

POLICY AND PRACTICE PAPER

Promoting resilience in  
development programming:  
World Vision UK's Approach



World Vision aims to promote the transformation needed for the wellbeing of people currently living in poverty. We seek to understand the situation of people struggling to overcome poverty and to work alongside them. We stand in solidarity with them in the search for justice.

**Cover image:** Monamud works as a goat herder near a check dam in Somalia. The dam was built through a cash for work scheme and helps to rehabilitate the grazing land. ©2013 Daniel Lee/World Vision

**Below:** Agri-pastoralist, Ms Roda Awshuki Abdi, has been supported to pursue drought tolerant crops - sorghum. She is a single mother with six children and hopes they become doctors and agriculturalists. Gatiitaley Village, Owdweyne, Somalia. ©2013 Ailyna Chie/World Vision



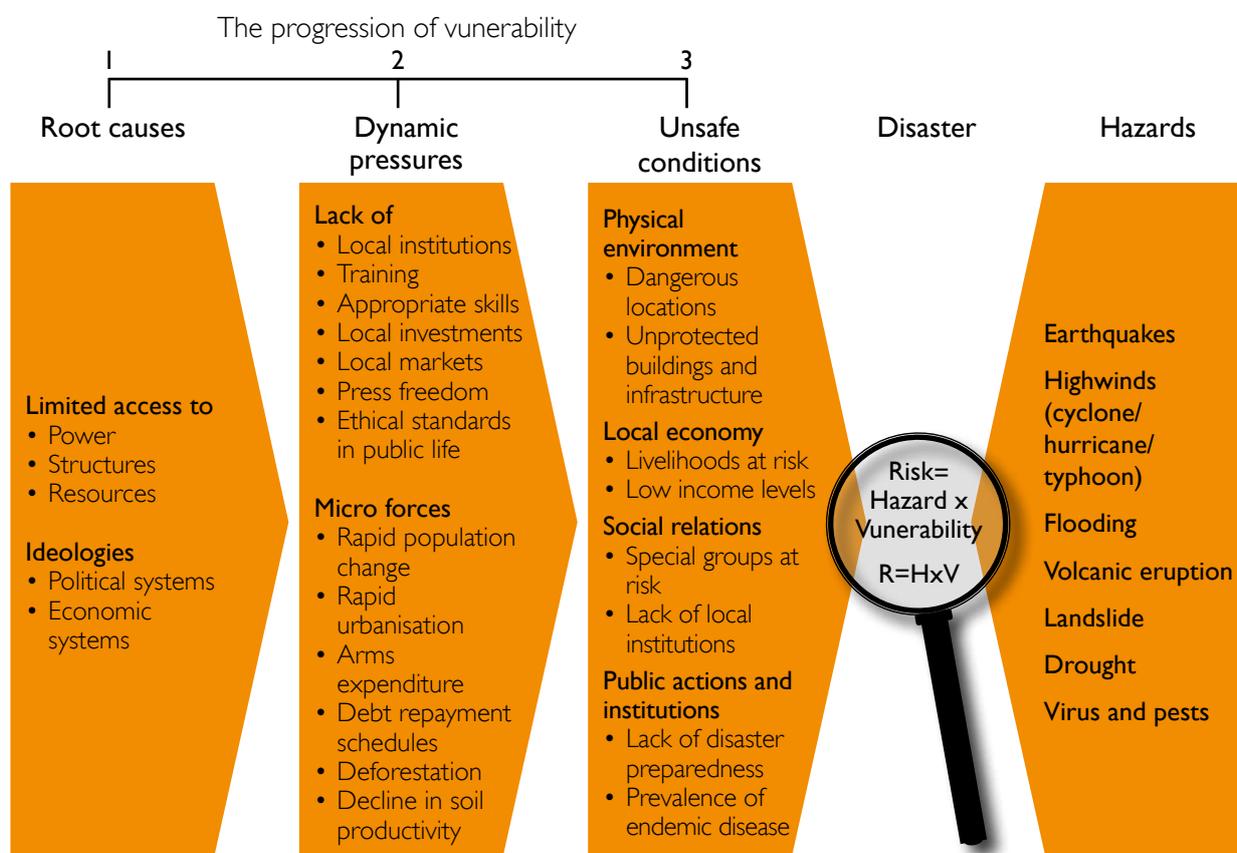
# Why resilience?

In the last decade, we have seen \$2.5 trillion in disaster losses in primarily lower income countries that have weak governance systems<sup>1</sup>. The next decade could see these trends continue and have a bigger impact as climate change leads to more uncertainty with more people living in exposed areas. Violent and fragile states are a long way from achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and provide the hardest environments in which to make and consolidate development gains. As people endure changing risks and weak governance systems, World Vision UK is changing the way we do development programming to promote resilience.

## A resilience approach: Integrating holistic risk reduction approaches into development

World Vision UK focuses on incorporating holistic risk reduction into our development programming to improve the wellbeing of communities, including children. We believe that more progress can be made to achieve positive child wellbeing outcomes through a holistic understanding of the risk landscape that is incorporated into World Vision’s development programmes and advocacy approaches. This builds on the widespread acceptance of the pressure and release model of disasters which includes understanding the root causes, dynamic pressures, unsafe conditions and hazards in communities (See Figure 1 below).

FIGURE 1 The progression of vulnerability

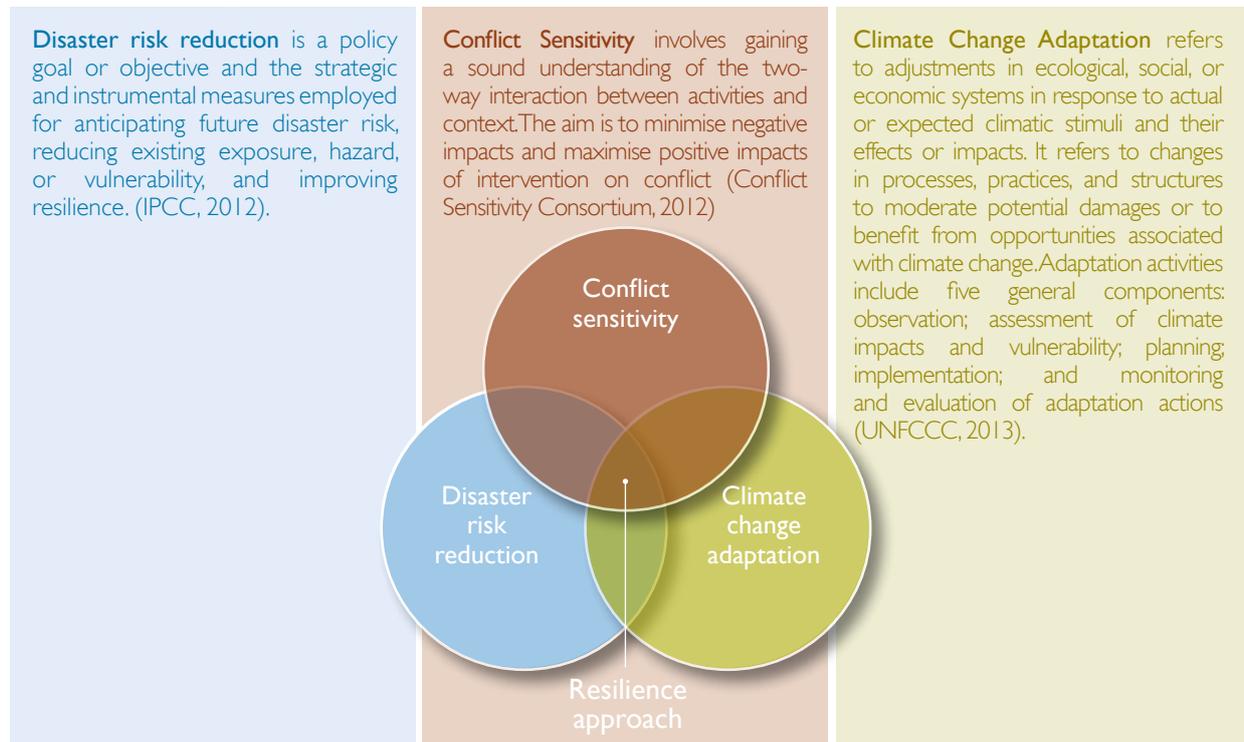


Source: B. Wisner et al. At Risk: Natural Hazards, People’s Vulnerability and Disasters. London: Routledge, 2003, p. 51

<sup>1</sup> UNISDR. Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction. Geneva: UNISDR, 2013. [www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/gar/2013/en/home/index.html](http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/gar/2013/en/home/index.html)

Holistic risk reduction also resonates with the way people experience risk - in an integrated, non-compartmentalised manner. In practice, a resilience approach to development means combining three development approaches – Conflict Sensitivity (CS), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) – into programme assessment, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation as well as advocacy. Figure 2, below, highlights the three long-standing development approaches. These approaches can be streamlined together for an understanding of the impact of root causes, dynamic pressures (including conflict and climate change), unsafe conditions and hazards that lead to changing risks.

**FIGURE 2** Resilience approach: a combination of development approaches



With this holistic understanding of changing risks, action plans for resilient development can be developed. In this way, the resilience approach bridges the divide between humanitarian and development work. It promotes development across sectors to address short to long-term risks.

## How to develop resilience programming: the process matters

Based on a review of World Vision’s programming in a range of contexts - Honduras, Kenya, Indonesia and Somalia - approaches and principles of resilience have been identified<sup>2</sup>. These are highlighted below in Table 1 along a project cycle.

Using the principles and approaches described in Table 1, specific cross sectoral inputs can be identified and best practice models adopted – such as Holistic Rangeland Management (HRM), described in the Somalia case study below, Participatory Water and Sanitation, and others – and brought together to address the challenges identified in the assessment phase. Working across sectors is possible by working in partnership and coordination with other non-governmental organisations, the private sectors, United Nations agencies, multi-lateral agencies and government departments. World Vision and its partners should consider the principles and approaches described above and adopt them across its development programming. It should also use findings, lessons and identified gaps to guide advocacy positions.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Folkema, J., Ibrahim, M and Wilkinson, E. (2013) *World Vision’s Resilience Programming: Adding Value for Development*. Working Paper; Overseas Development Institute.

**TABLE I** Resilience programming – Approaches and principles in the project cycle

<b>The design phase</b>
Conduct <b>holistic and participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments</b> across livelihoods, hazards, governance and trends including climate change <sup>3</sup> . Use Geographic Information System (GIS) to analyse multiple sources of data (social, economic, governance, environmental) spatially and map vulnerability.
Undertake <b>systems and power dynamics analysis</b> to understand a complex nature and interactions of actors, assets and activities. Analysis works through the power dynamics and vested interests as part of defining critical vulnerabilities and how to address them.
<b>Stakeholder engagement</b>
Include a <b>range of stakeholders</b> in analysis to improve the appropriateness, effectiveness and accountability of interventions (marginalised groups, private sector, public sector, research institutions, civil society) <sup>4</sup> . Governance challenges are therefore overcome as different groups find ways to act collectively in their own best interests. <sup>5</sup>
<b>Identifying solutions</b>
Use <b>scenario planning</b> with different stakeholders to provide new understanding of the complexity of systems that support the development of different potential situations, which are then tested to understand the potential changes in the economic, political and natural environment <sup>6</sup> . This provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to agree on interventions and to broaden their scope beyond the micro level and consider national and sub-national policy making. Participants discuss scenarios and options for intervention and anticipate how these might impact the overall system in positive or negative ways.
<b>Implementation phase</b>
Focus logistical frameworks (log frames) on the <b>outcomes</b> , allowing adaptive management rather than activities and outputs during project implementation. This allows for different possible pathways for implementation.
Include <b>crisis modifiers</b> (identified in the scenario planning) so that alternative responses can be implemented to shocks and stresses and reduce delays in action.
Conduct stakeholder 'steering committee' meetings to promote dialogue, to review progress and prevent barriers from emerging across all governance levels – micro to macro.
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>
Organise <b>multi-stakeholder reviews</b> of data results throughout implementation and make use of innovations in GIS and mobile technologies for real-time data entry and monitoring to manage evolving scenarios effectively.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GIS allows you to monitor changes geographically/spatially and to react through flexible adaptive management scenarios if results are not being achieved</li> <li>• Mobile technologies increase transparency and empower local communities to contribute more effectively to evidence gathering.</li> </ul>
<b>Document and review systems maps</b> to see which interventions were successful and which were not. System mapping should be an iterative process in understanding how best to achieve the desired outcomes.
<b>Capture learning</b> through case studies, action research, participatory videos to share and influence policy and practice.

<sup>3</sup> Holistic Vulnerability and Capacity assessments include livelihoods, hazards, governance, and trends. Resources from World Vision include: Participatory Learning Approaches for Resilience; Landscape, Engagement, Spatial and Systems (LENSS).

<sup>4</sup> The Development Programme Approach by World Vision is a process of engaging a range of stakeholder for programme development which includes a critical path. See: World Vision International (2011). The Handbook for Development Programmes. [http://wvi.org/sites/default/files/Handbook\\_for\\_Development\\_Programmes.pdf](http://wvi.org/sites/default/files/Handbook_for_Development_Programmes.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Bergh, G., M. Foresti, A. Rocha Menocal, L. Wild (2012). 'Building Governance into a Post-2015 Framework: Exploring Transparency and Accountability as an Entry Point'. ODI Research Report, London: Overseas Development Institute.

<sup>6</sup> Addison and Ibrahim (2013), *Participatory Scenario Planning for Community Resilience*, World Vision UK.

# Resilience programming: learning from the field

Resilience programming approaches and principles have been developed through analysis of World Vision's experience in the field. An example of our work in building resilience in a fragile state is shown in the case study from Somalia below.

## CASE STUDY

Poverty in Somalia is widespread: 43 percent of the population lives on less than US\$1 a day<sup>7</sup>. Climate variability has led to a poor rainy season which has contributed to a dramatic increase in food prices and water shortages. World Vision's Somalia Holistic Rangeland Management project 2011-2012, sought to reduce the impact of drought on chronically water-stressed pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, and internally displaced communities. The project also involved working with a wide range of actors, across sectors and through a more integrated approach to land management and risk reduction, benefitting 30,645 individuals in Mudug, Nugal and Goldogbo.

The project was designed using holistic approaches to collect data on livelihoods, socio-economic trends, hazards and governance. Vulnerability and capacity assessments (VCAs) were conducted with women, men, elders, youth, and government officials from the Ministry of Livestock and Husbandry and the Ministry of Environment, Range, Wildlife and Tourism. Participants identified their vulnerabilities, capacities, and coping strategies. The assessments highlighted the importance of traditional rangeland management practices as well as the institutions that control access to resources for HRM. The project was innovative because it mimicked wildlife behavior in Savannah ecosystems and the practices of the Samburu tribe in northern Kenya that still uses traditional systems of pasture management. Degradation of land is often the result of pastoralists letting their herds spread out widely, while in natural ecosystems livestock walk in a line. Training pastoralists to consolidate their livestock in a narrow group and keep them moving forward, reduces degradation and allows for regeneration. The findings from the VCAs led to the identification areas in need of attention: livestock markets, animal healthcare systems, livestock feeding practices, the availability of land for grazing, and a shortage of water resources. A training curriculum on pasture management was developed to address these challenges.

As a result of the VCA findings, World Vision Somalia implemented a combined approach to mitigate the immediate effects of the drought and to help reduce longer term vulnerability by strengthening infrastructure, local institutions, and the community's asset base. This included work across four sectors:

- Social protection: rehabilitating strategic water points and constructing pilot water entrapment and soil retention sites using cash-for-work programmes.
- Disaster Risk Reduction: establishing DRR committees and community preparedness plans; training in how to maintain the new water entrapment and soil retention sites and in rangeland management practices.
- Food security: curriculum developed on good agricultural practices; drought resistant seeds provided; training of trainers in Ministries of Environmental Conservation and Agriculture and Livestock.
- Water and Sanitation: participatory training in ten community water committees in hygiene and sanitation.

<sup>7</sup> AUNHCR (2011) [www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483ad6.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483ad6.html)

### Programming success

Implementing the project across sectors allowed for a range of risks to be addressed, including economic shocks, conflict, and epidemics. It also protected existing assets, developed people's ability to identify and manage risks over the longer term through tailored training on how to conduct VCAs, and developed more resilient agricultural practices. Many benefits were visible within a year, including:

- One-third of beneficiaries were able to access 15 litres of water each every day after the project in comparison with six percent of beneficiaries before the intervention.
- Dryland farming technologies, such as planting pits, resulted in increased access to and availability of food, which reduced the number of food scarce months.
- Livestock productivity increased because pasture was enhanced: 38 percent of beneficiaries reported they had access to more pasture as a result of the project intervention.
- Beneficiaries had increased capacity to produce more food and conserve the environment.
- The development Somali curriculum will enable government officials and colleges to train communities and students in HRM.

This case study leads to findings and two main recommendations for resilience programming.

### Findings

A key observation linked to the success of this project was the capacity of World Vision Somalia staff and consultants to work holistically and using a participatory research methodology. The team comprised of consultants specialised in Rangeland Management through training at masters and doctorate levels. A team which includes both technical skills in holistic rangeland management and the ability to work with local governance systems and to empower communities through a participatory methodology is essential.

A monitoring and evaluation system gathered information on: direct support to asset accumulation (increased household food basket); indirect support through the transformation of structures and processes (the inclusion of health and sanitation in the education curriculum); feedback on the achievement of livelihood outcomes through virtuous circles (i.e. directing planning to priority areas identified by the community). This is a move towards recognising that it is important to monitor and evaluate outcome and process indicators for resilience.

### Recommendations

Conflict sensitivity or power analysis exercises need to be carried out during the design phase to ensure access to resources and that other power dynamics are acknowledged and mediated. This should be followed up with stakeholder engagement activities to build dialogue and consensus over the long-term to reduce potential conflict. Secondly, aid agencies need to coordinate with each other and work together in order to avoid duplication of activities and ensure maximum use of resources to meet the identified vulnerabilities and capacities.

# Linking resilience programming to child wellbeing

By incorporating the principles and approaches for resilience programming described along the project cycle (see Table 1), World Vision UK seeks to improve its child wellbeing outcomes: that girls and boys enjoy good health, are educated for life, experience the love of God and of their neighbours; and are cared for, protected and participate in decisions that affect their lives.

**World Vision knows that children are particularly vulnerable to disasters and changing risks. We know also that with access to knowledge and skills development, children can contribute to building the resilience of their communities.**

*World Vision International, 2013*

## Future directions for World Vision UK in promoting resilience

In adopting the principles and approaches of resilience in development programming, World Vision UK's goal is to empower communities to lead their own development. World Vision UK intends to feed learning from resilience programming into important development processes and debates, such as post-Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) discussions, the post Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and resilience debates.

For post MDG and SDG discussions, World Vision UK is calling for a stronger commitment from nations to risk reduction and for related indicators to be developed. With regard to post HFA, there is a need for a new global agreement on disaster risk reduction. World Vision UK is championing for: increased accountability measures to reduce the drivers of risks and a children's charter for disaster risk reduction, which emphasises the future that children want and practical ways to achieve this<sup>8</sup>. For the resilience debate, we are seeking the adoption of resilience principles and approaches, as highlighted in Table 1 above, in all development work through donors and practitioners and for a review of how such an approach could lead to increased child wellbeing. World Vision UK is also seeking to refocus the evidence-for-resilience debate so that it pays more attention to the process indicators concerning the empowerment of communities to reduce the drivers of risk than the quantitative indicators captured to date.

World Vision UK believes that holistic risk reduction is an empowerment agenda that will lead to equity and justice – for communities now and for our children who will lead the future.

**Want to learn more about our resilience programming at World Vision UK?**

Contact the Resilience Unit

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<sup>8</sup> For a review of how to support the children's charter for disaster risk reduction, see: Bild, E. and Ibrahim, M (2013), *Towards the resilient future children want: A review of progress in achieving the children's charter for disaster risk reduction*. Children in a Changing Climate Coalition <http://community.eldis.org/DRR/59e3c4cb/5ba45472>

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## Further World Vision resources promoting resilience

*Conflict Sensitivity: How to Guide*. 2013. Conflict Sensitivity Consortium. [www.conflictsensitivity.org/content/how-guide](http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/content/how-guide)

*Disaster Risk Reduction Toolkit: DRR and CCA Integration into Area Development Programmes*. 2013. World Vision. <http://wwasiapacific.org/drr/>

*Landscape, Engagement, Spatial and Systems Analysis (LEnSS)*. 2013 World Vision. Laura Fontaine and Josh Folkema.

*Bridging the Participation Gap: developing macro-level conflict analysis through local perspectives*. 2013. Tim Midgley and Michelle Garred. World Vision UK. <http://www.worldvision.org.uk/our-work/fragility-resilience>

*Participatory Learning Approaches for Resilience: Bringing Conflict Sensitivity, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Together*. 2013. Maggie Ibrahim, Tim Midgley. World Vision UK. <http://www.worldvision.org.uk/our-work/fragility-resilience>

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*Promoting Local Adaptive Capacity: Experiences from Africa and Asia*. 2012. Maggie Ibrahim and Nicola Ward. World Vision UK. <http://community.eldis.org/.5b1d10a7>

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WorldVision responded to the drought in the Horn of Africa. This child had access to water twice a week, along with 18 other communities. Resilience programming aims to bridge the gap between development programming and humanitarian response so that droughts do not leave communities in crisis.  
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