role is to support the development of planning and managing processes and policy that is flexible, forward-looking and able to adapt to the unexpected.³² Critical to flexible and forward-looking decision making is the recognition that change will continue to happen, and ways of thinking and organizing need to adjust accordingly. Oxfam is well positioned to integrate this insight through the many interventions it supports at multiple levels. Examples include:

- at the household level, assisting women and men to shift the burden of care so that it is equitably shared, creating space for women to plan their own activities, innovate and manage change³³
- incorporating awareness of change, and mechanisms for addressing it, into our training and capacity building initiatives for communities, civil society, private sector and government. There are a range of techniques and tools to assist with this, including VRA, scenario planning and games.³⁴
- developing mechanisms for the adaptive management and governance of natural resources across community, local government and national levels. Trans-boundary governance and management of natural resources such as freshwater are likely to require social innovations, including new forms of multi-state governance.

3.3.3.5 Accountable governing

This includes processes that secure accountable and enabling states and institutions. The concept of accountable governing is particularly relevant for addressing risk, vulnerability, fragility and uncertainty. It includes processes that:

- promote transparency and accountability, access to information and promotion of civil society space
- secure government accountability for addressing short- and long-term risks and their impacts on people living in poverty, including by investing in preparedness and prevention as well as adopting sustainable development strategies and pathways
- build government capacity to support and engage multi-stakeholder approaches
- promote sustainable management and governance of natural resources including land, water and biodiversity
- promote informed and inclusive public conversation and discourse about risk, vulnerability and fragility, their causes, and how risk is distributed within society

‘Many governments are taking a multi-stakeholder approach. The Philippines and Indonesia stand out as developing policies enriched by inputs from civil society. The process of drafting the Disaster Management Law of Indonesia included a series of consultations involving stakeholders from various development sectors. In the Philippines, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) has seats for government agencies, civil society, the church sector, private sector, national Red Cross as well as academia. Such multi-stakeholder composition in the national leadership is also expected to be replicated at the provincial and municipal levels, though this process has yet to be operationalised.’³⁵



3.3.3.6 Learning and innovation

Continual learning, experimentation and innovation have been identified as characteristics of resilient systems.³⁶ They also support the development of transformative capacity. This is because learning processes help people to question the assumptions, beliefs, values, and interests that have created the structures, systems and behaviours that contribute to social vulnerability.³⁷ And innovation, i.e. the successful application of new ideas, is necessary if societies are to find and use the new approaches needed to adapt to ongoing change.³⁸



Oxfam in the Solomon Islands has developed a tool to help communities visualize what resilience means to them, and how they are developing resilience by building on their existing strategies while adopting new strategies with the help of Oxfam and other partners. The tool is known as the 'resilience spider web'. It helps women, men and young people in the community talk to each other and other actors about what is important to them and what resilience means. This helps the community build a shared understanding of the different values and needs of its members. It also helps the community talk to Oxfam and partners about what resilience means and how it changes over time. It reveals what can be achieved by community members at the community level and what other actors need to do to support the community's resilience.

Processes that support learning and innovation include:

- tools that help stakeholders visualize change processes and possible futures
- processes of dialogue and co-creation when a mix of stakeholders is involved
- the use of new technologies such as ICTs and social media and participatory video to enhance connectivity and learning across people and groups
- demonstration sites, field visits, exchanges and ongoing face-to-face collaborations
- identifying, supporting and networking 'champions' and leaders, within and across communities and institutions
- scenario planning, game playing and other experiential learning processes
- processes that remove barriers to innovation and learning by poor and vulnerable people and communities. 'At the local level, institutional barriers include elite capture and corruption; poor survival of institutions without social roots; and a lack of attention to the institutional requirements of new technological interventions. There is also evidence that innovation may be suppressed if the dominant culture disapproves of departure from the 'normal way of doing things'.³⁹

'A lot of the technologies and practices to achieve a more equitable and sustainable agriculture are within reach, and... many farmers are inherently creative and inventive, adapting their farming practices beyond what we "experts" think. What is lacking is real political will. What is lacking are actual investments to support farmers' creativity and foster collaborations to better link farmers to each other, to the private sector, to extension services, etc.'⁴⁰



3.3.4 Iterative learning, adaptive management and MEAL

Pathways to resilient development are not linear, so Oxfam will need to adapt what we do and how we do it over the course of a programme, and certainly over the course of a country programme or regional strategy. MEAL is integral to Oxfam's work. It enables the adaptive management of our strategies, programmes and projects based on evidence, learning and change that is happening in the wider context.

Using MEAL in resilience programming is not about creating new tools or methodologies. Rather, it is about how MEAL can help us develop our evidence and learning to enhance our work on resilience. Appropriate MEAL strategies and practices:

- are flexible and adapted to a complex and changing environment
- create rapid learning loops for adaptive management
- allow for timely and frequent data collection (by formal and informal means) of what is important to monitor in a variety of moments, circumstances and contexts (while questioning whether this is the 'right' evidence)
- enable us to look continuously for the unintended consequences of our interventions, by gathering frequent feedback from affected populations and other stakeholders
- create spaces for shared learning with all stakeholders

Our recent MEAL efforts have been focused on developing methodologies to assess resilience through measurement approaches. Progress in this area is extremely useful, and will be further developed to inform the six social change

*'Good adaptive management builds a community of institutional learning that takes place at the collective rather than the individual level, drawing from the memories and experience of the entire institution and carrying this wisdom forward into the future.'*⁴¹



processes and three resilience capacities. While recognizing the need for good measurement, MEAL systems need to balance collecting sound evidence to measure resilience with promoting rapid and iterative learning to allow for adaptive management and the continuous improvement of our strategies.

Internally, we need to design and resource systematic processes for regular critical reflection that bring together whole teams – campaigns, communications, fundraising, technical and other staff – practising multi-

stakeholder collaboration to obtain feedback, stop, reflect, discuss, express doubts, share insights and acknowledge places where we are stuck and unsure, as well as failures and successes. This is the basis of adaptive management. Adaptive management allows your programme design to evolve as you learn more about what is happening in the system. In order to provide our programmes with guidance on how to define MEAL systems for resilience programming, we are developing the MEAL components of the resilience framework. We will complement this with

more specific guidance on MEAL for programmes.

In developing resilience programming, Oxfam is moving beyond 'business as usual'. We are finding new ways to collaborate, participate in and support capacity building processes. Our emphasis on MEAL enables us to adapt our programme strategies and longer-term strategic objectives based on the change that we are seeing, monitoring and evaluating in our programmes.

This guide should support Oxfam staff to design programmes and campaigns which enhance the empowerment of vulnerable people. It is by no means a definitive statement on how this can be done. It is our hope that as we implement programmes and learn from them together, we will challenge the assumptions that inform this guide and develop a 'better' theory of change.

4 CHECKLIST

Below are a number of quick and direct questions that may help teams explore how strategies, programmes and projects contribute to resilient development:

Context

- What are the risks in your context?
- What are the development trends and how are they related to the three challenges?
- What are the drivers of risks?
- Who is vulnerable, in what specific ways, and how do those vulnerabilities interact?
- What is driving inequality and vulnerability?
- What are the drivers of chronic poverty?
- Do you understand how inequality is increasing vulnerability in your context?
- How are resources, growth and risk distributed?
- What are the existing capacities of women and men, communities and institutions (public, private and civil society), and what processes are in place that are enhancing these capacities?
- What opportunities are there, including new policy frameworks, innovations and collaborations?
- What are the limits of relevant ecosystem/s?
- What opportunities for change do disruptions and shocks create?

Building capacities

- In what ways is the programme building absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities? Remember, all three are equally important and the context requires a particular mix.
- What drivers of risk, inequality and fragility/ conflict is the programme targeting?

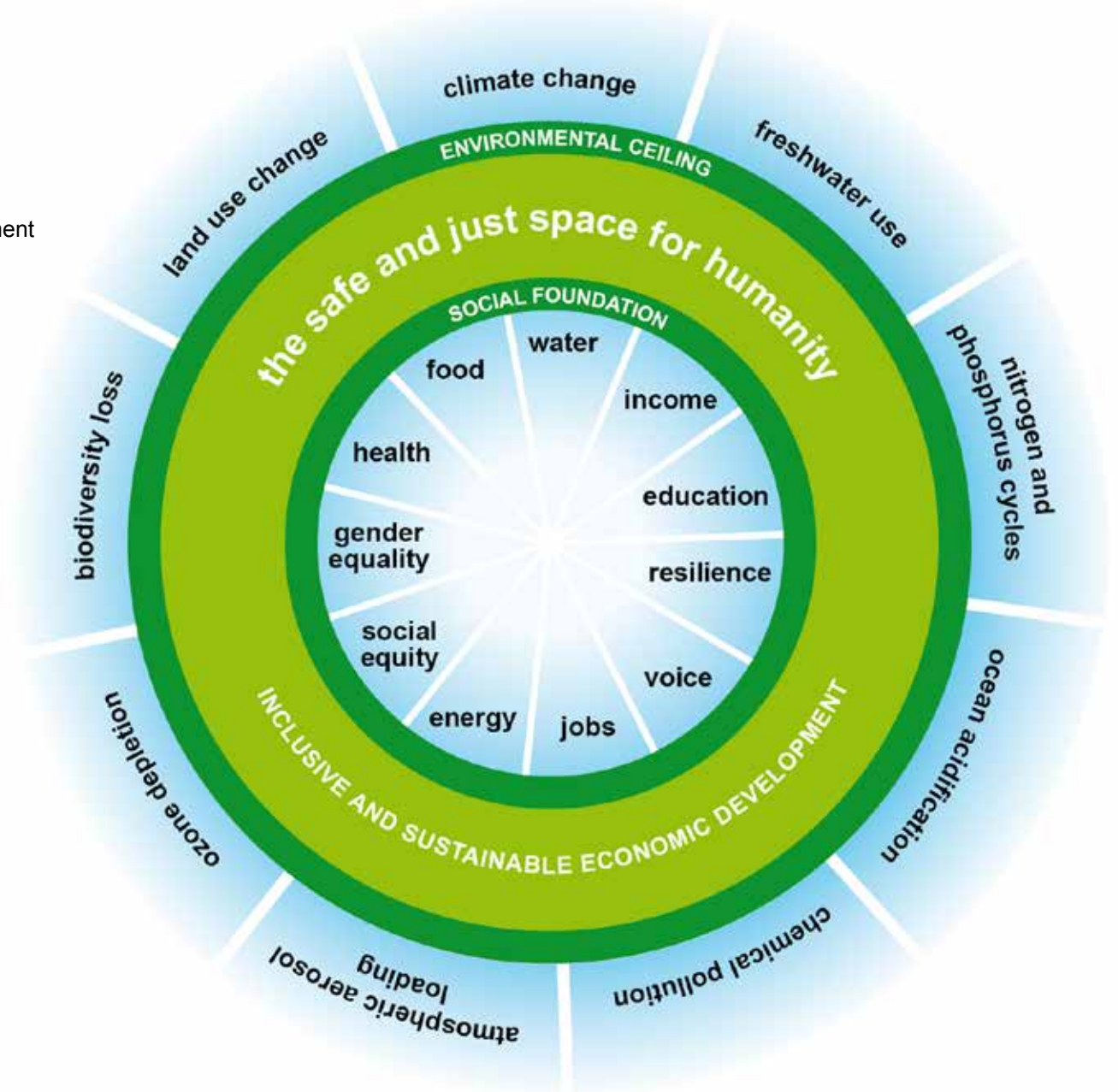
Multi-stakeholder processes

- What processes are being integrated into the programme? In what sequence and why?
- What spaces are there for learning in your programme and adjusting your activities and strategy? What spaces are there for learning with partners and with other stakeholders?
- What new visions, relationships, networks, ideas and understandings of and for resilience development is the programme creating?
- What stakeholders are involved and how are they being connected and networked? What relationships is the programming building?

ANNEX

Environmental ceiling and social foundation

This diagram, developed by Kate Raworth, sets out the boundaries required for resilient and sustainable development and is known as the Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries for development.⁴²



Linking our humanitarian and development work

- **We need to dedicate sufficient time, resources and professional recognition to working and learning across organizational silos.** Teams need to move beyond ‘good intentions’ and work together on joint initiatives to develop mutually supportive relationships, shared understandings and truly integrated approaches. This takes time and sensitivity. Spaces for horizontal networking can be facilitated by the Oxfam International Resilience Knowledge Hub, and regional structures can support vertical networking.
- **Joint analysis** of national and local drivers of risk and vulnerability needs to be integrated into our country- and regional-level development and humanitarian planning. Joint analysis and planning that bring together humanitarian and development colleagues and approaches are more likely to result in development and humanitarian interventions that are mutually reinforcing.
- **We need to learn how to better integrate humanitarian and development interventions⁴³** in targeted areas, e.g. by building real contingency budgets into development programmes, or by implementing development programmes in areas that have experienced shock or cycles of chronic stress.
- **Challenging ourselves** to work together on issues facing the poorest and most marginalized people helps us to integrate humanitarian and development perspectives and strategies, and to layer and sequence humanitarian and development interventions and approaches.
- **The aid system is changing** and new, resilience-sensitive funding mechanisms are being piloted by USAID and the EU. However, other trends, including payment by results and value for money, create new challenges for resilience programming.

Tools for context analysis

Oxfam and other agencies have developed a range of tools for context, risk and vulnerability analyses. These are being collated by the Resilience Knowledge Hub and include:

Tools to understand the structural causes of vulnerability:

- Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (VRA)⁴⁴
- power analysis – see the *Quick Guide to Power Analysis*⁴⁵
- Net-Map as a way to identify key stakeholders and understand the ways in which they are and are not interacting, and build strategies for influencing⁴⁶
- conflict analysis and ‘do no harm’ principles
- gender analysis
- political economy analysis

Tools to understand local vulnerability:

- Household Economic Assessment (HEA)
- Rapid Care Analysis⁴⁷
- PCVA for a better understanding of community-level context and a smooth transition to the landscape-level analysis⁴⁸

Tools to understand trends and future change:

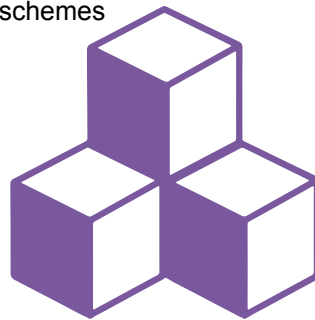
- the ACCRA climate resilience game to enhance understanding about the principle of flexible and forward-looking decision making,⁴⁹ which is one of many forms of scenario planning.

Building blocks and processes

Set out below are examples of existing programmatic strategies and approaches. It is far from a comprehensive list, but provides some examples to trigger discussion and ideas for building context-specific resilience pathways.

Empowerment

- promoting gender justice and women's empowerment
- supporting civil society to advocate for national social protection
- enhancing the participation of marginalized and disenfranchised people
- supporting conflict transformation/resolution
- supporting champions at community level
- creating safe spaces for innovation, empowerment and experimentation at community and household levels
- enhancing ability to influence local authorities
- supporting producers' organizations
- Emergency Food Security and Vulnerable Livelihoods (EFSVL): working with high-risk food producers (women, indigenous groups, other marginalized groups) to increase productivity through strengthening their rights on land and water, better access to markets (and information on markets), finance mechanisms and insurance schemes
- Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)



Securing and enhancing livelihood assets

- enhancing informal social protection mechanisms and developing complementary formal social protection mechanisms, safety nets and insurance mechanisms
- local food reserves
- enhancing social capital at household, community and district levels, understanding gender/power dynamics
- DRR and 'build back better'
- WASH and public health engineering
- adaptive livelihood strategies including increasing access to markets, improved agricultural practices
- seed banks
- access to credit
- household water treatment (HHWT)
- EFSVL: establishing community-based food and nutrition groups and facilitating training on household strategies to improve and protect nutrition amid changes and shocks, and as preparedness measures

Informing

- participatory risk, vulnerability, capacity and power analysis
- early warning systems e.g. food security information systems, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)
- multi-stakeholder approaches that support the integration of traditional and scientific knowledge
- developing understanding of legal rights, policy frameworks and political processes

Continued next page...



- participatory market and value chain analysis
- public health promotion (PHP) through WASH
- weather forecasts, markets information including via mobile phones
- monitoring of natural resources, e.g. water availability, deforestation, soil health
- using social media and ICTs
- participatory video and community science

Planning and managing

- participatory assessments: VRA, contingency planning, market chain analysis, etc.
- contingency planning, humanitarian response preparation planning and monitoring food security
- support to community groups and platforms
- support to national civil society and movements
- engagement in and support for government (local and national) consultation processes
- supporting/convening multi-stakeholder platforms and planning processes and cross-sectoral planning processes (local and national government)
- mechanisms that mainstream risk assessment into development planning across all sectors

Accountable governing

- participatory processes, e.g. VRA
- finance tracking
- mechanisms to ensure the formal involvement of civil society in policy processes
- mechanisms that ensure institutions have legitimacy and accountability for their actions, and are transparent in their dealings with vulnerable populations
- active and independent media supporting political discourse
- political discourse about the drivers of vulnerability, risk and inequality
- Oxfam's own accountability mechanisms, internally and with communities

Learning

- farmers' schools
- community meetings
- scenario planning
- response simulations
- multi-stakeholder processes and events
- barrier analysis in behaviour change (WASH and PHP)
- VRA
- Oxfam's own learning systems

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