



Regional Learning & Advocacy Programme for Vulnerable Dryland Communities

THINK SPACE: Resilience in the Horn of Africa

On Wednesday 23rd January 2013 [REGLAP](#) and the [IAWG](#) held a one day 'Think Space' to discuss the developing resilience agenda in the Horn of Africa and review how different actors have progressed in the last year. The aim of the event was to combine information sharing, learning and reflection and build on REGLAP's Think Space events in Ethiopia, and the IAWG/RHPT March 2012 workshop on learning from the 2011 Food Crisis.

The format of the Think Space' combined panel discussions around key issues alongside group discussions and debate. An exhibition / market place was set up for agencies to present their resilience work across a range of themes including programmatic interventions and approaches, research outputs, resilience technology and new methodologies

The meeting saw the participation of over 100 people drawn from the practitioner (both humanitarian and development), donor and research communities. The following report shares a summary of the proceedings, conversations and conclusions from the meeting.

SESSION 1 - PANEL DISCUSSION: Donor perspectives on resilience and what difference it will make?

Session Facilitated by the co-chairs of the IAWG - Kurt Tjossem, Regional Director, Horn and East Africa, International Rescue Committee and Paula Tenaglia, Regional Director, Action Contre la Faim (ACF)

Dominique Davoux - European Union (EU) Kenya

- *The EU's approach in Kenya and some common lessons on past and current EU programmes.*
- *Gave an outline of the current donor alignment and allocations to Kenya's Country Planning Programme priority areas.*
- *Highlighted some of the areas that the EU will look to support, including: food & nutrition, security and resilience needs of both individuals and communities; the support of a conducive environment for resilience building and aid delivery modalities and process.*
- *Reiterated the need for the process to be engaged. On the Government of Kenya side: the Medium Term Plan (MTP) should provide a detailed framework for alignment and National Drought Management Authority to coordinate. On donors side: The need to develop a common donors feed back to the MTP on possible funding coverage, needs to analyse capacity of absorption and possible mechanism of aid delivery*

Chris Porter - Department for International Development (DfID)

- DfIDs definition of resilience, framework, governing policies/DFID approach in Kenya– Support to the Government of Kenya (GOK) to end drought emergencies.
- DFIDs work with on Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), Nutrition ENSuRRRe, Education, Arid lands support through livelihood programming and the Regional contingency fund financing
- Highlights on what has changed: better alignment and coordination, multi-year financing, blurred financing. They are aiming for scalability, and are keen to recognize the linkages between programmes and the ...
- Obstacles, challenges, opportunities including underfunding, need for evidence, sustainability, need to get and implement, ensuring that greater linkages become real.

Aldo Biondi - European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO)

- ECHOs definition of resilience and conceptual framework: multi-sectoral approach, importance of aligning humanitarian action with development.
- Key question: Resilience of whom to what?
- Of whom? Pastoralists and ex Pastoralists, agro pastoralists and others, appreciating that the needs are differentiated.
- To what? To drought and drought resilient emergencies.
- Needed in Kenya: to find the right balance between growth model vs equity model; a better understanding of livelihood systems, and wealth groups and beneficiaries.
- Needed in Ethiopia: a joint programming effort between development and humanitarian actors working in the same geographic areas.

Peter Ewell – United States Agency for International Development USAID

- The Global Alliance - its focus, operating principles and areas of work.
- The work of USAID around resilience including support to various technical consortiums, the CGIAR centres, and the Country Programme Papers and the Regional Program Papers processes.
- Lessons learnt from USAID Past Programming
- Highlighted Areas of USAID’s Expanded Support – IGAD, National institutions, governance and co-ordination among others.
- Emphasis on the role of Knowledge Management and Learning Agenda

Important Take-Aways from Q & A- Session 1

1

The CPP should be the framework through which money is funded to governments. Aligning, however to the CPP does not mean donors are doing business differently. There must therefore be a deliberate push by donors, and government alike to do business differently.

2

Unless we develop a better understanding of trends and practices, we cannot move forward well. We need to then use this understanding to, with communities, shape our vision for the drylands. We need good evidence that will help us make better funding and programming decisions and choices.

3

While we must keep in mind the impact of climate change in the drylands, it is important that we FIRST address the structural issues and the development gaps that exist in many areas where food insecurity continues to persist.

4

In spite of the findings of a study that strongly argued that government capacity and absorption in the region is very low, therefore presenting a major problem in the push to build resilience, it was observed that with the exception of Somalia, all countries in the region have the capacity required to build a food secure region, and the concern is less about capacity and more the lack of political will. Capacity is not a problem in Ethiopia and in Kenya. There has over time been a significant push to build local capacity, including working with local non-state actors.

5

We need to move away from silo programming to programming with a holistic integrated approach.

SESSION 2 - PANEL DISCUSSION 2 : Key Issues For Resilience In The Dryland

Session facilitated by Omeno Suji – REGLAP

Resilience in the drylands - What needs to be done differently? - Vanessa Tilstone – REGLAP

- Putting communities and local government at the centre of development and humanitarian efforts:
 - a. Need to understand and respect communities
 - b. Need to build capacity
 - c. Start where communities are and plan with them. Need to focus on people rather than projects.
- Recognising and responding to different needs, capabilities and aspirations of different households and communities .
- Highlighted the importance of understanding and focusing on social and ecological systems rather than individual components and therefore the promotion of integrated multi-sectoral approaches across different sectors and scales.
- Reiterated the need to do things differently, but bear in mind the lessons already learnt - better knowledge management, and innovation based on learning.

Economic empowerment - How to empower communities through access to markets? Diane Johnson (Market Access Program)

- Societal needs and economic needs define markets - Spring Field Centre
- Why markets? Importance of markets
- Challenging the thinking that simply linking people to markets is important. It is much more complex, and there is a need to appreciate this complexity.
- What are the key constraints within the market system?

The importance of education for resilience -Jess Shaver - Save the Children

- Role of education within the resilience agenda.
- Emergency education is profoundly important particularly in areas that are prone to disaster.
- Education is key in protecting the most vulnerable.
- There is a need for better funding
- Education is the cornerstone of resilience

Important Take-Aways from Q & A - Session 2

1

Education: While it could be argued by some, that among pastoralists, education is viewed as a process that undermines resilience - as it may limit mobility, it is important with the community to determine how to best advance learning, bearing in mind that adaptability within the community is key.

2

Markets: To change market, we need to understand market. We need to rely on local actors and appreciate the iterative nature of markets. Understanding this will be key in knowing how we can work with markets to make a difference for the wealthy poor.

3

On community input and organisation: Why are we not doing it? What are the obstacles and how can we overcome them? We have a long way to go. The problem is our predisposition. If we are going to do things differently, we must think differently.

4

Do we really appreciate the alternative livelihoods for pastoralists? Are we talking to all the people? And understanding the differentiated needs? Livelihoods, rangelands, are changing. Communities must be at the fore in deciding how to work around those changes to build their resilience.

SESSION 3 - WORKING DISCUSSION – What does this means for current practice?

Facilitated by Sarah Gibbons, IUCN and Chair REGLAP Water for DRR Learning Group

In four groups group members tackled the following questions:

1. Practically what changes are you implementing to meet the resilience agenda?
2. What still needs to be addressed – within our own organisations and how could collective action support this?

Group 1 -Organisational structures and relationships - Chloe Stull-Lane , Mercy Corps

- Resilience needs to be cross cutting and not sector based.
- Coordination processes and platforms need to be better linked together – humanitarian and development.
- We need to discuss at different levels and promote coordination . Who would take leadership? Government? Donors? Partners? Where is the decision making in this collaboration?
- What do we do in these forums? Can we make decisions for collaborative efforts, be a platform beyond information sharing?
- How can leadership roles be changed to ensure that organizations, donors and government are meeting the demands and needs of communities?

Group 2 - Measuring Resilience - Catherine Fitzgibbon, Independent Consultant

- There is need for common indicators to measure resilience at different levels.
- Resilience a long term concept – it is about impact, and monitoring and evaluating. We need a longitudinal study and funding is necessary.
- We need to streamline data collection processes.
- Agency / sectoral perspectives need to be synthesized. Need to step outside traditional sectoral approaches to M&E.
- We should develop a minimum list of measurable indicators – per community, as well as coordinate on measurable goals amongst ourselves such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- The indicators we develop should not be static, they need to be based on a Table of Contents format as opposed to log frame format.
- We need to know how to respond to intersectoral / holistic concept of resilience e.g. governance conflict, adaptive capacity.
- Accountability needs teeth – We need to hold ourselves accountable to the learning and the best practice that is generated. There needs to be a consequence for not taking up the learning that is out there.
- The issue of trust lies at the core of the work we are doing.
- We need to ensure that local organisations are implementing within their communities more.

Group 3 - Putting communities first – Gerry McCarthy – People First Impact Methodology

- Need to leave bias against communities behind. We need to put communities first. Agencies underestimate the role of communities and overestimate their own roles. A light touch is necessary not to impact negatively on communities. We must listen to communities.
- Need more focused engagement with communities, seeking community solutions rather than driving solutions from outside. We must encourage community participation. This is will ensure ownership.
- We need to understand community dynamics, build rapport with them, use appropriate communication methods in our work and support community participation.
- Cross border equity is sometimes a challenge with different governments working under different policies.
- Community knowledge and sharing of information – community action planning works. There are many examples of successful interventions without donor funding.
- We need an integrated approach from the village up. Agencies need to decipher the issue of gatekeepers – take meetings to village level.
- We need accountability between agencies and the community – post project implementation – to encourage trust.
- The alignment of agency plans to community plans and the CCP s is vital.

Group 4 - Advocacy – Anne Mitaru, Save the Children / REGLAP

- Creating linkages between development and humanitarian advocacy is vital and must be heightened.
- We need to better share our regional plans on resilience to prevent overlapping.
- Funding on resilience – we all need to demand for increased transparency around funding especially with the IGAD process.
- We must seek to link advocacy to programming right from the outset of our projects and programs.
- Government engagement is very necessary. In the coming months we will need to link with local authorities at county level with the devolution of government happening in Kenya.
- We have a massive opportunity to input into EU EDF 2014-2019

- While we are advocating to donors and government we also need to link within our own agencies to influence programming and projects and stress that our interventions must put communities at the heart of our work, and must be based on good evidence.
- There is often a missing voice in our work as we advocate – the voice and face of local organisations, civil society organisations and community based organisations. We must work closer with these constituencies.

On the whole, a lot of what is raised is good practice.

Why are we not doing it? How can we do it better?

We have a serious accountability issues to the communities we work in, and there needs to be a consequence for not changing and not learning.

We need to hold ourselves and each other to account.

We need to address the way we work as a sector – interrogate the turnover of staff, lack of investment in Knowledge Management and Learning; the often demonstrated lack of trust between ourselves and communities and more...

Through technology, today communities have greater access to information, and are communicating more. They will demand and take action for change –

How can we, in the best way, be part of that change?

SESSION 4 - WRAP UP SESSION

Steven McDowell – FAO

- 1. Perhaps we need to stop trying to define resilience. There is a lot of literature. We need to translate what we know into activities and programming that recognises the range of different developmental pathways and show examples of good practice.**
2. Our discussion needs to translate into something different. Let us go out and see what works.
- 3. What have we learned – there are many definitions of resilience, it has challenged us in many different ways, there is no right and wrong, what we must however do is incorporate resilience into our organisations' ways of working.**
- 4. When we see drought we need to see development issues. When we see crisis we need to understand the strategic/underlying issues. We have consensus on the need to understand the connections between development and humanitarian work. Let us make it happen.**
- 5. Our Partnerships need to grow with government and with the private sector.**
6. Understanding the change in context, the weaknesses and opportunities of where we are working, is very important and must be done. While it is sometimes difficult to see our progress we need to determine if what we are doing has translated into something better?
- 7. Resilience has a lot more to do with people themselves and government. It is more than just us.** We are small but we are still useful. We will need to however, reassess our role and our impact. Are we prepared to be subsidiary to something? What can we contribute, how can we best support change, how can we BEST contribute to sustainable improvements?
- 8. Resilience is big and complicated. We are just simple parts of the puzzle. Innovative activities, individual impacts are good and they make a contribution. We need to attune our expectations to what we can do well. Keep focussed on long term objective – managing risk not just the crisis.**