



Women Crab Farmer Group meet in Southern Bangladesh © Janice Ian Manlutac

# OXFAM'S STRATEGY FOR RESILIENCE IN ASIA

Asia is experiencing unprecedented change. Some of these changes are bringing benefits, whilst others are increasing the vulnerability of some or all of the population. Resilience building is a counter to these drivers of vulnerability. The Asia Resilience Strategy for 2015-2020 provides a broad framework on inclusive humanitarian and development trajectories focused on the poorest of the poor in the areas of: 1) smallholder agriculture; 2) water; 3) urban resilience; and 4) natural resource management.

**STEVE JENNINGS**  
**JANICE IAN MANLUTAC**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Oxfam in Asia has a long track record of supporting vulnerable people to overcome the impacts of disasters, climatic variation and change and conflict. This has resulted in a rich array of different approaches towards building resilience across the countries in the region.

This strategy is part of the process of harnessing this rich variety of programmes towards an approach to resilience that is shared amongst all country programmes and affiliates in the region, in order to have a shared understanding of quality, focus and a platform for learning. It has been developed with participation from staff and partners of the 11 countries and 5 affiliates working in Asia.

The strategy is intended to support the work of all affiliates on resilience in Asia from 2015-2020. Whilst the concept of resilience is a broad one, the Strategy articulates the key components of what resilience means for Oxfam in Asia, and provides a degree of thematic focus. An accompanying 'how to' Companion Guide is intended to provide practical support to the design and implementation of projects that are coherent with the Strategy.

### 1.2 Why resilience? The Asian context

Asia is experiencing unprecedented change and is on a path of historical transformation. Some of these changes are bringing benefits, whilst others are increasing the vulnerability of some or all of the population.

#### **Economic growth and inequality**

If the region's economies continue to grow on their current trajectory, by 2050, Asia could account for more than half of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), trade and investment, and enjoy widespread affluence<sup>1</sup>. But although Asia's economic growth has lifted millions of people out of poverty, deeply entrenched inequalities persist in the region and within countries. Asia is still home to over two-thirds of the world's poor, who remain vulnerable to disasters, climate change, economic shocks and conflict. Beyond income inequality, gender inequality and exclusion based on ethnicity or religion is deep-seated in many countries, and keeps millions of Asians in extreme poverty and vulnerability.

#### **Political change**

The region has shown increasing leadership in tackling vulnerability. Although there are challenges in the increasing trend of regional integration, the political stability and cooperation it generated has created opportunities for shared mitigation and adaptation actions in Asia. For example, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2005 has adopted the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), which is a landmark treaty that spelled out the roadmap for the sub-region on mainstreaming disaster management into its national policies and multi-lateral agreements. Countries like Bangladesh and Nepal have been consistent voices in global climate change negotiations. However, a number of countries are affected by or recovering from political violence and civil war, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, contexts that present their own specific challenges.

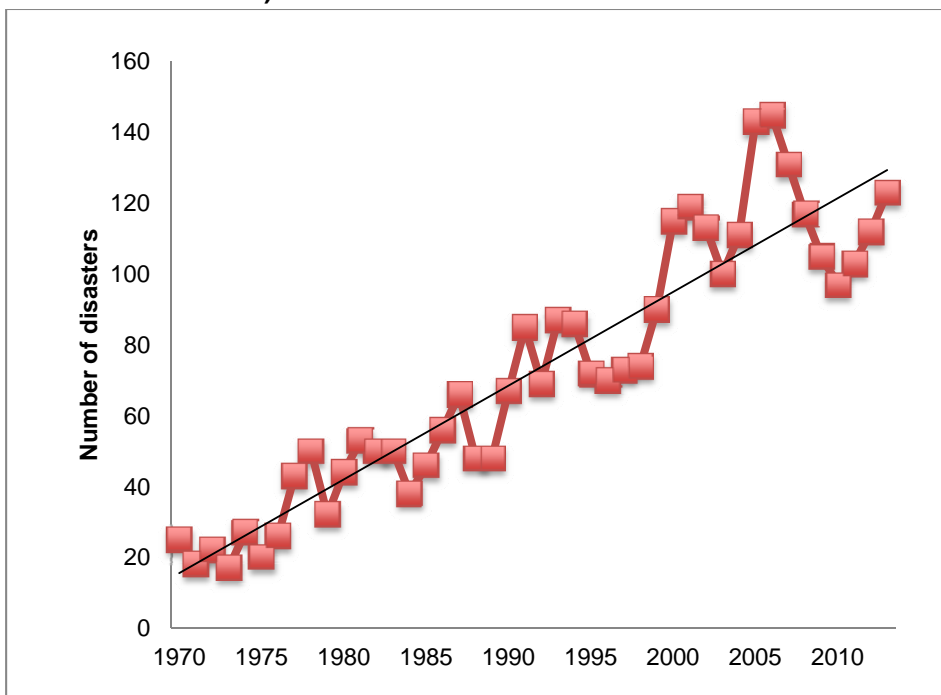
## Climate change

Asia contains 10 of the world's 16 countries most vulnerable to climate change<sup>2</sup>. Climate change is resulting in sea level rise, saline intrusion into fresh water sources, changing seasonality and rainfall patterns, increasing temperatures, and is increasing the frequency and intensity of many types of extreme weather events. All of these changes undermine people's livelihoods and puts their lives at increased risk. These changes cause uncertainties and demand for increased need for flexible decision making and adaptive planning at all levels. CC affects development pathways as countries have to manage more shocks - other development activity could be constrained – this affects the strategies e.g. need for more cross sectoral planning to identify co-benefits. Asia (and other) democracies may not yet be designed for the type of decision making required to manage the level of change, shock and uncertainty that are likely to occur. A specific example is trans-boundary governance and management of freshwater which is a challenge that is likely to require social innovations including new forms of multi-state governance or layering the functions of sub regional nodes like ASEAN and SAARC.

## Disasters

Asia consistently has the highest number of disasters and the highest number of disaster affected people of any region in the world. Moreover, the number and scale of disasters has risen at an alarming rate over recent decades (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: The number of reported disasters<sup>3</sup> from 1970-2013 in Asia (data from the EM-DAT database, for the whole of Asia)**



## Urbanization

More than half the population of Asia lives in rural areas, but Asia is also the region with the fastest rate of urbanization. According to the Asian Development Bank, another 1.1 billion people will live in the region's cities in the next 20 years, and half of all the world's urban dwellers are now Asian. This rapid transformation also represents a concentration of risk but also new opportunities for innovation.

## Information technology

With 1.3 billion people online, and a high level of mobile device ownership in many countries, Asia is among the main utilisers of information technology in the world. In some instances, this has enabled remote areas to engage with the outside world, or provided early warning during times of crisis, and lately, it has become a platform for social movements and change. Information technology represents an opportunity to address resilience in ways that were unavailable until recently.

### 1.3 Why resilience? Oxfam in Asia

#### Organizational priorities

This Asia Regional Strategy aligns with the organisation's global strategic and thematic priorities, namely Oxfam 2020. Resilience is a crosscutting theme of the Oxfam Strategic Plan<sup>4</sup>, being particularly relevant to Change Goal 3 (Saving lives, now and in the future); Change Goal 4 (Sustainable food); and Change Goal 5 (Fair sharing of natural resources). The creation of an Oxfam International global Resilience Knowledge Hub underlines the importance that Oxfam places on resilience.

#### Donor priorities

An increasing number of donors, including the Rockefeller Foundation, DfID and USAID are prioritizing funding for resilience. These agencies are all grappling with the same problem, which is how they can have a greater impact on poverty and suffering in the context of a rapidly rising number of disasters, which threatens past development gains and risks an ever-increasing budget for emergency responses.

#### Oxfam's niche

The external emphasis on resilience creates opportunities for Oxfam, based on Oxfam's unique commitment to humanitarian action, long-term development and influencing (the One Programme Approach). It provides an opportunity for staff, partners and beneficiaries to articulate a range of interlinked aspects of vulnerability and inequality. Finally, because resilience is an *outcome* of Oxfam's work and not a discrete set of programme interventions, it can be a shared objective linking humanitarian responses with long-term development across a range of thematic areas.

## Box 1: Two of the many faces of vulnerability in Asia

### Extreme vulnerability to minor climate variation in Laos

Upland communities in the north of Lao PDR – many of whom are ethnic Khmu or Hmong – are amongst the poorest in the country. They cultivate steep slopes by rotational burning, with rain-fed upland rice the predominant subsistence crop. Non-timber forest products are used for consumption, trade, and for construction materials. Disasters that result in fatalities are rare, but small-scale flash floods, droughts, landslides and wildfires are frequent, and damage or destroy crops in most villages on an annual basis. Even more frequently, variation in the timing and onset of rains, and erratic weather events combine to reduce yields, resulting in some villages having sufficient food for only 8 months of the year. The natural resource base on which communities depend are highly degraded, making agriculture more vulnerable (e.g. through reduced soil fertility) and depriving communities of their traditional coping mechanisms (e.g., harvesting food and products to sell from the surrounding forest). In summary, the livelihoods of these communities are lack resilience to even minor hazards, climatic variability, and erratic weather events.

### Extreme extremes in the Philippines

On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines. By any measure, this was amongst the most extreme of extreme events, being the most powerful storm ever to strike land, with wind speeds of 315 km/h. An estimated 6300<sup>5</sup> people lost their lives and 4 million people were left homeless. Roads, electricity and communications were cut off in a number of areas. Entire villages were destroyed, and the city of Tacloban was left in ruins. The Philippines is no stranger to large-scale extreme events, with 6-9 typhoons making landfall each year. But nor is the Philippines unique in Asia in its exposure to large-scale disasters as the tsunami of 2004, Cyclone Sidr in 2007, Cyclone Nargis in 2008 or the Pakistan floods of 2010 sadly illustrate.

## 1.4 Oxfam's definition of resilience

Oxfam defines resilience as '*the ability of women, men, and children to realize their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses, and uncertainty*'<sup>6</sup>. Oxfam's definition of resilience is not only about coping or 'bouncing back' from disasters, it is about going beyond preparedness and risk reduction (although these are important) and ensuring that poor and marginalised people can realize their rights and improve their well-being despite a range of shocks, stresses, and uncertainty.

There are some important caveats that need to be kept in mind whilst working on resilience:

- There will be circumstances in which it may seem difficult to imagine that resilience is possible: people at risk of sea level rises on Pacific islands, or in places where there is an irresolvable water deficit. This will require radical change and ways of working that might not be available in our current menu of options. In this instance for example, resilience could be framed as the capacity to determine future patterns of migration, develop new forms of statehood and ways of sustaining or enabling cultures to evolve in new environments.
- Resilience is about combining effective development and humanitarian techniques in ways that we haven't always done in the past to better respond to the emerging realities of poverty and inequality. That will sometimes mean innovating – such as using ICT and new social technologies– but there are no new interventions that are specific to resilience.

Ultimately, resilience is probably best thought of as an outcome that that can contribute to reducing poverty and suffering, and which can be delivered across different Change Goals. The definitions of resilience – Oxfam’s included – are always broad and can seem to encompass almost everything. More important than the definition is agreeing the aspects of resilience that Oxfam in Asia wants to focus on.

## 1.5 Our Vision

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

The key ideas here are that Resilience is about:

- The ambition of our work should be **beyond supporting poor people returning to the same level of poverty** after a shock: it needs to include protective elements which reduce the impact of shocks and stresses (*‘... less affected’*), it also should enable people to adapt to change (*‘... thrive in the face of’*) and it should build transformative capacity so that people can address the drivers of risk and inequality so that they are no longer exposed or vulnerable (*‘... systemic changes’*).
- Disaster risk reduction remains an important approach within resilience, but we need to go **beyond disaster risk reduction** to be also assessing and addressing people’s vulnerability to climate variation and climate change, and potentially to economic shocks, conflict and its aftermath, too and how these risks and their drivers interact with each other. This explains the inclusion of *‘stresses and uncertainty’* as well as *‘shocks’* in the vision.
- Resilience should be understood as **a property of society**. The social and economic linkages between citizens and their families, the linkages within and between communities, between people and businesses, and the responsibilities of governments to their citizens (and in the case of climate change, the global community) all combine to give resilience. Social empowerment is a route to resilience, not something separate from it.
- **Resilience is gendered**: women and men are vulnerable in different ways. Understanding these differences, and planning and implementing our work so that women and men can realize their human rights is a necessary part of Oxfam’s approach to resilience.

## 2. Our focus

Definitions of resilience have to incorporate the many different aspects that the concept includes, and so are inevitably broad. However, we can give the idea focus by deciding which aspects of resilience we want to prioritise in Asia.

Consultation with staff and partners from all 11 countries and the 5 affiliates has highlighted the following areas of focus for our resilience work. Any one country would not necessarily work on all of these areas, but would be expected to be proactive in at least one area from the ‘current’ list and one from the ‘innovation’ list. Interventions will particularly focus on the bottom 5-10% poorest who more often than not are also the most vulnerable and excluded socially due to gender, caste, or disability status:

## Improving the quality of current focus areas

There is significant potential to have a greater impact in many of Oxfam's traditional thematic and geographical areas, specifically:

- Increasing the resilience of *smallholder agriculture and enterprises* to climate shocks and climate change. A menu of interventions range from market based solutions that help extreme poor and vulnerable populations transition from vulnerable to viable livelihoods. This is also an area where influencing work on various fronts will be most useful: inclusive growth for more broadly shared prosperity; transforming power relations between men and women and between right holders and duty bearers; tackling land rights; engaging in safety nets and public and private risk transfer mechanisms; and yet keeping risk reduction and adaptation work on solid ground will be critical.
- *Water* – variable rainfall, drought and floods as well as access to water for human consumption and productive use are all drivers of vulnerability in Asia. We can build on our WASH expertise in emergencies, to encourage more sustainable management and equitable supply of water, including community-based management, social enterprise, and influencing governments and the private sector. The trans-boundary nature of water in Asia also requires trans-boundary governance, management and political leadership.

## Areas for innovation

There are areas where there are fewer current projects, but that are coherent with the Oxfam Strategic Plan, where the needs of people living in poverty are unmet, and that might be attractive to donors. These areas of innovation should be the focus for an 'accelerated learning' agenda within the region (See Section 9), to generate a step-change in our understanding and competence.

- *Urban resilience*: a rapidly growing number of poor people in many Asian cities live and work in places that are exposed to a range of major (or minor but frequent) hazards. Urban resilience is a potential niche for Oxfam. This will mean working in innovative alliances and partnerships to find demand and supply-side solutions in policy and in practice. Examples might include using mobile phones for citizen hazard mapping, or lobbying municipal government to provide the infrastructure and incentives so that local food supply chains make nutritious food accessible to the urban poor whilst benefiting farmers in the city's hinterland. Beyond rural-urban continuum, Oxfam recognises the difference between these two contexts, thus requiring different approaches. Active citizenship and good governance are overarching principles especially on key issues of income, gender and habitat.
- *Resilience and natural resource management*: healthy forests, soils, mangroves and other natural resources can reduce risk, support coping, and are the basis for adapting to change. Ensuring that vulnerable people have access to natural resources, and that they are restored and managed sustainably, is therefore a critical aspect of resilience.

## **Box 2. Natural Resources and Resilience**

### **Ecosystem-based climate change adaptation in Pakistan.**

Coastal communities in Badin District, Pakistan, are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and have low adaptive capacity with limited information and knowledge on climate change issues. The land degraded by a major infrastructure scheme (the Left Bank Outfall Drainage System) and recurrent sea-erosion have also affected the natural ecosystem of the area and undermined people's livelihoods. Importantly, sea intrusion has exacerbated the situation by turning the cultivable land into barren patches, thus limiting the livelihood options for local communities.

Amongst a suite of community-led activities that are turning the lives of these communities around, the ecosystem on which the livelihoods of the communities depend is being restored. This has included building a 2.26 km embankment to prevent the intrusion of seawater. The embankment has allowed agricultural land to be restored, and the fishing ponds that had in the past supported the communities' food security as well as providing income have begun to reform. Planting a variety of useful trees, and using new varieties of crops, has diversified the agricultural production in the area, leaving households less exposed to risks. Finally, the community-led approaches in Badin have been amplified through the local partner (Laar Humanitarian and Development Programme) supporting the District government to develop its climate change policy, and by Oxfam providing technical input to into national-level climate change policy.

Elsewhere in Asia, there are other examples of Oxfam is using ecosystem restoration and management to reduce risk and help communities adapt to climate change, such as supporting advocacy against mangrove destruction in Andhra Pradesh, India.

## **3. Theory of Change**

The following is a broad theory of change for resilience in Asia that can be adapted to specific circumstances. Not all of the elements will be present in every project, but together they form a powerful force for change.

The purpose of the theory of change is to provide a degree of coherence to Oxfam's work on resilience in Asia, whilst recognizing a diversity of contexts and approaches. At a project level, it can be thought of as a menu from which the elements that are relevant to your context can be chosen. A full programme on resilience (or domain of change in an OCS) will include most or all of the elements of the Theory of Change. At higher levels still – that of the whole country programme, affiliate or region – the Theory of Change can be a way of recognizing and aggregating how different programmes contribute to building resilient communities. It also provides a common language by which we can generate evidence, share learning and communicate.

### **What Oxfam will do with partners**

This is the work that Oxfam and partners do, whether it is in a livelihoods project, a disaster risk reduction project, or a project on water governance. The key elements of our approach will include advancing gender justice throughout; assessing and addressing the risks facing poor people's lives, livelihoods, assets and rights; building the capacity of vulnerable people and of institutions to increase resilience; convening actors and influencing the policies and practices of those in power towards strengthening (and not undermining) the resilience of vulnerable people; always aiming to achieve change at scale; and having a rigorous focus on evidence and learning from successes and failures. Note that as a minimum, Oxfam should do no harm in contexts of conflict and in some cases should work towards conflict transformation<sup>7</sup>.



## **Community led Resilience**

Resilience should be driven by local community context, through a methodology that orients all resources to locally-identified needs. Example, risk assessments should generate a detailed understanding of the barriers – from specific places and information types – to enable a more precise framing of problems and solutions at ground level. This means looking at local actors not as beneficiaries but as partners for change. We will bring a combination of actors who would not normally work together but whose core mandates and businesses intersect. Global and regional institutional and private sector partners, development agencies, academics and others--using their infrastructures and available technology, will work alongside a variety of local actors—people’s organisations, farmer leaders especially women from high risk communities, small business owners and local government officials from urban and rural areas.

## **Change in communities**

The approaches that Oxfam and partners take must result in change within vulnerable communities. There are several elements that together will lead to greater resilience of vulnerable people. These include building on existing capacities on resilience especially as a result of decades of DRR and CCA work. Then we need increased access to contingency resources and support, so that vulnerable people are better protected against harm from disasters and shocks. Increasing income, food security and productive assets (e.g., making agriculture more resilient to climate variability), supporting innovation (e.g., on new agricultural techniques, or using social media to gain voice), and facilitating greater access to information (e.g., weather forecasts, Early Warning Systems) all help vulnerable communities to thrive in the face of climate change and uncertainty. Supporting communities to have access to a sustainably managed natural resource base underpins their livelihoods, helps them cope in times of stress and can play a protective function (e.g., mangroves). Finally, poor communities should be supported to better exercise their rights, including women’s roles in decision-making, and use their talents and resources to build safer and thriving communities for themselves.

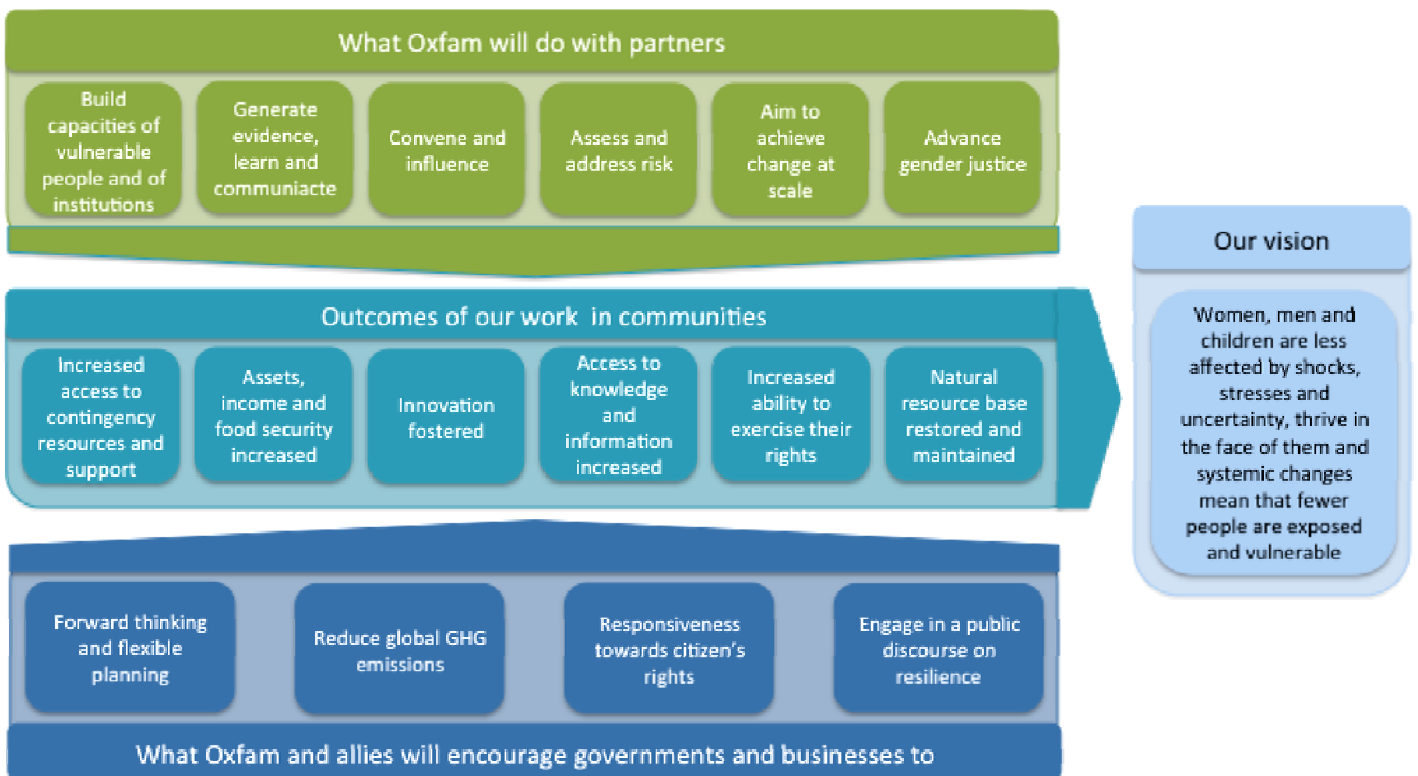
## **Oxfam and our allies**

This refers to the influencing work that should be part of resilience building, and should be coherent with the National Influencing Guidelines<sup>8</sup>. The approaches will be supportive and working with government and the private sector in some contexts, or challenging them in others. The key elements will be to encourage forward thinking, long-term and flexible planning that is robust in the face of change and uncertainty; to advocate for duty bearers to be responsive to the rights of vulnerable people; to engage in and stimulate a public discourse on issues of resilience; and advocating and campaigning on climate change nationally and globally. More importantly, this looks at collaboration and co-creation such as multi-stakeholder joint problem solving especially among civil society, government and the private sector to address the complexity of multiple risks where people value different things/outcomes.

Resilience is also about building three important capacities:

- a) **Absorptive capacity** – to take protective action to cope with shocks and stress. It is needed as shocks and stress will continue to happen, for example due to climate variability, protracted conflict and extreme weather events - This corresponds to Asia's ongoing focus on DRR.
- b) **Adaptive capacity** – to make adjustments and incremental changes in anticipation of or in response to change, in ways that create more flexibility in the future. It is needed as change is ongoing and uncertain, and because transformational change takes time and sustained engagement - This corresponds to Asia's ongoing focus on CCA and NRM and urban resilience.
- c) **Transformative capacity** – to change systems that create risk, vulnerability and inequality. It is needed to address the drivers of risk, vulnerability and inequality and because social and natural systems are themselves being transformed, for example by globalization and climate change - This corresponds to Asia's vision for systemic change.

**Figure 2. A Theory of Change for Oxfam in Asia**



#### 4. Measuring change: how do we know we have done something good or bad?

Knowing whether people and communities are actually becoming more resilient as a result of Oxfam's work is fundamental to effective programming. Unfortunately, there is as yet no practical and standard way of measuring resilience either within Oxfam or externally.

Until that is available, it would make sense for Oxfam in Asia to measure resilience by focusing on *the range of outcomes that we think will result in resilience*, as described in the Theory of Change. These outcomes, with potential indicators of each, are given in the table below. Not all of the outcomes will be relevant to all projects (e.g., natural resources may not be relevant to some urban resilience projects) and not all of the indicators would need to be measured for each outcome (which ones are used will depend on the project focus, resources available for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, etc.). However, agreeing to an overall framework of measurement that is consistent between projects will help learning within and between programmes.

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

Measuring change – whether a project has been effective or not – is of limited value unless that information is used to inform decisions going forward. Each affiliate has its own systems for encouraging evidence-based decision making during project design and implementation, and these should be followed for projects where the outcomes include resilience. However, for resilience, there is a further opportunity, that of coordinated cross-learning, which is discussed in Section 8.

In line with Oxfam International agreements, a minimum of 5% of the value of each project should be budgeted for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning. However, learning from the wider development sector is that high-quality MEL often requires 10-13% of project value.

*Since metrics for resilience is relatively new, Table 1 provides a useful approach but it should be noted that other MEL frameworks outside of Oxfam are also useful as reference even as Oxfam International continues to work on an updated MEL framework for resilience.*

**Table 1: Measuring resilience: a menu of outcomes and their indicators for resilience projects and/or programmes**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Potential indicators<sup>9</sup></b>
Increased access to contingency resources and support	Participation in community groups Perceptions of local government emergency support Access to remittances or formal earnings
Assets, income and food security increased	Women's control over assets and income Asset ownership Savings Income Dietary diversity Number of weeks with less than normal number of meals
Innovation fostered	Attitudes towards changing practices Awareness of climate change Climate predictions used Presence of innovative livelihoods practices Number of social connections Access to credit
Access to knowledge and information increased	Use of weather forecasts in livelihoods decisions Access to technical livelihoods support Access to disaster early warning information Awareness of community disaster risk reduction plans
Increased ability to exercise their rights	Number of women in decision-making roles Participation in community groups Perceived ability to influence local authorities Formal involvement of civil society in policy processes Change in [specified] national policy
Natural resource base restored and maintained	Soil quality Access to clean water Access to irrigation Area of habitat restored Perceived change in forest quality

## 5. Tools of the trade

Different affiliates and country programmes are in different places with respect to their focus on resilience and their capacity to integrate resilience across change goals. A practical Companion Guide to this strategy will support project design and implementation. The guide is rooted in real project examples from across the region, and is intended for Programme Managers and Officers.

## 6. Resourcing: what do we need to get there?

Resilience is the common thread across all change goals within some country programmes, whereas in others it is a minor part of the approach. As a result of this variation, there are significant

differences in the number of staff who are expected to work on resilience, as well as differences in the capacities of the staff that work on resilience.

### **Staff capacity**

Resilience is not a topic that is confined to one change goal, and therefore there needs to be at least a basic understanding of it across country teams (even if ultimately one team is responsible for advising staff working on other change goals). An immediate action would be for all countries to conduct an assessment of staff capacity on resilience, which could be compiled across countries, and with countries then collaboratively developing the training programmes to fill the observed needs.

### **Partnerships**

The proposed Theory of Change calls for multiple layers of action on resilience: working with vulnerable people and communities, and with governments and business as well. Oxfam will need a flexible approach: in some contexts resilience can be a politically 'safe' approach to work with governments and business, in others contexts it will be necessary to be more challenging to those in power.

### **Funding**

As many Asian countries have moved towards 'middle income country' status, some traditional government donors are turning their attention away from the region. We should seek to influence these donors to shift their thinking and support resilience work. There are also opportunities with new types of donors: for example, large service sector companies with a green agenda are likely to be attracted to financing (and/or partnering) work to restore ecosystems as an aid to resilience. Whether it is traditional or new donors, it is important to remember that resilience building is a long-term effort, and so multi-year funding is important. Oxfam should also actively seek out multi-country funding to support cross-learning.

### **New business models**

Ultimately, the changing context will require us to be nimble and quick to respond with new business models. More and more we need to modify and adapt our own practices, e.g. a different humanitarian approach to areas with chronic crisis but still remain true to Oxfam core principles and values. This will require pooling of resources across the confederation.

### **Link to other strategies**

It is important to note that will be key intersects between the Asia Resilience Strategy and other strategies in the region such as the Asia Regional Humanitarian Unit (RHU). This strategy must not be read as a stand-alone document but should be viewed as complementing these other strategies.

## 7. A Resilience Link

Five distinct needs have emerged for a coordinated approach to resilience across the Asia region:

- **Cross-learning:** There is a strong feeling from almost every country that there are good projects being implemented that many could learn from, but they are not known about outside the country. A coordination mechanism for enabling cross-learning between affiliates and country programmes is a priority for improving the quality and impact of resilience programming<sup>10</sup>.
- **Accelerated learning agendas:** The two areas for innovation – urban resilience and natural resources and resilience – are two areas where a cycle of research; on-the-ground practice; facilitated cross-learning between countries, partners and affiliates; and Oxfam’s policies and resources should be aligned to generate a step-change in our understanding and competence. This needs to happen quickly, and can be supported by investment and coordination from various levels, with an initial contribution from OI needed.
- **Technical support:** Several country programmes are short of technical understanding on resilience, and would benefit from training based on the experience and expertise of others in Asia and beyond. This will require collaboration and coordination (see ‘staff capacity’, above).
- **Keeping the conversation going:** there is considerable energy for working on resilience together across Asia, including on-going discussions on the strategy and how to implement it together, seeking and responding to global or regional funding opportunities, communicating Oxfam’s work on resilience within the region, and as a platform for peer-to-peer support.
- **Asia Transition Group/PGG Support:** For smooth and accountable delivery of this resilience framework, Asia needs the endorsement and support of its leaders by way of:
  - including resilience as part of performance management of Oxfam staff; and
  - earmarking a percentage of unrestricted funds to support the Resilience Knowledge Hub in Asia.

The most appropriate way to put these functions into operation will be through an **Asia Resilience Hub**, contributed to by affiliates and linking closely to the Global Resilience Knowledge Hub.

## NOTES

- 1 Asian Development Bank (2011). Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian Century.
- 2 Verisk Maplecroft (2011). <http://maplecroft.com/about/news/ccvi.html>
- 3 For a disaster to be entered into the EM-DAT database at least one of the following criteria must be fulfilled: Ten or more people reported killed; one hundred or more people reported affected; declaration of a state of emergency; and/or a call for international assistance.
- 4 Oxfam International (2013). The Power of People Against Poverty: the Oxfam Strategic Plan 2013-19.
- 5 For verification with NDRMC as other reports state 10,000.
- 6 This is the Oxfam International definition of resilience, signed off by all affiliates and first published in the 2013 Oxfam International Report 'No Accident: Resilience and the Inequality of Risk'.
- 7 The issues of resilience in conflict are dealt with in more detail in the Companion Guide
- 8 Oxfam International. National Influencing Guidelines
- 9 The indicators used are partly based on the Effectiveness Review methodology for Resilience, adapted to reflect the more holistic and dynamic approach to resilience proposed for Asia. Effectiveness Reviews were developed by OGB but are increasingly being used by other affiliates. This may have its limitations. A Resilience MEL framework is currently being developed to provide better impact tracking and will be part of the Resilience Companion Guide.
- 10 Note that some consultees thought that cross learning would need to avoid reliance on workshops and find ways of minimizing costs (e.g., of international flights). Coordinated short secondments or 'buddying' of staff from close-by countries might be ways round this.

© Oxfam International February 2016

This paper was written by Steve Jennings and Janice Ian Manlutac. Oxfam acknowledges the assistance of the Helen Jeans, Annette Salkeld, Iftikhar Nizami and the Asia Resilience Hub in its production.

For further information on the issues raised in this paper please e-mail [JManlutac@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:JManlutac@oxfam.org.uk)

This publication is copyright but the text may be used free of charge for the purposes of advocacy, campaigning, education, and research, provided that the source is acknowledged in full. The copyright holder requests that all such use be registered with them for impact assessment purposes. For copying in any other circumstances, or for re-use in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, permission must be secured and a fee may be charged. E-mail [policyandpractice@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:policyandpractice@oxfam.org.uk).

The information in this publication is correct at the time of going to press.

Published by Oxfam GB for Oxfam International under ISBN 978-0-85598-674-2 in February 2016.  
Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, UK.

## OXFAM

Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organizations networked together in 92 countries, as part of a global movement for change, to build a future free from the injustice of poverty:

Oxfam America ([www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org))  
Oxfam Australia ([www.oxfam.org.au](http://www.oxfam.org.au))  
Oxfam-in-Belgium ([www.oxfamsol.be](http://www.oxfamsol.be))  
Oxfam Canada ([www.oxfam.ca](http://www.oxfam.ca))  
Oxfam France ([www.oxfamfrance.org](http://www.oxfamfrance.org))  
Oxfam Germany ([www.oxfam.de](http://www.oxfam.de))  
Oxfam GB ([www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk))  
Oxfam Hong Kong ([www.oxfam.org.hk](http://www.oxfam.org.hk))  
Oxfam India ([www.oxfamindia.org](http://www.oxfamindia.org))  
Intermon Oxfam (Spain) ([www.intermonoxfam.org](http://www.intermonoxfam.org))  
Oxfam Ireland ([www.oxfamireland.org](http://www.oxfamireland.org))  
Oxfam Italy ([www.oxfamitalia.org](http://www.oxfamitalia.org))  
Oxfam Japan ([www.oxfam.jp](http://www.oxfam.jp))  
Oxfam Mexico ([www.oxfammexico.org](http://www.oxfammexico.org))  
Oxfam New Zealand ([www.oxfam.org.nz](http://www.oxfam.org.nz))  
Oxfam Novib (Netherlands) ([www.oxfamnovib.nl](http://www.oxfamnovib.nl))  
Oxfam Québec ([www.oxfam.qc.ca](http://www.oxfam.qc.ca))

Please write to any of the agencies for further information, or visit [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org).

[www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org)

