Understanding Community Perceptions of Resilience

DISCUSSIONS WITH COMMUNITIES FROM
CRS DISASTER RISK REDUCTION PROJECTS

CRS
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Catholic Relief Services
is the official international relief and development agency of the United States Catholic community. Through development projects in fields such as education, peace and justice, agriculture, microfinance, health, and HIV and AIDS, CRS works to uphold human dignity and promote better standards of living. CRS works in 99 countries around the world and, since 1943, has provided emergency relief in the wake of natural and human-made disasters.

Cover photo: Women in India show their emergency evacuation kits to visitors. Photo: Amy Hilleboe/CRS

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building resilience is key to Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) work as it upholds its mission to promote integral human development by responding to emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and just societies. There are many perspectives being offered on resilience, as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors recognize that people's ability to better withstand and recover from disasters is critical to sustaining development. NGOs, donors and the international development and humanitarian response community are working to define resilience in their own terms. CRS defines resilience as "the capacity of people, communities and institutions to advance integral human development in the face of shocks, cycles and trends"[1].

Resilience is best defined by vulnerable communities themselves. What vulnerable people believe contributes most to their resilience capacity is critical to current discussions on resilience. Donors and NGOs may have their own concise definition of the term but an understanding of what it actually means to people seeking to build their own resilience is vital to designing effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience initiatives in development, disaster response and disaster recovery programs.

Resilience is best defined by vulnerable communities *themselves*. What vulnerable people believe contributes most to their resilience capacity is critical to current discussions on resilience

By viewing development and humanitarian relief projects through a "resilience" lens, CRS seeks to strengthen resilience to shocks whereby people and systems mitigate, adapt to, and are prepared to respond to, and recover from, shocks quickly. In 2013, CRS had an opportunity to listen to a sample of community members who had participated in DRR projects, express what project components they felt contributed most to their resilience.

Under a three-year private foundation grant, entitled "Response, Resilience, and Recovery" (R3), CRS is supporting rapid responses to low-attention disasters and disaster risk reduction projects to address natural disasters in CRS's Latin America and the Caribbean (LACRO), and East and South Asia (ESA) regions. The grant also includes a focus on learning to improve program design and implementation for emergency response and disaster risk reduction.

In 2013, the first year of the R3 grant, CRS undertook a post-project review involving 12 communities that had engaged in CRS-supported community-based disaster risk reduction programs and emergency recovery projects, to understand how these communities perceive their resilience. The period since the projects had been carried out ranged from several months to 12 years. The results of the review will help inform the design and implementation of R3 grant projects and other CRS DRR/resilience projects, to better meet the needs of the people CRS serves.

1. CRS working paper on resilience, 2013 draft

Inputs that required funding beyond the capabilities of the communities were ranked as essential *but* as activities that would not likely continue after a project had ended

The purpose of the review was to deepen CRS' understanding of:

1. Which project activities and practices communities believed contributed most significantly to strengthening their resilience and which did not.
2. Whether the community continued to engage in project-promoted activities after a project had ended, and why.
3. What project activities were abandoned after a project had ended and why.
4. How local government representatives perceived the resilience of the community after a project had ended.

Key findings from community interviews on their resilience and on project-supported activities showed that:

1. Communities' increased ability to understand disaster risks facing them, and to better utilize their capacities to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to, disasters was very important to them.
2. Community organization was rated highly because of its contribution to increased resilience.
3. It was significant when a government recognized a community's DRR work, not necessarily to provide input, but so that community disaster-management task forces and committees felt validated during disaster responses that occurred subsequent to a project.
4. Capacity-strengthening was well-regarded as an important project activity to reduce risks to disasters.
5. Disaster preparedness and response planning, especially in areas where rapid-onset disasters are frequent, were ranked as very important.
6. Preparedness measures such as early warning systems, protection of assets, and strengthening of livelihoods before disasters and in recovery efforts, were seen as vital DRR measures.
7. Linking community DRR plans and activities with local government actors and their DRR plans contributed to sustained actions post project.
8. Inputs that required funding beyond the capabilities of the communities—such as those for the construction of weather-resilient housing and raised hand pumps—were ranked as essential but as activities that would not likely continue after a project had ended due to people's inability to access funding or materials.
9. Activities that are out of the norm of community behavior—such as storing fodder on raised platforms rather than on elevated areas of land—were not successful.
10. Several government representatives interviewed said that it was very difficult for them to visit all of the communities as they did not have the resources nor the transport to provide DRR support.

II. REVIEW BACKGROUND

Final evaluations are typically conducted on projects just before a project ends. Time and funding constraints limit post-project follow-up, and rarely is there an occasion to revisit communities to learn what had happened after a project ended. In disaster-prone areas, NGOs such as CRS—which promote community-based disaster risk reduction measures and work to build community skills to continue these practices—generally have very limited opportunities to understand from community members why they maintained some practices after project closure, or why and how they or neighboring communities may initiate new DRR activities without project support.

Understanding what vulnerable communities perceive as having contributed to their long-term resilience will help CRS to understand what is most important to communities to build and retain their resilience capacity. This in turn will inform the design and implementation of DRR projects for improved long-term impacts.

Understanding what vulnerable communities perceive as contributing to their long-term resilience will help CRS to understand what is most important to communities to retain their resilience capacity

Criteria for projects

Given the focus of the R3 grant on disaster-prone areas of Latin America and the Caribbean, and East and South Asia, all projects included in the review were implemented in these two CRS regions. In addition, CRS agreed that it would be most useful to revisit projects that had ended at least two years prior to the review, as this was deemed sufficient time to have elapsed in order to get a genuine measure of which practices communities and individual households had determined were worth continuing, and why. Nevertheless, two projects in Latin America that ended more recently were also included because of their focus on important perspectives the information would provide given their respective focuses on an integrated approach to increasing resilience in areas highly vulnerable to multiple hazards in four countries in Central America, and engaging youth in DRR projects.

Local villagers look on as CRS beneficiary Suryakanta Jena demonstrates a conch shell warning system he was trained to use through a CRS Community-Based Disaster Preparedness pilot. Photo: David Snyder

CRS selected seven projects for inclusion in the review: three from Central America, and four from East and South Asia

As DRR and emergency recovery projects are frequently supported by emergency funds and thus often have shorter funding cycles than many development projects, CRS did not establish a project-selection criterion related to project duration, though one requirement was that the project must have included activities that were intended to reduce risks to disasters in the long term. The full criteria for the projects and the communities selected for the review were:

1. The project must have been a community-based/community-led initiative.
2. The community participated in a CRS-funded community-based DRR project that was carried out between 2001 and 2011 (with the two exceptions noted previously).
3. At least 30 families in the community must have participated in the project (the number of families in a target community can vary considerably across the two regions).
4. Community selection included those where the project had been deemed a success as well as those where there were significant challenges/the project was generally considered unsuccessful.
5. Both stand-alone DRR initiatives, and development or emergency recovery projects with DRR components, were eligible.
6. The project addressed one or multiple *natural* hazards.
7. The community had not engaged in a similar review in the past.
8. No more than one community per region that had been previously highlighted through frequent visits and/or documentation could be included. This was to encourage a focus on communities that had received less attention, and to promote learning from a wide range of projects.

Overview of communities

CRS selected seven projects for inclusion in the review: three from Central America, and four from East and South Asia. Given the time and budget available, and the scope of the review, not all communities in each of the seven projects were included in the interviews. The consultants were accompanied by CRS partners and staff forming Field Facilitation Teams (FFTs). The FFT drew, from a representative sample, communities that faced the same threats and lived in similar conditions as the wider project target populations. A total of 12 communities participated in the discussions to provide an indication of how communities perceive their resilience to disasters and to direct CRS's attention to areas where further learning would be important. (See Pages 6 and 7 for a comparative overview of the projects selected for review and Annex A for a brief description of the projects' goals and objectives.)

PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW

HAZARDS

FLOOD DROUGHT LANDSLIDE EARTHQUAKE CYCLONE/ HURRICANE

BUDGET

$ = $500,000

INTERVIEWEES

MEN WOMEN

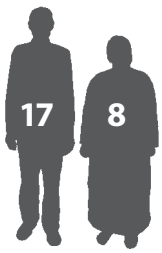
GUATEMALA

Community Shexubel
Project Agriculture for Basic Needs (A4N) and Mi Cuenca (Regional project also implemented in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua
Type Improved agricultural production and Integrated Water Resource Management development projects with solid community-based DRR components

Community disaster-management committees and Water Commissions were groups that were created and/ or strengthened by the project, and made us more united.

Lack of secure livelihoods is our biggest impediment to increased resilience.

A weakness was lack of women's participation in the community disaster-management committee.



SHEXUBEL: 25

DONOR: HOWARD G. BUFFETT FOUNDATION

$$$$$$$ $3,662,550 (A4N Guatemala)

$$ $1,000,001 (Mi Cuenca Guatemala)

A4N: 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

Mi Cuenca: 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

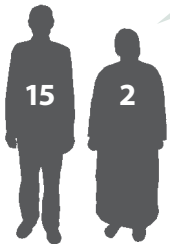
EL SALVADOR

Community
Santiago de Chile
Project Central American Mitigation Initiative (CAMI) Post-Hurricane Mitch. Also implemented in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua
Type Regional-level community-based DRR

The community disaster-management committee had its identity strengthened and validated by having to step up and lead the response at the community level.

Mitigation works can make the difference between life and death.

It is very important to have a safe place, especially for people who live in high-risk areas.



SANTIAGO DE CHILE: 17

DONOR: UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

$ $306,562 (El Salvador)

2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011

EL SALVADOR

Community La Galera
Project Youth-Led Community DRR in the Acahuapa River Sub-Watershed of San Vicente
Type Community-based DRR

A trained and active community disaster-management committee is vital for coordinating, organizing and seeking out partnerships.

We would like to see continued strengthening of the community disaster-management committees and increase community awareness in disaster risk reduction.

LA GALERA: 13

DONOR: UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA) ($257,133)

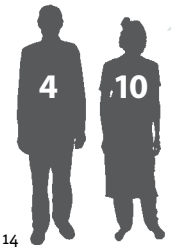
$ $273,694

2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

INDONESIA

Community Riangrita Village, in East Flores
Project East Flores Food Security Project
Type Food security development project with solid community-based DRR



RIANGRITA VILLAGE: 14

Partnering closely with local government agencies through joint planning and monitoring exercises helped build communication and rapport between the communities and the government.

Reduction in drought-related crop losses due to the adoption of more appropriate and locally suitable crops, varieties and farming practices have made us more resilient to shocks.

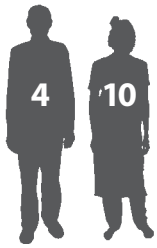
DONOR: AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE (AUSAID)

$235,157

2003 2004 2005 2006 **2007** **2008** **2009** 2010 2011 2012 2013

INDONESIA

Community Orong Kopang sub-village and Medana village
Project Emergency Response/DRR Program in Indonesia
Type Community-based DRR



ORONG KOPANG SUB-VILLAGE AND MEDANA VILLAGE: 14

The introduction and promotion of DRR activities, particularly tree planting to reduce flooding and landslides, was important,

It would have been better if the disaster risk management group was also trained in how to manage and organize a group (including in the administration and documentation of group and community activities).

DONOR: CRS PRIVATE FUNDS

$$$$$$$

$3,496,158

2003 2004 2005 2006 **2007** **2008** 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

INDIA

Community Kuruki and Tentoi, in Odisha
Project Biparjuya Prastuti: Community-based Disaster Preparedness in Coastal Odisha, India
Type Community-based DRR

KURUKI: 8

TENTOI: 11

We are confident that we can handle relief materials in a better way after the project. We can start a free kitchen immediately using our own resources.

There should be periodic meetings and follow up by NGOs

Fodder storage on raised platforms at the community level did not work as it was not a traditional practice familiar to the community.

DONOR: DISASTER PREPAREDNESS EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S HUMANITARIAN AID AND CIVIL PROTECTION DIRECTORATE GENERAL (DIPECHO)

$

€351,038

2005 2006 **2007** **2008** 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

BANGLADESH

Community Mithagonj and Khaprabhanga, in Barishal. Kanai Nagar and Kainmary, in Khluna
Project Shelter Assistance to Cyclone Sidr-Affected Communities in Bangladesh
Type Community-based disaster response and DRR

MITHAGONJ: 13 KHAPRABHANGA:8 KAINMARY 17 KANAI NAGAR 16

The early warning system we established worked in a subsequent cyclone.

Training helped villagers to become alert.

People were ready with boats as a standby evacuation plan in a subsequent flood.

DONOR: OFDA, CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS, CRS PRIVATE FUNDS

$$$$$

$2,646,283

2007 **2008** 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

III. METHODOLOGY

CRS developed a guide for the community interviews, to standardize and facilitate the process in the two regions and 12 communities. The initial plan was for CRS and partners to carry out the discussions with the communities. However, given the scope of the study, the logistics involved in visiting the communities, and the time required to gather the data, CRS decided to hire two consultants to manage the field study: one led data collection in India and Bangladesh, and the other that in Guatemala and El Salvador. The consultants were selected based on their skills for the task and their language capacities, as it was determined that it would be best to conduct the interviews in local languages and not to have simultaneous translations of the discussions, to reduce the risk of translation errors. In Indonesia, a CRS staff member led the interview process.

The consultants and the Field Facilitation Teams, were responsible for refining the questionnaire to adjust it to the local context, translate the questions from English into local languages in preparation for discussions with community members, and planning and coordinating the FFT visits. Focus group discussions were the primary method used for conducting interviews with community groups, along with some key informant interviews. The FFTs organized separate focus groups with women and men to encourage all participants to express their opinions openly. Responses from these were later presented to all participants in each respective community for triangulation and to share what the other groups had said during the interviews.

To stimulate their recollections, work with the communities began with a reflection of what activities had taken place during the project, followed by a ranking by community members of which project interventions were most useful for increasing their resilience, and which least useful. After the ranking exercise, the Field Facilitation Teams prompted the focus groups to articulate why they felt certain activities were useful and others less so, to better understand what was most important to them regarding the building of their resilience. Timeline methodology was also used to enable the community to plot events and discuss practices and activities that continued after a project ended.

Led by the consultants, after visiting and interviewing the communities, the FFTs met at the end of the day to review the input received that day to ensure that all the information community members had provided was captured, that the information documented matched what the team had heard from the community members, and to discuss the findings.

The Field Facilitation Teams organized separate focus groups with women and men to encourage all participants to express their opinions openly

Because three people led the data-collection process, there were different approaches to the participatory methodology used

Limitations

Difficulties in drawing direct comparisons between diverse projects

Despite the development of interview guidance, and because three people had led the data-collection process, there were different approaches to the participatory methodology used. DRR and emergency recovery projects are wide-ranging, given the multitude of hazards the projects are designed to address and the diversity of communities engaged in projects across regions and countries, and in urban, peri-urban and rural settings. This makes it challenging to draw direct comparisons between projects since the circumstances for each project and each community vary greatly—from the types of hazards communities face, to their livelihoods, their access to services, the length and scope of the project, donor parameters, etc. The one thing all projects in the study had in common was that they were highly participatory, engaging a community-based approach to DRR.

Lack of consistency

The objective was to learn more about how community members perceived what it meant for them to be resilient. For this reason, CRS used participatory exercises to facilitate community members' ranking of the level of importance of certain DRR activities and practices which community members had adopted during the project. The Field Facilitation Teams in Central America utilized several methodologies *in addition to* the ranking and timeline approaches suggested in the Field Facilitation Team Guidance (Annex B), including force field analysis, spider webs, Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat analyses and thermometer measurements, as tools to capture information from the community. These various additional approaches resulted in important data but, as they had not been used consistently across the reviews of all projects, complicated the compilation of the data for review.

A positive unanticipated outcome of the use of a variety of participatory tools was that it succeeded in encouraging the uptake of new skills by CRS staff

A positive unanticipated outcome of the use of a variety of participatory tools was that it succeeded in encouraging the uptake of new skills by CRS staff through a demonstration of useful new tools, and immediately illustrated their application. CRS has included them in the R3 projects learning tool, and staff from Central America have incorporated them into some of the new R3 projects.

For future studies, it would be important to have one consultant carry out the entire process to ensure consistency. It was helpful that the consultants leading the data-collection process spoke the languages of the communities where they conducted the interviews. However, uniformity in the data collection and reporting is very important for the assessment of information. If simultaneous translation is needed in future efforts, this should be included in the plan and competent translators hired.

Influencing perceptions through an initial reflection of past project activities

Another limitation may have been beginning the community discussions with a reflection of past DRR project activities. This was done to remind people of a project—which in some cases had taken place some years previously—and to establish common ground for people to express their ideas. However, this approach may have inadvertently biased the community towards project-related activities that enhanced resilience, and may have resulted in the communities' thoughts on non-project practices being left undiscussed and unrecorded.

Beginning the community discussions with a reflection of past DRR project activities may have inadvertently biased the community towards project-related activities that enhanced resilience

For example, in Guatemala and El Salvador, the focus groups cited environmental protection practices as important to reducing risks to disasters. The shocks that communities faced in these areas include drought/flood cycles, tropical storms, high levels of environmental degradation and increasing climate variability, and addressing these hazards had been a central part of the project strategies in these communities. Thus the discussion that ensued during the review tended to be slanted towards these strategies included in the projects.

Meanwhile, environmental protection practices were *not* mentioned by the communities interviewed in India, Bangladesh or Indonesia. Issues related to environmental management had not been specifically included in the strategy of any East and South Asia projects in the study. This is not to say that environmental concerns were not seen by the people in India, Bangladesh and Indonesia as important to resilience, but that, during the discussions, there may have been a bias toward specific project-related activities because the opening introduction had inadvertently prompted the discussion in that direction.

That people's perceptions of resilience, as recorded in the review discussions, tended to be predisposed towards project interventions may have been as a result of the "prompting" during the introductory session reminding people of the project. Yet, it could be argued that these community-based projects were developed based on the community's own assessment of the hazards it faced, its capacities to cope and vulnerabilities to disaster. Thus, project activities had been designed to respond to the needs as expressed by the community and the participatory nature of the project interventions would have incorporated the community's own sense of its resilience, or lack thereof. Therefore, any "bias" towards project-based initiatives recorded in the review may well have been apparent even without the "influence" of the introductory session.

Nevertheless, the possibility that the community's response may have been inadvertently biased by the introductory reflection session means that an opportunity to get a wider view of the community's sense of its own resilience may have been lost. Thus, future reviews might consider a broader

Future discussions with communities should avoid having key implementers present to ensure that responses can be candid

approach to encourage a wider range of responses. This approach would carry out a review of community perceptions of resilience without first discussing the project in detail in the introductory meeting, thus removing any possibility of participants being inadvertently "prompted" by the preceding discussion. This might leave the question of what contributes to resilience capacities more open and reduce bias.

Makeup of the Field Facilitation Teams potentially influenced discussions

In some of the discussions with communities in Bangladesh, the implementing partner was part of the Field Facilitation Team and their presence might have biased the responses towards what the community believed would make a good impression on the partner representatives. Future discussions with communities should avoid having key implementers present to ensure that responses can be candid.

CRS staff interview communities in India for the resilience review.

IV. FINDINGS

Overall, interviewees expressed that resilience was a composite of various actions and practices at the community and household levels, with both seen as important. However, since the DRR projects included in the review were community-based initiatives, many of the most important activities and practices mentioned by the focus groups were primarily community-level in nature, with only limited mention of preparedness measures undertaken by households. Community responses indicated that DRR activities/practices were increased through hardware improvements, such as infrastructure and community works, as well as software, such as building community cohesion through disaster-management planning, preparedness training and ensuring that mitigation and response measures were in place.

Resilience was viewed by communities as a composite of various actions and practices at the community and household levels, with both seen as important

Highly visible measures to reduce risks to disasters—such as elevated hand pumps, improved housing, reinforced embankments and clearing refuse from drainage systems—were noted as very important. Respondents acknowledged that these improvements were very tangible and, therefore, quickly recognized by community members and the government as important DRR interventions.

Ranking of activities during focus group discussions showed that communities rated the following as very important to their ability to better withstand the impacts of disasters. Skills and abilities rated highly by both regions regardless of the type of hazard(s) communities faced (in order of importance):

1. Enhanced knowledge and skills related to preparedness and measures to mitigate disaster risks (training for mitigation, preparedness and response was highlighted in all community responses).
2. A greater understanding of their risks, capacities and vulnerabilities, gained through various methods of community-based capacity and vulnerability analyses.
3. Stronger community organization, coordination and collaborative disaster-management planning.
4. Knowing DRR roles and responsibilities within the community and in coordination with government, to be able to respond more efficiently to disasters that occurred subsequent to the project.
5. Livelihood security activities—such as livelihood diversification, livestock and assets protection—before and during disasters and in recovery efforts, ranked especially high in Bangladesh and India.
6. Collective marketing of agricultural products and greater income as a result of improved agricultural practices and marketing plans (in Indonesia where this was part of the project).
7. Improved environmental conservation practices and agricultural production before and during disaster recovery (primarily in Guatemala and El Salvador).
8. Water conservation and water management (in Guatemala and El Salvador).

A community risk map developed by community members to mark evacuation routes, high and low areas, and homes that house people with special needs, such as the elderly, the disabled, and young children. Photo: Snigdha Chakraborty

Aspects cited as most useful were those that required reasonable/ few resources (time and money) from the communities and households and provided a discernible gain for household or community disaster preparedness

Communities (in both regions) that faced rapid-onset disasters such as tropical storms, heavy rains that resulted in flooding and landslides, etc. expressed that the following were significant to their increased resilience (in order of importance):

1. Community readiness for response (community organization, establishing DRR task forces and committees; training in search-and-rescue, first aid, and early assessment; identification of the most vulnerable who need assistance; establishing grain banks as food reserves, cattle vaccination in India and Bangladesh, etc.)
2. Early warning systems (EWS) and early response plans both at the community and family level (evacuation routes and sites; protecting valuables, documents and jewelry; household level emergency evacuation kits, etc.).
3. Mitigation efforts to strengthen household and communal infrastructure to withstand shocks (reinforced housing; protected water sources and latrines; roads and bridges; reinforced embankments; tree planting; keeping drainage systems clear; refuse management).
4. Tools such as shovels and wheelbarrows for use in mitigation activities and recovery efforts.
5. Stockpiling of supplies (food, grain, water, fuel) to access during disasters.

General findings

Aspects cited as most useful across all projects were those that required reasonable/few resources (time and money) from the communities and households and provided a discernible gain for household or community disaster preparedness. In Bangladesh and India, communities said activities that were "low or no cost techniques that are easily adopted and have an impact on daily life" were especially important and most likely to continue. These communities were engaged in projects with shelter and latrine construction and said that they would not have been able to initiate these without external support nor continue with activities that required hardware inputs once a project had ended.

Identification of the most vulnerable who need assistance during disasters was one of the key elements communities identified as significant to their resilience

The formation of disaster-management committees, which often continued to meet on an ad-hoc basis following the cessation of project support, as well as training and knowledge transmitted to community and committee members during the project, were cited as positive across the communities interviewed. Many said they felt empowered by the DRR knowledge and systems they learned through the project and that a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities of community committees and the government was very valuable. In one of the communities in Central America, accepting the responsibility that the community should reduce its disaster risks with its own resources was

a very important realization for community members, especially women. Most of the communities had not understood DRR and emergency response systems and structures in their community and government roles and responsibilities prior to project interventions.

The communities interviewed in Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia faced frequent rapid-onset disasters. There was emphasis in the focus groups on the importance of early warning systems, early action and planning to safeguard livestock and assets from floods and tropical storms (particularly in India and Bangladesh). In Indonesia, the communities gave credit to agricultural diversification and production, and the collective marketing schemes, included in the project, for increasing their resilience by strengthening their livelihoods, especially important when dealing with increased drought conditions.

In Indonesia, the communities gave credit to agricultural diversification and production, and the collective marketing schemes, included in the project, for increasing their resilience

Hazard type	Important DRR activity/practices cited by the communities
Floods and tropical storms	• Reinforced housing to reduce flood damage • Elevated hand pumps and raised latrines accessible during flooding • Identification of evacuation routes and established evacuation sites • Early warning systems and early action • Training in search-and-rescue and basic equipment • Protection of personal property and livelihood assets, family evacuation kits, protection of important documents, livestock vaccination • Stockpiling of food supplies
Drought	• Adoption of drought-tolerant crops • Diversification of livelihoods • Increasing marketing skills
Earthquakes	• Community and government coordination for emergency response • Training on what to do during an earthquake • Training for rapid response • Keeping the community informed • Reconstruction of homes
All natural hazards	• Knowledge of disaster risks and capacity awareness • Formation of disaster-management committees • Community planning and coordination within the community and with the government • Knowing community members' and government roles and responsibilities in disaster management and disaster response

Their focus was clearly on immediate life-saving interventions, such as search-and-rescue

Even though water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and livelihoods were noted as very important activities in Bangladesh and India, respondents reported that WASH and livelihoods activities were less useful as pre-disaster DRR initiatives as they did not focus on immediate life-saving needs, such as early warning, evacuation, search-and-rescue, and first aid. They felt that livelihoods and WASH practices would naturally follow once lifesaving efforts were in place. Their focus was clearly on immediate life-saving interventions, such as search-and-rescue, rather than critical interventions such as WASH that must be in place early on in a disaster response to save lives and livelihoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the greatest extent possible, infrastructure inputs should use local, appropriate materials that are low-cost and easily maintained. The government should be engaged in discussions on the design of these inputs and a cost/benefit analysis might be carried out to demonstrate the value of investing in disaster-resilient inputs, such as reinforced housing and elevated hand pumps, in flood prone areas to reduce disaster relief needs and costs.

Although it would be expected that discussions about a particular project would drive thoughts and that a recent or current disaster would be at the center of people's concerns, it is very important that a thorough multi-hazard assessment be carried out in DRR and resilience projects to fully understand the dimensions of the hazards and people's capacities and vulnerabilities, in order to design a project that will increase resilience in the long term, regardless of the type of disaster that may occur.

*Additionally, it would be interesting to go further to study communities that **have not** participated in a DRR or resilience project to see what their perceptions of resilience are compared to communities that **have** been part of a project.*

The importance of a multi-sector emergency response that includes such things as water, sanitation and hygiene, should be discussed with the community during the development of their disaster-management plan to be sure that people know the importance of WASH practices during an emergency and adopt sound practices before a disaster strikes.

It is very important that a thorough multi-hazard assessment be carried out in DRR and resilience projects to fully understand the dimensions of the hazards and people's capacities and vulnerabilities

Women's and men's perceptions of resilience

Women interviewed in the communities in Central America placed greater value on building community cohesion and knowing roles and responsibilities in DRR practices, than on the hardware components of the project. Women expressed that their idea of resilience was more in terms of a set of actions related to preparedness and prevention that the community undertakes with its own resources before a disaster; communication, coordination and activities that contribute to the well being of the community. One of the women's focus groups in Guatemala noted that there were fewer women than men trained in the community committees, which they felt was a missed opportunity.

In the interviews in India and Bangladesh, women were more focused on such subjects as the availability of quality drinking water during disasters, medicine for children, evacuation routes and safe havens; generally, those elements that fall within their gender role responsibilities to meet the day-to-day needs of the family. In Indonesia, some women from the communities remarked that they were not aware of what the project involved. CRS should emphasize the importance of engaging more women in future DRR projects.

In both regions, men cited (more frequently than women) the hardware aspects of resilience such as infrastructure and tangible response measures that bring about greater physical/spatial security as the most important aspects in DRR projects. In Bangladesh and India, the men's responses were centered primarily on visible infrastructure such as improved shelter, strengthened embankments, roads and bridges. Men noted the importance of reinforced housing, evacuation shelters, and safe places for animals during disaster. They also highlighted the importance of their ability to conduct assessments, and to take a key role in the requesting of disaster response assistance.

In the Central America interviews, questions posed to the focus groups asked what their five priority DRR actions were before, during and after a disaster. The men's focus groups, in several interviews, prioritized response and recovery activities; evacuation, quantification of damage, coordination with outside assistance, and housing reconstruction, etc. over preparedness and coping measures. Their initial focus was on activities that are conducted during and, to a lesser degree, after a disaster and much less on mitigation and preparedness.

Overall, for both women and men in the two regions, there was a strong correlation between improvements in the physical infrastructure of the community and their increased sense of security, though men placed more importance on visible, physical infrastructure than women did.

Gender balance

In the Guatemala community, a women's focus group cited pre-disaster activities such as environmental management and identification of safe havens as very important. When the women's input was shared with the men's focus groups, the men then also sited these as activities important for increasing resilience, even though these were not initially mentioned in the men's focus groups.

Though it is important to have separate focus groups for women and men, it is important to encourage open discussion. Women's and men's perspectives are complementary, and it is thus critical to offer spaces for both men and women to openly participate together in planning, training, monitoring, and evaluation.

Women were focused on medical needs for children, evacuation routes, safe havens, and the availability of quality drinking water; things that impact their daily lives

Men highlighted the importance of their ability to conduct assessments, and to take a key role in the requesting of disaster response assistance

Women in both regions cited changes in knowledge and attitudes, community cohesion and organization, coordination, communication, and the well being of the community and their families as most important components of the projects more frequently than men's responses.

In most of the communities, both women and men felt that the activities that continued, or were most likely to continue, were related to livelihoods and increased income; things that are critical to a family in non-disaster periods and that would be even more important to reducing disaster risks, loss of assets, during disaster preparedness and recovery.

Women expressed that their idea of resilience was more in terms of a set of actions related to preparedness and prevention that the community undertakes with its own resources before a disaster; communication, coordination and activities that contribute to the wellbeing of the community.

A community-built piping system underwritten and supervised by the MiCuenca project. In the resilience review, men cited such infrastructure as among the most vital aspects of DRR projects. Photo: Karen Kasmauski

Household- and community-level activities

Across all 12 communities in the review, establishing and training community task forces and committees was cited as *the*, or *one of the*, most useful outcomes of a project. In Central America, focus groups placed more emphasis on community-level activities and much less on those at the household level. Project participants in Bangladesh and India said that the development and strengthening of community committees was a key component of the project but felt that household-level activities were more likely to continue after the project end.

Establishing and training community task forces and committees was cited as *the*, or *one of the*, most useful outcomes of a project

Importance of low-input, high-impact activities

Project participants in Bangladesh and India felt that household-level activities were more likely to continue after the project end than community initiatives because families could take on the activities they preferred and do what they could by themselves, rather than to trying to gain commitment and contributions from the wider group.

Low-input, highly efficient efforts were more likely to continue after the projects ended, given that these communities did not have extra time, money or resources to devote to non-essential activities.

The formation and training of community-level DRR task forces and committees were cited as very important by all communities and thus the importance of establishing clear criteria for the selection of community volunteers to those task forces and committees was cited as imperative. Turnover among committee members was related to out migration, voluntary withdrawal from the group and, in the case of Guatemala, withdrawal due to legal restrictions on the length of tenure allowed for serving on community committees.

In both regions, there was a notable focus on the perception of resilience as being prepared; early warning, early action and the ability to recover from a disaster quickly. All communities recognized the importance of taking care of people – especially those more vulnerable – during an emergency and the importance of pre-disaster community organization, knowing roles and responsibilities and having a plan, as significant in building their resilience capacities.

Communities that had experienced a disaster after a project ended said that the following practices learned through the project were utilized:

High turnover of committee members

High turnover of committee/task force members was seen as disruptive and contributed to a lack of momentum of the activities of these committees/task forces during and after projects ended. It is important that committee/task force volunteers understand the level of effort required to be able to fully commit to the tasks during the project. (See recommendation on Page 20)

There was a notable focus on the perception of resilience as being prepared; early warning, early action and the ability to recover from a disaster quickly

1. Early warning systems.
2. Greater awareness of the impending disaster (in one case, a cyclone) allowing families to react quickly and efficiently.
3. Evacuation kits including ways to protect documents and household relief supplies.
4. Rapid assessment.
5. DRR planning and coordination within the community and with the government expedited the response.
6. In El Salvador, where the community experienced a serious flood event after a project, the community coordination and protection committee took the initiative to carry out an assessment of the emergency response to discuss what went well and what they wanted to improve in future responses.
7. Activities and practices that interviewees said they used during an emergency response in communities where a disaster occurred subsequent to project implementation:

Household level		Community level	
Central America	**East and South Asia**	**Central America**	**East and South Asia**
• Family gardens provided food • Looking out for one another, attending to the most vulnerable first • Risk awareness • Response plans: evacuation routes and sites	• Evacuation routes and safe havens • Use of family DRR kits • Accessing stockpiled food, grain • Cash savings • Reinforced housing for reduced damage • Water harvesting • WASH practices • Maintenance of low-cost latrines • Food processing to increase food options (Indonesia-specific) • Improved farming techniques reduced losses	• Community groups: water committees, women's savings groups • Water system maintenance • Drainage system maintenance • Coordination, organization and empowerment • Disaster response preparedness on the part of the community disaster-management committee	• Early warning • Cattle vaccination • Learning from training • Marketing groups • Use and maintenance of first aid kits

RECOMMENDATIONS

Projects should ensure that community members, task forces and committees agree on the level of effort required to serve the communities in the DRR plan so that those accepting the responsibility to serve on task forces and committees understand and agree to their commitment to the tasks required during the project. Further, meetings and responsibilities should take into account the time people can dedicate and the times of the meetings to encourage a wide range of representation in the groups.

If it is known that task forces and committees will engage after the project ends, this should be discussed during the project so that people are clear on their commitments. If there are government restrictions on the length of time one may serve on community committees, planning for a change in committee representation would need to be taken into account in the early stages of a project. In East and South Asia, the FFT noted that, in some cases, it seemed that the task forces tended to be made up of people who had time to dedicate to the activities, so that perhaps the most vulnerable were not necessarily represented. Deliberate planning needs to take place to ensure that the meeting times and level of effort accommodate inclusion of the most vulnerable so that they are represented in task forces and committees.

The ability of families and communities to dedicate time and resources to DRR activities after a project ends must be discussed with the community at the beginning of the project with subsequent plans incorporated into the project to encourage continued practices.

Clarifying community expectations for DRR activities to carry on after a project ends is critical to ensuring that project training and support contributes to strengthened capacities in the long run, including possible future government support. Sustainability in DRR projects is different from development projects in that the former generally focus on hazards and, often, establishing and training task forces such as search-and-rescue and rapid assessment activities that would only be used in a disaster event, while the latter focuses on the longer term, increasingly with a focus on mitigating the impacts of disaster events. If a hazard does not occur soon after the project ends, it is still important to know what makes a community feel resilient in the long run and incorporate those practices into the project.

In East and South Asia, in some cases it seemed that the task forces tended to be made up of people who had time to dedicate to the activities so perhaps the most vulnerable were not represented

Deliberate planning needs to take place to ensure that the meeting times and level of effort accommodate inclusion of the most vulnerable so that they are represented in task forces and committees

Government links vital

In both regions, communities felt that linkages to government contributed to continued committee activities and a stronger sense of resilience. In addition, recognition by the government of community DRR committees and activities was seen as extremely important to establishing and maintaining activities. One community in LACRO said government recognition of their work during a disaster response to Tropical Storm Ida validated the disaster committee's existence. With this in mind, the visibility of community DRR actions should be considered in project design as higher-visibility activities help reinforce the value of a project to communities and government.

Community and external support

In Central America, in addition to the importance communities placed on strengthening or developing community disaster-management committees, there were references to an enhanced sense of community responsibility to prepare for and respond to disasters as a result of the project. Those communities viewed resilience as related to a community's ability to become and remain organized and coordinated before an emergency. However, some people directly involved in community risk reduction activities, e.g. members of disaster-management committees, who were aware of the DRR needs, expressed that resilience should be built with outside support, especially infrastructure inputs. Still, the focus groups in Guatemala said they perceived resilience as something largely undertaken with and by the community (i.e., asset-based, using its own resources).

This wasn't expressed in the same way by the communities in East and South Asia. Despite the focus on the usefulness of community committees and the increased sense of responsibility, many respondents in Bangladesh said that the local implementing partner should return to reinstate meetings and support community committees, suggesting that the role of the community committees wasn't seen as purely the responsibility of the community by all, that some community members believed that external assistance was needed to continue activities. They said that continued visits by the implementing partner after the project had ended would have motivated them to continue some aspects of the project. They felt that having to uphold their DRR commitments to external actors would motivate them to be active and accountable. Several communities in both ESA and LACRO expressed an interest in continued training by NGOs.

In those interviews, local implementing partner staff had participated in the FFT so focus groups may have felt compelled to present what they felt was important for the implementing partner representatives to hear: that their assistance was, and continued to be, essential. There was significant oversight of the project by the implementing partners as they worked to ensure that housing reconstruction was properly done and that the techniques embraced "building back better" principles, according to the design. This may have created expectations within the community for a continued high frequency of visits even after the project ended. This perspective (of continued involvment by the partner) may also be related to the difference in the review methodologies used in the two regions.

In projects that included strategies to facilitate communities forming linkages with government regarding their disaster-management plans and activities, this clearly helped reinforce the continuation of DRR practices. It was also noted by several communities that highly visible outputs such as elevated hand pumps, improved housing, etc. were important because these

were very visible and thus were easily recognized by the government and community members as DRR activities that had been successfully completed.

Two technical units created in the A4N and Mi Cuenca projects in El Salvador—the Municipal Technical Unit for Agriculture and the Municipal Forestry Office—have now been integrated and funded by the government. The formation and integration of these technical units was part of the initial project strategy. Community members indicated that the benefit and impact was felt at the community level, since the role of these two units and other municipal agencies is to liaise directly with all communities in the municipality. Prior to the projects, these connections had been weak or non-existent.

In a key informant interview, a Municipal Director of Planning (MDP) in Guatemala said that the technical units created by the projects had proven to be effective and beneficial to the population, leading to an increased sense of ownership by both the authorities and beneficiaries.

Focus groups in the project that, of those in the study, had ended the earliest, Central America Mitigation Initiative (CAMI) in Santiago de Chile in El Salvador (2001 to 2003), felt that the community disaster-management committee, the Community Civil Protection Committee's (CCPC), identity was strengthened due to its emergency responses to Tropical Storm Ida in 2009. But through the years since the project ended, the CCPC had lost strength largely because it was not closely associated with government DRR and emergency response bodies. This could be as a result of the time that has elapsed since the project ended ten years before the review.

RECOMMENDATION

The frequency of visits during the project by CRS and implementing partners should be carefully planned to provide enough support but to not create a dependency on oversight of the project, and to empower the community and ensure ownership in successful implementation.

Facilitating linkages between communities and governments with disaster-management planning and resilience activities is critical to community disaster mitigation and preparedness advancements and to longevity of efforts. Government recognition or acknowledgement of community level efforts is an important element to validate community DRR activities.

V. LESSONS CRS CAN LEARN FROM R3 PROJECTS

CRS will continue exploring community perceptions of resilience through the systematic gathering of data on perceptions of resilience in the R3 projects. A tool to gather data at the beginning of a disaster resilience project, during the project cycle, and at the end of the project, has been designed and will be tested in early 2014. The data will assist CRS to better design projects based on community views of activities and practices that contribute most to their increased resilience capacities.

Additionally, CRS will seek opportunities to explore community perceptions of resilience in situations in which a project has *not* been implemented. This will help establish whether there are widely divergent perspectives of resilience among people in areas where a DRR project has not been implemented and does not influence responses.

ANNEX A. DETAILS OF PROJECTS

GUATEMALA

Mi Cuenca

Goal: Poor rural communities reduce their vulnerability to water-related shocks and improve their quality of life through Integrated Water Resource Management in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.
SO1: Risk Management: Communities have increased their resilience to climate change, water-related shocks, and conflict related to water.
SO 2: Sustainable Multiple Uses of Water: Communities improve their access and use of water for domestic and productive uses through Integrated Water Resource Management.
SO3: Enabling Environment: Water policy, financing, and governance benefit vulnerable rural communities.

Project activities

- Comprehensive analysis and participatory multi-sector watershed planning. Restoration and protection of watershed resources.
- Building the capacity of watershed management committees and local governments to carry out watershed restoration activities.
- Advocacy strategy for Guatemala includes interventions at the local, regional, and national levels.
- Promoting hygiene and sanitation in schools and communities.

Agriculture for Basic Needs (A4N)

Goal: 15,765 poor, vulnerable and marginalized households in Central America improve farm production and increase income.
SO 1: Sustainable production: Rural households increase sustainable production of diverse foods.
IR 1.1 Rural households have increased and diversified production of nutritious crops.
IR 1.2 Rural households have increased production of micro-livestock, poultry or fish.
IR 1.3 Rural households have reduced post-harvest losses.
IR 1.4 Rural households have advocated for policy reform in public spending and/or land tenure.
SO 2: Rural households increase agricultural income.
IR 2.1 Members of community savings and lending groups have increased financial assets.
IR 2.2 Members of community savings and lending groups have invested in production and marketing.
IR 2.3 Farm families and farmer organizations have improved post-harvest processing to capture added value.
IR 2.4 Farmer organizations have expanded participation in markets.
Cross-Cutting Intermediate Result: Households and communities have adopted the 'Five Essential Skills'.

Project activities

- Promote diversification of agricultural production.
- Support vulnerable populations to gain legal title to their land, increasing the probability they will also gain access to potable water, electricity, and housing programs, among other government interventions.
- Training in sustainable agriculture practices.
- Training in animal production and management.
- Installation of post-harvest infrastructure, strengthening of post-harvest management skills and processing to reduce post-harvest loss.
- Support for project participants to advocate for public spending and community improvements to support agricultural production, such as water and sanitation projects and rural road improvements.
- Promote and strengthen community savings and lending groups and individual management of funds.

EL SALVADOR

Central American Mitigation Initiative (CAMI)

Impact goal: Strengthen the capacity of communities and institutions in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua to reduce the impact of future disasters through mitigation and prevention activities through a coordinated regional effort.

Effect goal #1: Strengthen capacity in 319 vulnerable communities to reduce the impact of future disasters through training, establishment of local Emergency Action Committees, development of community emergency action plans and the installation of 25 evacuation route signing systems.

Effect goal #2: Installation and implementation of 16 early warning systems for floods.

Effect goal #3: Strengthen the capacity for disaster mitigation at the national, municipal and local levels through public education, training and political advocacy.

Project activities

- Strengthen/ form local emergency committees.
- Provide training on disaster management and response.
- Develop community disaster-management plans.
- Conduct disaster simulations.
- Establish evacuation routes and install evacuation signs.
- Include information on disaster mitigation and prevention in schools.
- Broadcast DRR messages on local radio stations.
- Facilitate DRR forums engaging local government actors.

EL SALVADOR

Youth-Led Community Disaster Risk Reduction in the Acahuapa River Sub-Watershed

Goal: Vulnerable communities of the Acahuapa River sub-watershed have reduced risk to natural disasters.

SO: Vulnerable communities of the Acahuapa River sub-watershed have enhanced capacity to prepare for, mitigate the impact of, and respond to, natural disasters.

IR 1: Community-level Civil Protection Committees (CPCs) are mobilized and capable of managing disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.

IR 2: Vulnerable communities are linked to local and national government disaster risk reduction and response initiatives.

IR 3: Vulnerable communities are better informed about, and benefit from, enhanced disaster mitigation and preparedness measures.

Project activities

- Train youth in disaster preparedness, mitigation and management including earthquake drills and community risk mapping.
- Development of community risk reduction plans, policies or curricula.
- Create and train new community civil protection committees.
- Implement community mitigation projects including food and water storage, and training and provision of veterinary kits for use during disasters.

INDONESIA

East Flores Food Security (EFFS) Project

Goal: Improved food security in East Flores (drought).
Outcome: Farming families in Ille Bura have reduced drought-related food insecurity.
Output #1: The target farmers increase drought-resistant food crop production in the target areas.
Output #2: The target households increase consumption of drought-resistant food crops.
Output #3: The target farmers increase sales of surplus farm products.
Output #4: The target women are empowered to contribute to food security.

Project activities

- Strengthened role of women in planning and implementation of food security initiatives.
- Work through participatory approaches to provide farmers with information, technology, inputs and linkages, and assist farmers to ultimately decide on their farm plan, crop breakdown, etc.
- Local knowledge combined with innovation.
- Introduce farmers to sustainable farming techniques, including water and soil conservation, development of farm plans and crop diversification, and appropriate technology to increase food-crop production (e.g. how to make organic fertilizer using locally available resources).
- Provide technical training to farmers to improve knowledge and skills in drought-resistant crop cultivation and reproduction.
- Provide training to improve marketing practices.
- Increase linkages between the farmers and farmers groups and government extension agricultural research programs.

INDONESIA

Emergency response/DRR

Goal: Communities in Indonesia and risk-prone countries in Southeast Asia are resilient to disasters.
SO1: Vulnerable communities are better prepared to cope with, resist and recover from disasters.
SO2: CRS and partners have improved capacity to accompany communities in disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

Project activities

- Develop DRR/ER program team at CRS level.
- Provide training in DRR, emergency preparedness and response for CRS DRR/ER team.
- Facilitate training on DRR, emergency preparedness and response for CRS/ID program staff for mainstreaming DRR into other program sectors.
- Network with international agencies working on DRR.
- Develop a media strategy for CRS DRR and emergency preparedness and response to raise the profile of these initiatives.

INDIA

Biparjuya Prastuti: Community-based Disaster Preparedness in Coastal Odisha, India

Goal: To reduce the impact of natural disasters on the most vulnerable in select villages of Odisha, eastern India. Reinforce the coping capacity of vulnerable populations in coastal Odisha for effective preparedness and response to recurrent disaster.
ER1: Community capacity for preparedness and response improved.
ER2: Small-scale mitigation structures leveraged from communities and/or government resources.
ER3: Improved linkage and coordination at block, district and state level for more efficient and effective disaster preparedness, response and recovery.
ER4: Best practices on Community-Based Disaster Preparedness (CBDP) identified, documented and disseminated.

Project activities

- Develop community disaster-management plans.
- Establish and train task forces (early warning and information, search-and-rescue, health and first aid, shelter management, damage assessment, cattle care, coordination, relief distribution, water, sanitation and carcass disposal).
- Construct elevated latrines and stand pipes.
- Livestock vaccination campaign.
- Raised platforms for fodder.
- Improved linkage and coordination with government actors.
- Develop the CRS Community Based Disaster Preparedness: A How-To Guide.

BANGLADESH

Shelter Assistance to Cyclone Sidr-Affected Communities in Bangladesh

Goal: Shelter assistance to cyclone-affected communities in Bangladesh.
SO1 2,500 cyclone-affected families live in safe, healthy conditions.
SO2 2,500 construct a latrine with project materials; hygiene promotion.

Project activities

- Capacity building; formation of committees; training on hazard-resilient house and latrine construction; training on latrine management.
- Training in masonry and construction.
- Construct reinforced housing and latrines for 2,500 families, accompanied by hygiene promotion.
- Assist beneficiary families to receive a document signed by union and *upazila* officials or the private landlord giving them permission to live on the land where they reside.

ANNEX B. FIELD FACILITATION GUIDANCE

The facilitation guide is designed to ensure that the study is carried out in a consistent manner in the two regions and in each community. This will also assist staff to plan and gather data for the study and to synthesize and assess the data.

A. IDENTIFYING THE FIELD FACILITATION TEAM

It is very important that the field facilitation team (FFT) speak the language of the community to allow the discussions to flow smoothly and reduce the possibilities of misunderstandings due to translation. It is also important that the FFT have experience gathering data from communities. Reviewing the annexes in the CRS *Community Based Disaster Preparedness: A How-To Guide* and the tools from the *Good Enough Guide* (English)/ *Good Enough Guide* (Spanish) might help refresh the field facilitation team of some important points to consider when approaching the community and gathering data from community members.

The field facilitation team should be made up of two to three people who are acquainted with the project and, ideally, at least one who is familiar with the community members so that the focus groups interviewed are comfortable. The teams should include a gender balance to the greatest extent possible.

After the field facilitation teams have been identified, each will need to select one person to conduct the interviews and one to take notes. If the community is comfortable, the focus group discussions should be recorded so the notetakers can go back to the recording after leaving the community to be sure no major points made by community members were missed in the notes. There are funds to hire a professional translator to transcribe all transcripts into the local language, where required, and then translate into English. Even if a transcriber and/ or translator is hired, the CRS/partner staff notetakers will need to tidy up the notes and verify the transcription to facilitate the synthesis and analysis of the data by the team.

If there are three people in a field facilitation team, two can take notes and one can act as an observer. The responsibilities can be switched as the team wishes; however this should be agreed prior to approaching a focus group.

B. APPROACHING THE COMMUNITY

When setting up the field visit, be sure to advise the community of what the study is about and that it is not a continuation of the project: *CRS wants to understand your perceptions of resilience and how the CRS DRR project contributed to your increased resilience so that we can develop our future DRR programs in the most effective manner possible. We want to hear from you about:*

- Your experiences of the project
- Any changes you have seen as a result of the project
- What activities/ practices started under the project continue in the community and why
- Any stories related to your resilience you would like to share

This is not a continuation of the project. We greatly appreciate your willingness to contribute to this study and host our visit. On Day 1 of our visit, we would like to review the community map and any documentation, such as the community action plan that was prepared during the project, so please bring this information with you to the first meeting.

You will then brief the community members on the process (identification of focus groups, key informant interviews etc.), the calendar and how much time you will need to gather information from them for the study (half a day on Day 1 and one day on Day 3). If they would like copies of any of the information generated by their community, we will provide this to them when the study has been completed, but it will be in English.

C. DATA-GATHERING PLAN

The field facilitation team should begin the process with a half-day meeting with the community to engage them in a reflection exercise on past project activities, such as how vulnerable groups were identified for the project, what task groups were formed (both those that continue and those that no longer function), what training was carried out and with whom, activities included and implemented in the community action plan, etc.

On Day 1, the need to gather a separate focus group of extremely vulnerable people and the makeup of the group members will be determined through this initial half-day meeting with the community. This will help us to understand if these people have a different perspective of resilience than other groups. Day 1 will be closed by advising the community of the plan for Day 3, noting that the field facilitation team will work internally with the data gathered on Day 1 to be used on Day 3.

On Day 2, the field facilitation team will spend the day reflecting on the Day 1 discussions with the community. This will take place outside of the community, most likely in the partner's office, guest house, hotel, or other location. On Day 2, the team will determine which focus groups will be formed and who the key informant interviews will be with on Day 3. During Day 2, the team will also confirm their roles and responsibilities when engaging the community and confirm the tools they will use to gather information from the community on Day 3. Workshop supplies, such as flip charts, markers and tape, may be useful for this reflection.

On Day 3, the team will likely engage in focus group discussions (FDGs). For FGDs with the community, three focus groups should be convened in each community to cross check the information gathered. Depending on community dynamics, separate FGDs or key informant interviews with extremely vulnerable people (as discussed on Day 1) might be required as particularly vulnerable people may be unlikely to talk in a wider group.

If field facilitation teams choose to include key informant interviews, please be sure that the perspectives of the most vulnerable are adequately captured.

Focus groups might be (depending on the scope of the project):

1. Disaster-management committee (may need to separate women and men)
2. Task forces
3. Community committees e.g. grain bank group, farmers groups (especially for projects that included livelihoods resilience components)
4. Women's groups/committees (if, for example, the women who have prepared evacuation kits would be an interesting focus group
5. Elders
6. Children and youth, extremely vulnerable groups
7. Community leaders
8. Other members of the community, i.e. members of self-help groups, others as identified during the mapping exercise on Day 1
9. Local government representatives to get their perception on increased community resilience, especially in cases where the community plan of action was submitted to the government, and if the government acted upon some of the community action plan requests

Often, community members are very interested in being part of the discussions. However, if possible, focus groups should include six to 12 people to maximize the quality of the discussion. The facilitator will have a more difficult time managing the discussion if more than 12 people are present and, quieter people are less likely to speak up, especially if one or two people tend to dominate. Remember, a focus group is when people talk to each other,

rather than a traditional interview. A discussion with the group will stimulate thoughts among them. It is best if you can get people to sit in a circle so the facilitator and notetakers are part of the group and, so people look at one another as they are speaking.

D. WHAT CRS WANTS TO KNOW THROUGH THE DISCUSSIONS WITH FOCUS GROUPS AND KEY INFORMANTS

1. What did the project include (developing a community map, training, establishing task forces and other committees, support to advocate for government DRR entitlements, etc)?
2. What were the most valuable things you learned and did to reduce your risks to disasters as a result of the project (could have been something from the project or something they did on their own that perhaps was prompted by the project)? What was least useful?
3. How do you (community) define resilience? What is your (community) perception of resilience (working with the term for "resilience" most suitable for the community and context)?
4. *If the community experienced a disaster after the project ended*: What new practices/skills that you had learned from the project did you use?
    - What are some of the emergency preparedness and response practices you used and how did you use them?
    - How were your actions different from previous disasters?
5. What components of the project are still in place?
    - At the household level
    - At the community level
    - At the government level
6. Why do you think that the activities/practices that are still in place continue?
7. What activities/practices are no longer in place? Why do they not continue?
8. What activities/ practices to increase resilience did you initiate after the project ended?
9. What happened after the community plan of action was submitted to the government? (*This might not be relevant in some countries, depending on the engagement of the government in community DRR planning*.)
10. Did you approach the government for support for the community action plan or other DRR support after the project ended? If yes, what support was requested and was the government able to help?
11. What would have further increased sustainability of project activities?
12. If government representatives are part of the interviews:
    - Did the government participate in discussions about the community action plan?
    - Did the community approach the government for support with their DRR plan?
    - If so, what types of support did they request?
    - Out of the things you have learned / done what was most valuable in reducing risk from disasters?
    - How was the government able to support the DRR plan?
    - What increased resilience do you or other government representatives see as a result of the DRR project?

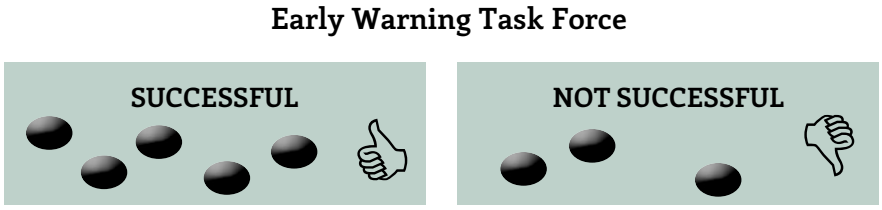
E. METHODOLOGY

The field facilitation teams should plan to use participatory methods with the community. Some of the methodology that may be used includes:

- Reviewing together with those who participated in the project, the disaster risk maps, disaster-management plans, action plans and other materials developed during the project to reflect on the past project activities.
- Ranking how the community members view the success or lack of success of specific project activities. This may be done through a sorting process whereby participants "vote" on the success or lack of success of a project activity, for example the early warning task force, by piling stones (or bottle caps or anything small enough to move but big enough to count. Leaves can move in the wind so are not recommended) into two

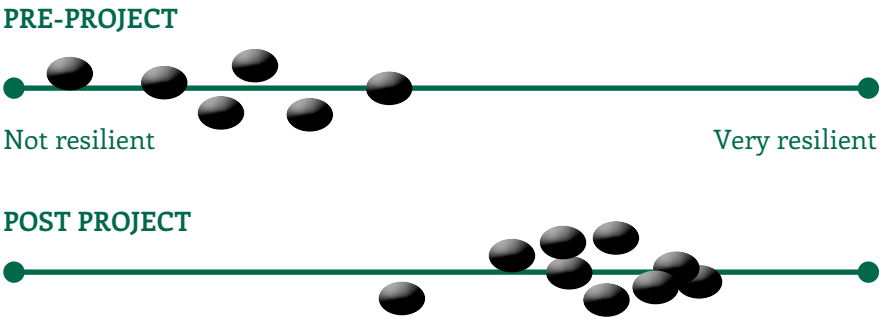
separate areas on the ground identified as "successful" (still active and/or engaged successfully during a pending disaster) or "less successful" (no longer active and/or did not engage successfully during a pending disaster). This would need to be followed by a discussion on why they felt that the activity was successful or was not successful to more fully understand their vote, e.g. if not successful, perhaps they feel that those on the early warning task force were not trained properly, those who volunteered/ selected for the EWTF were not the right people for the task force, maybe there were not enough practice drills, etc.

The community "votes" on the success of a project using stones or bottle caps.



Ranking can be used to understand general perceptions of resilience by asking people to put their rock on a line with the left end of a line in the sand or dirt indicating perception of resilience before the project and after. This would need to be followed by a discussion and perhaps further ranking on more specific points that people believe contribute to their resilience. Follow-on questions might include, what would it take to make you feel very resilient? What is in place now that makes you feel more resilient now than prior to the project?

The community ranks their perception of their resilience before and after a project using stones on a line.



Collectively preparing a timeline to show what activities took place during the project and when the activity ended:

Project end	6 months later	1 year later	18 months later	2 years later	Now
Task Force 1, Task Force 2, Task Force 3, Task Force 4	Task Force 1, Task Force 3, Task Force 4	Task Force 3			
Grain bank	Grain bank	Grain bank	Grain bank	Grain bank	Grain bank
Family evacuation kit	Family evacuation kit	Family evacuation kit			

F. DATA ANALYSIS AND VALIDATION

- **Who should participate in the data analysis and validation process?** The field facilitation team, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) staff, Head of Projects Regional Technical Advisors for Emergencies and the Deputy Regional Directors for Program Quality, other staff who were involved in the project (not all of these people will be available in the country where the research is taking place but there should be a few staff in addition to the field facilitation team involved to bring a fresh perspective and reduce bias).

- **How should the data be assessed?** The data should be translated into English if the notes are taken in another language. The data analysis and validation team, composed of the field facilitation team and M&E staff at the country program and/or regional level, should summarize points, draw out the main ideas, and compare community responses to identify commonalities, trends and diverging input. It might be helpful to record the interviews and have the recordings transcribed to be sure that all the data has been captured. R3 funds can support a transcriber and translator.

It is important that the data synthesis be clear and comprehensive as this will be the resource for Amy Hilleboe and Clara Hagens to prepare the report of the study.

G. EXAMPLE OF DATA SYNTHESIS

Date:	**Community:**	**Interviewer:**	**Note taker:**
Focus group: Early Warning Task Force		**Number of participants: F=**	**M=**
Was resilience defined differently by different groups in the community? If so, how was it different?			
What changes in resilience did the community experience?			
Disaster response practices used if disaster occurred post-project:			
Most valuable learning/ activities from the project:			
Activities from the project that are still in place:			
Why these activities are still in place:			
Activities no longer in place and why:			
Status of the plan of action:			
Post-project interactions with the government on DRR issues:			