

PILOTING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A DISASTER-RESILIENT COMMUNITY

In 2006, five UK-based international development organisations plus the British Red Cross jointly commissioned a review of existing monitoring and evaluation frameworks for livelihoods and disaster risk reduction projects. The aim of the joint undertaking was to develop a better understanding of what sets of indicators could be employed at the local level to assess progress of efforts in increasing community resilience.

The results of this participatory review involving the agencies and their Southern partners are published under the title 'Characteristics of a disaster resilient community'. The launch of the publication presents a first step in a process of piloting and testing the suggested framework that the commissioning agencies have committed to. Action Aid, Christian Aid, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Plan UK, Practical Action and Tearfund have agreed to use these characteristics as a basis for developing monitoring indicators, structuring project evaluations, for capacity assessments and conducting wider impact analysis in a number of countries and disaster risk reduction activities.

The current framework of resilience will be field-tested and the characteristics reviewed over the course of the next 18 months. Here is a brief summary of how we plan to do this (please see details in the table below).

All agencies will use the characteristics either to develop new or improve existing project monitoring indicators. The main activities monitored within this framework will be disaster risk reduction and livelihoods initiatives that aim to contribute to improving people's capacity to respond to, cope with and recover from natural hazards and other external shocks. Particular priority areas and components that will be monitored at the community level and by assessing the institutional and policy environment are the following:

Governance:	Integration with development planning and policies Institutional mechanisms, capacities and structures
Risk Assessment:	Hazards/ risk data and analysis Vulnerability and impact indicators
Knowledge:	Public awareness, knowledge and skills Information management and sharing Education and training
Reducing Vulnerability:	Sustainable livelihoods
Preparedness:	Organisational capacities and coordination Early warning systems Preparedness and contingency planning Participation, voluntarism, accountability

Additionally, some agencies intend to use the characteristics as a basis for capacity needs assessments in their own organisations and with local partners; to assess government capacity and institutional gaps (particularly by using the enabling environment column); and to conduct participatory reviews of vulnerability and resilience levels in and with communities.

We would like to invite all organisations and individuals with a similar interest in improving our understanding of what constitutes a resilient community to join us in our effort. The characteristics can be used in any way relevant to your programmes, research and community-based activities, and be adapted to monitoring, analysis and assessment frameworks that you may currently use. We are planning to review the framework after 12 and 18 months and invite interested parties to join into this learning process that we will begin on this year's International Day for Disaster Reduction, 10th October 2007.

Mapping of application/ piloting by agency:

AGENCY	PROJECT CYCLE (e.g., for project design, monitoring etc.)	GEOGRAPHY (by country/ region)	COMPONENT (within thematic areas; e.g., component 1.7. accountability and community participation)
Tearfund	<p>1. Mid-Term Evaluation for DFID DRR Project</p> <p>Coupled with 'Most Significant Change' Evaluation principles with communities</p>	<p>India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Malawi</p>	<p>Thematic Area 1 Components: 3, 4, 5</p> <p>Thematic Area 2 Components: 1, 2</p> <p>Thematic Area 3 Components: 2, 3</p> <p>Thematic Area 4 Components: 3, 5</p> <p>Thematic Area 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6</p>
	<p>2. Partner Capacity Assessment and Development</p>	<p>Malawi Participatory Assessment and Score (using Milestones) current achievement/ capacity and monitor over a period of 6 -12 months progress towards achieving characteristics</p> <p>(2 partners: one high capacity partner, one medium capacity partner) Monitor ability to achieve characteristics and document challenges and successes through-out the process) 'buddy-up' process</p>	<p>Thematic Area 2 Components: 1, 2</p> <p>Thematic Area 3 Components: 2, 3</p> <p>Thematic Area 4 Components: 3, 5</p> <p>Thematic Area 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6</p>
	<p>3. Orissa Evaluation (post Monsoon flooding)</p>	<p>India (Partner DC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Identify which characteristics were already present in the community pre-floods as a result of the work of DC that helped the community cope better during the floods and recover quickly post floods. * A comparative analysis would be undertaken with a community where no DRR has been implemented. * Try to identify the minimum levels of achievement for resilience 	<p>The process will begin with communities and any outcomes matched with relevant characteristics</p>
Practical Action	<p>Annual and Mid-term evaluations.</p> <p>On-going monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>Preparedness plans are being tested for efficacy during and after current floods in Bangladesh.</p>	<p>Bangladesh Nepal Zimbabwe Peru Sri Lanka</p>	<p>Individual components of our project can be identified in all of the five Priorities for Action. In particular:</p> <p>Thematic Area 1 Components: 3, 5, 6, 7</p> <p>Thematic Area 2 Components: 1, 2</p> <p>Thematic Area 3 Components: 1, 3, 5</p>

	We will identify specific characteristics within each component which relate specifically to our activities and outputs and generate indicators that can be used to map progress towards the attainment of these characteristics. Thus far it would appear that our indicators will fall within many of the UCL characteristics, but at a much more “specific” level.		Thematic Area 4 Components: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 Thematic Area 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Christian Aid	<p>Monitor on the basis of country and project specific indicators. Where possible, these are aligned with existing monitoring frameworks, e.g. in Malawi where partners have committed to working with the Government of Malawi’s food security indicators. Additionally, in some countries, HAP monitoring will be combined with resilience monitoring.</p> <p>Mid-term evaluation of Phase 1 countries.</p> <p>Integrated into project design in Phase 3 countries, particularly through partner & community capacity assessments.</p> <p>Review of DRR impact in current South Asia floods</p>	<p>Bangladesh Honduras Malawi</p> <p>El Salvador Mozambique Philippines</p> <p>Bangladesh India</p>	<p>While selected components from all five thematic areas are of relevance to our partners’ work, we will start using the resilience framework in our BDRC project countries to increase our understanding of and monitor the following areas in particular:</p> <p>Thematic Area 1 Components: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 Thematic Area 2 Components: 1, 2 Thematic Area 3 Components: 1, 2, 3, 5 Thematic Area 4 Components: 1, 3, 4</p> <p>Plus: Thematic Area 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 6</p>
Plan International	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mid term and final evaluation and 2. On-going monitoring of DFID DRR project 3. Project planning for new DRR projects, some of which may be funded by donors other than DFID 4. Possibly, for evaluation of Plan’s disaster response programmes 	Initially, in El Salvador, Philippines, Indonesia, Sierra Leone	Thematic Area 1 Components: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Thematic Area 2 Components: 1, 2 Thematic Area 3 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Thematic Area 4 Components: 1, 2, 3, 6 Thematic Area 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6
International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent	Final Evaluation of DFID funded programme in 2008	4 countries in southern Africa and 2 in South Asia	Thematic area: 1 Components: 3, 4, 5, 6 Thematic area: 2 Components: 1, 2 Thematic area: 3 Components: 1, 2, 3 Thematic area: 4 Components: 3, 5 Thematic area: 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

	Monitoring of DFID funded IS	Multiple countries with main focus in Africa	Thematic area: 1 Components: 3, 4, 5, 6 Thematic area: 2 Components: 1, 2 Thematic area: 3 Components: 1, 2, 3 Thematic area: 4 Components: 3, 5 Thematic area: 5 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
	Monitoring of ECHO thematic funding	Asia, Americas & Africa	Thematic area: 5 Components: 1, 3, 4, 5
	Developing and setting indicators for Global Alliance (programme) on DRR	20 focus countries (to be determined)	Similar to above but yet to be precisely determined
	Training reference material and general resource on DRR Notes: 1. Not all components will apply to all countries / contexts. 2. Exactly how the characteristics will be applied has yet to be determined. At a minimum as a reference source and checklist		
ActionAid International	ActionAid's DRR through Schools Project falls under thematic area 3, and will initially focus the use of the characteristics of community resilience in this area. We do note however there will be inevitable overlap with other thematic areas. The characteristics will be applied through (not exclusively): 1. Peer reviews 2. Participatory annual review and reflections 3. Baseline surveys 4. Checklist for external evaluations	All the DRR through schools project countries (Malawi, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Kenya, Ghana and Haiti)	Thematic Area 3 Components: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (various aspects of all the components are applicable and will be used as relevant)