



# MAKING PROGRESS

## BRACED AT THE MID-TERM

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Synthesis paper



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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

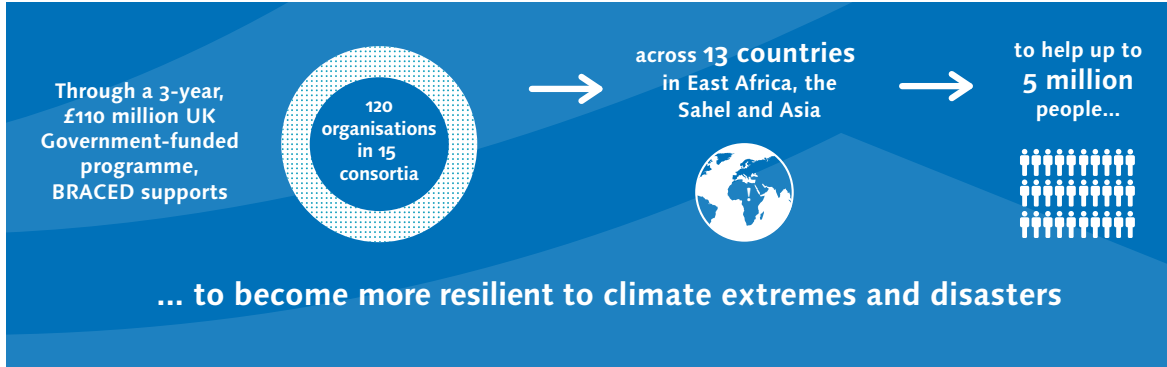
<b>ASP</b>	Adaptive Social Protection
<b>BCURE</b>	Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence
<b>BRACED</b>	Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters
<b>BRICS</b>	Building Resilience in Chad and Sudan (BRACED project)
<b>CIARE</b>	Climate Information and Assets for Resilience in Ethiopia (BRACED project)
<b>CMO</b>	Context-Mechanism-Outcome Configuration
<b>CToC</b>	Common Theory of Change
<b>DCF</b>	Decentralising Climate Funds (BRACED project)
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EA</b>	Evaluation Activity
<b>EWS</b>	Early Warning Systems
<b>FM</b>	Fund Manager
<b>GToC</b>	Grant Theory of Change
<b>HH</b>	Household
<b>ICMO</b>	Intervention-Context-Mechanism-Outcome Configuration
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>IRISS</b>	Improving Resilience to Climate Change in South Sudan (BRACED project)
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>KM</b>	Knowledge Manager
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>MAR</b>	Market Approaches to Resilience (BRACED project)
<b>MTR</b>	Mid-Term Review
<b>NRM</b>	Natural Resource Management
<b>PHASE</b>	Providing Humanitarian Assistance for Sahel Emergencies

<b>RIC4REC</b>	Renforcement des Initiatives Communautaires pour la Résilience aux Extrêmes Climatiques (BRACED project)
<b>SUR1M</b>	Scaling up Resilience to Climate Extremes for over 1 Million People (BRACED project)
<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>VSLA</b>	Village Savings and Loan Associations
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WHH</b>	Welthungerhilfe (BRACED project – name of lead agency)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

This report presents a synthesis of project-level mid-term reviews (MTR), carried out after 18 months' implementation of the Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) programme.



BRACED aims to build the resilience of up to 5 million vulnerable people against climate extremes and disasters. It does so through a 3-year, £110 million UK government-funded grant supporting more than 120 organisations in 15 consortia across 13 countries in East Africa, the Sahel and Asia.

### The major areas the BRACED projects focus on are:

- improving climate and disaster risk management, including through planning and finance mechanisms, for better developmental outcomes;
- improving access to climate and weather information, including early warning systems, to strengthen resilience;
- improving basic service delivery in different sectors to strengthen household resilience – including water, health, financial and agricultural services;
- improving access to markets (physical/regulatory systems/pricing information etc.) for smallholders and other producers to strengthen resilience to climate extremes and disasters.

Project activities include: training (e.g. in the use of improved seeds, in climate smart technology, health and nutrition); support for natural resource management; establishing and supporting early warning systems; water management and water and sanitation hygiene (WASH) activities such as providing boreholes and latrines; improving access to climate information; and establishing and supporting small-scale financial institutions (savings and loans groups).

Within BRACED, resilience is understood as the 'ability to anticipate, avoid, plan for, cope with, recover from, and adapt to (climate-related) shocks and stresses'. The BRACED projects follow a common approach to measure the 'outcomes' of resilience-building processes, thought of as a set of interlinked capacities or abilities to **absorb**, **anticipate** and **adapt** to shocks and stresses.

The synthesis tries to draw programme-level lessons from the experiences of individual projects operating in different contexts to implement activities that contribute towards resilience building. Using the evidence provided by Implementing Partners (IPs), this report examines the following central evaluation question:

**How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned/how can good practice be replicated?**

To help to answer this question, the Knowledge Manager (KM) Evaluation Synthesis and Support team and IPs took a realist approach when they carried out their MTRs. Using this approach, we worked together to understand **how context interacts with project activities to make a change process happen** (often referred to as a 'mechanism') leading to a particular outcome and, ultimately, to improved resilience to climate extremes and disasters.

IPs have used the insights they gained from using the realist approach to make changes to the way they carry out their activities in order to better achieve resilience outcomes. Lessons from the MTR process and synthesis also contribute to BRACED evidence and learning and to the wider stock of knowledge on designing and implementing resilience-strengthening programmes.

## Key findings

**Across the BRACED project portfolio, how and why have different 'packages' of interventions strengthened resilience in particular contexts?**

The synthesis found that projects are already contributing to improved wellbeing of communities in a number of areas:

- increased income, availability and diversity of food as a result of changing agricultural practices, including using improved techniques, (climate smart) technology adoption and improved market linkages;
- improved health outcomes through: access to water, WASH and better diets;
- generation of cash income and access to savings and financial services so that project participants are able to pay for other costs, e.g. school/university, or use their savings for periods of hardship;
- gender-focused activities resulting in women having greater voice and decision-making power at household level and in local institutions;
- improvements in girls' wellbeing through club-based and mentoring activities with both girls and boys, helping them more confidently engage with a range of issues of fundamental importance to them;
- strong foundations laid in early warning systems and disaster risk management.

How and why the activities lead to the different outcomes relate to both **intervention factors** (the way the projects respond to context) and to **mechanisms** (reasoning and behavioural change brought about by the project, dependent on context).



- **Mechanisms:** People's responses to project activities relate strongly to social factors – their appreciation of 'spaces' to meet and their enjoyment of group interaction and peer support. Good implementation is related to IPs developing or capitalising on good relationships between project staff/ community facilitators and project participants, helping to achieve outputs and outcomes. This means people are more likely to trust the projects. People also need to feel that the project and its approach are credible.
- **Intervention factors:** Training and mentoring achieve results when they do not exclude people, when activities happen over longer time periods rather than being 'one-off', and are linked to practical outcomes for participants. Working with existing institutional structures, such as community groups, is also important. People act when there are concrete and appropriate incentives. However, the means to act needs to be there – for example, if a new crop is grown, there needs to be an appetite or a market for it; if people are educated to use hand soap, they need to be able to find it locally and afford to buy it; if new skills are acquired from training, or community-level planning, there have to be opportunities to put them into practice.

#### **What can be learned from across the BRACED portfolio about future resilience-strengthening programming?**

**Anticipatory capacity:** Evidence for improved anticipatory capacity is strongest where projects are implementing community-based early warning systems. This reflects the higher number of IPs reporting on this as an outcome indicator for UK International Climate Fund's Key Performance Indicator No. 4 (KPI4) (see also Silva Villanueva et al., 2016). There have been cases where BRACED activities have directly reduced losses from climate-related hazards.

**Absorptive capacity:** The main outcomes demonstrating progress towards improving absorptive capacity relate to:

- improved health outcomes (through access to water, WASH and better diets) and more diverse food available to communities (through: more vegetables grown for consumption and sale);
- access to financial services (ability to pay for other costs, e.g. school/ university/savings used for periods of hardship).

**Adaptive capacity:** Improvements in adaptive capacity have potentially been achieved via the higher-level outcomes of achieving sustained new income sources and/or increased incomes. These have been due mainly through agronomy-related activities, applying and building on BRACED project training and support; technology adoption including climate smart technology; improved agricultural practices (linked to natural resource management [NRM]); and diversified livelihoods/crop portfolios. Most progress is found in activities focusing on farm level change, and less so those seeking change in value chains.

## Lessons learned about resilience

- The agronomy, seed or plant varieties promoted by projects' agricultural activities may result in sustained change, but is likely to represent only a marginal increase in household annual food and nutrition needs or household income. Changes of this order are unlikely to lead to other changes that would alter the fundamental nature of the poverty and vulnerability of these households or communities.
- Improved agricultural practices, or the use of modified seeds, could help to stabilise vegetable production or income levels, buffering against fluctuations in rainfall in the future. The activities, however, are not linked to any contingency in the years of significant crop losses, meaning that given the level of household risk, these activities would be limited in scope.
- Activities that focus on the practices of individual farmers, but do not engage at any other level with the seed supply system or value chains for products to be sold, are unlikely to see the benefits of the project extending beyond those farmers.
- Where activities have also linked into local social systems this helps to make the activities successful.
- Some health outcomes have been reported as a result of health and nutrition activities alongside agricultural interventions, but the direct relationship between health and nutrition activities and climate is not clear.
- The savings and credit activities are well suited to manage actual, idiosyncratic shock – those experienced by individual people or households. This means that families are able to avoid compromising long-term transformative opportunities for their children (e.g. pulling them out of school when a shock to their income happens). The project, therefore, contributes to transformation in the longer term.
- Behaviour change is beginning to occur where there are gender-focused activities. Changing the social standing of young women within traditional communities is a substantial change. As those changes are linked to formal education and business opportunities, this outcome could be fairly transformative. While this is encouraging social development progress, more work needs to be done to explain linkages between gender-related outcomes and resilience to climate extremes and disaster.

## Concluding comments and reflections

Interventions have been successfully adapted to respond to context and as a result are more effective at stimulating mechanisms that lead to change in behaviour. Importantly, the projects are 'good development projects': responding to context enhances credibility that in turn leads to reasoning, behavioural change and the likely achievement of outcomes. The level of flexibility in allowing reflection and 'course-correction' that the BRACED programme offers projects is therefore key.

The projects have put in building blocks ensuring that they are already making progress towards change. However, activities need time for outcomes to be realised. This is particularly true of planning, NRM and gender. Others, such as early warning systems, will only realise outcomes in the event of shocks and stresses. Time is also an important factor in achieving resilience aims – especially adaptive capacity.

Many of the projects face deteriorating or crisis conditions during their period of implementation. Resilience programmes cannot ignore this and projects have to address immediate humanitarian needs – giving people the tools to both manage actual crisis, and to make longer-term investments to reduce vulnerability and improve their ability to manage potential risks.

# PART 1. BACKGROUND TO THE EVALUATION

AGENT NUMBER  
015941

**NEW M-PESA TARIFFS**  
EFFECTIVE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2016

Customer Categories

Transaction Range (KSh)	Transaction Fee and Customer Charge (KSh)	Standard Fee	Standard Charge	Standard Fee and Charge (KSh)
< 100	FREE	N/A	N/A	N/A
100	15	15	0	15
1,000	15	44	27	27
1,000	25	58	27	27
2,500	40	75	27	49
5,000	40	132	44	62
7,500	75	143	68	110
15,000	89	201	110	199
15,000	95	240	176	187
30,000	100	282	187	282
30,000	110	303	199	303
50,000	110	N/A	275	385
70,000	110	N/A	330	440

Transaction Range (KSh)

200	132
2,500	163
5,000	201
7,500	240
15,000	282
30,000	303
50,000	303

Safaricom

A woman in a red jacket is leading a donkey carrying a large bundle of sticks on a dirt road. The background shows a shop with signs for 'SELF SERVICE CENTRE', 'DEALERS IN UTENSILS COSMETICS', 'HARDWARE', and 'HOUSE HOLD'.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Image: Jennifer Leavy

## 1.1 What is BRACED?

The Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) programme is a 3-year, £110 million programme funded by the UK Department for International Development. It is one of the largest and most ambitious global initiatives to strengthen resilience at scale.

BRACED aims to build the resilience of up to 5 million vulnerable people against climate extremes and disasters. It does this through:

- scaling up proven technologies and practices;
- research and evaluation to build knowledge and evidence on how best to strengthen resilience in different contexts;
- enhancing local and national capacity to respond to climate-related shocks and stresses.

Launched in January 2015, the programme supports over 120 organisations in 15 consortia managing 15 projects across 13 countries in East Africa, the Sahel

and Asia.<sup>1</sup> These consortia include local government, civil society, research organisations and the private sector.

The 15 projects are led by BRACED Implementing Partners (IPs), connected through a Fund Manager (FM) and a Knowledge Manager (KM). The FM is responsible for overseeing the delivery of BRACED projects. The KM leads monitoring, evaluation and research activities at the programme level, based on the projects. The evidence and knowledge generated feeds into learning, uptake and communication activities to effect change across and beyond the BRACED focus countries (see Annex 1 for more information about the BRACED components).

## 1.2 Purpose of this evaluation synthesis

The overarching purpose of all BRACED Evaluation activities is to **'help determine what works to build resilience to climate extremes'** (BRACED, 2015a). This report contributes to this purpose by synthesising evidence from project mid-term reviews (MTRs) carried out by 14 of the 15 BRACED IPs<sup>2</sup> that lead work under BRACED Component A and Component B.<sup>3</sup> These are referred to in this report as 'projects'.

It examines the following central evaluation question:

*How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned/how can good practice be replicated?*

The **project-level** MTRs were led by IPs, and took place between July and October 2016. The purpose was to assess progress towards outcomes, and encourage reflection on lessons at project mid-term (i.e. after 18 months of implementation). IPs reflected on project successes and failures, and any enablers and constraints, in order to explore, test and revise assumptions about pathways to change and allow for necessary course correction. The KM supported IPs during this process by providing a common set of evaluation questions, written guidance and ongoing remote, individually tailored support. This supported **quality** and **consistency** across the projects. The Evaluation Support and Synthesis Design Report (January 2017) sets out the detailed design followed by IPs.

This report presents key lessons from IP experience of implementing resilience-strengthening interventions and, where possible, a **programme-level** synthesis of evidence. It aims to understand **how, where, when and why particular interventions work**. It does so using a realist evaluation lens. It takes IPs' experience of implementing 'packages' of resilience-building activities as a starting point to understand why particular interventions lead to specific outcomes.

- <sup>1</sup> Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Mauritania, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Myanmar and Nepal.
- <sup>2</sup> Due to delays in implementation, the Vive avec l'eau/Live with Water project (Senegal) has not yet conducted a mid-term review, and project results are not included in this synthesis.
- <sup>3</sup> Component A comprises nine IP-led projects in the Sahel. Component B comprises six projects in East Africa and South Asia.

This programme-level synthesis is the first major output of the KM Evaluation Synthesis and Support team (evaluation team for short) referred to in the BRACED Evaluation plan as Evaluation Activity 2 (EA2). It is one of five evaluations led by the BRACED KM (BRACED 2015a).<sup>4</sup> It complements the other evaluation activities as well as the annual reporting by the IPs and BRACED monitoring and routine results reporting, under the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, including the BRACED Annual Report Synthesis (Silva Villanueva et al., 2016).

**The relatively early stage of project implementation means that at the time of the MTR, it was still too soon to detect or measure tangible outcomes for most activities. The pathways towards intended outcomes are also not yet well evidenced, and we have mostly individual instances and examples of particular outcomes achieved or of context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations. This means that the necessary volume of data for a full synthesis is not available. Some limited synthesis is possible and this is presented in Section 4.4. In order to achieve maximum learning from the MTRs, we have additionally analysed what works and why by considering what lessons we may learn from individual events as well as pathways towards outputs achieved as building blocks towards change. This helps to make sense of the complex processes that underlie the projects.**

This report lays the foundation for the final project evaluation synthesis, providing a focus for further investigation of pathways to change at project conclusion.

The scope of the evaluation is limited to the interventions carried out by IPs under BRACED Components A and B. With the programme's performance and architecture (including the KM and FM) sitting outside the scope, the evaluation aims to provide general programme-level insights where possible. Furthermore, it is not intended to evaluate progress and performance of individual projects, but rather to investigate the factors that enable packages of interventions to work, and understand how these come together to lead to project-level outcomes.

The intended users of this report are:

- **DFID:** By providing an assessment of how and why BRACED intervention packages are working, capturing innovation and strengthening the BRACED theory of change. It is hoped that this report can assist with decisions about how to plan and implement strategic resilience-strengthening interventions. The focus on activity packages means that it will also support understanding of how complementary interventions (in agriculture, financial services and inclusion, social protection and gender) can best contribute to resilience outcomes. Drawing on a realist evaluation approach (explained in Section 3) can also assist DFID to inform best practice in evaluating complicated and complex resilience-building interventions in fragile states.

<sup>4</sup> Full details of EA2 and the other evaluation activities can be found here: [www.braced.org/resources](http://www.braced.org/resources)

- **The BRACED Implementing Partners:** The report provides a qualitative synthesis of evidence from projects of how, when and where BRACED project interventions are working, highlighting achievements and lessons. The findings are intended to help IPs refine theories of change, carry out 'course correction' and make improvements to their projects. They will form the basis of closer ongoing engagement between the Knowledge Manager and project teams.
- **KM and FM teams:** The report provides preliminary evidence of what is working and why. The mix of qualitative and quantitative evidence presented can inform further research and complements the monitoring and results reporting synthesis findings. The report can also assist the FM and IPs in informing theories of change and annual plans for the final year of implementation.
- **Others designing, implementing, funding and evaluating resilience-building programmes:** The evaluation methodology draws on realist evaluation principles and methods. This is a relatively nascent approach in evaluating complex development projects, and our experience with the methodology may offer some useful insights and learning for others evaluating complex and complicated programmes. The findings related to implementation provide insights to factors that may enable or constrain effective implementation of these resilience programmes.

## 1.3 Report structure

The report is presented in two parts (Background and Findings), broken down into a number of sections to help the reader.

Section 2 describes the BRACED projects and conceptualising resilience within the BRACED programme. Section 3 outlines the methodology for the MTR synthesis, including evaluation approach and limitations. **Section 4 presents the findings of the MTR reports' synthesis**, focusing on outcomes achieved to date and the contexts and mechanisms that explain how change happened, and also on evidence for building blocks for change. Section 5 reflects on the extent to which the outcomes reported in Section 4 are contributing towards resilience. Section 6 concludes with lessons learned through the MTR process across the BRACED portfolio about future resilience-strengthening programming.



A young child, likely a girl, is standing in a rural, dusty environment. She is wearing a patterned top and shorts. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. In front of her and to her left are several large, blue, cylindrical water storage containers (jerrycans) stacked or arranged. The ground is dry and dusty, with some sparse vegetation in the background. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

## 2. BRACED PROJECTS

Image: Jennifer Leavy

The BRACED projects carry out their activities towards building resilience at scale using different strategies and modes of implementation, with diverse partnership arrangements and operating in different contexts. Each project uses a range of approaches in a holistic process to build resilience and increase the wellbeing of women and men involved in the projects. The projects aim to build local-level resilience at national or regional scale. The complicated nature of the programme, and the inherent complexity in implementing activities designed to respond to the context, influences and guides the choice of evaluation methodology and the way we analyse the data (outlined in Section 3).

### 2.1 Project activities

The projects implement packages of activities locally, regionally and nationally, working directly with communities, households and individuals as well as with local-level institutions, and local and national governments. These packages of activities will together contribute towards achieving the overall outcome of improved resilience to climate-related extremes and disasters. They are implemented in many different ways, including: working directly with intended beneficiaries; building institutional capacity; providing grants and technical support or resilience-building activities; and working through markets and private sector actors to reach more people.

The major focus areas of BRACED projects are:

- improving climate and disaster risk management, including through planning and finance mechanisms, for better developmental outcomes;
- improving access to climate and weather information, including early warning systems (EWS), to strengthen resilience;
- improving basic service delivery in different sectors to strengthen household resilience – including water, health, financial and agricultural services;
- improving access to markets (physical/regulatory systems/pricing information etc.) for smallholders and other producers to strengthen resilience to climate extremes and disasters.

Project activities include: training (e.g. in the use of improved seeds, in climate smart technology, health and nutrition); support for natural resource management; establishing and supporting EWS; water management and water and sanitation hygiene (WASH) activities such as providing boreholes and latrines; improving access to climate information; establishing and supporting small-scale financial institutions (savings and loans groups).

By learning from projects about approaches that work and why they work, and in what contexts, BRACED hopes to *influence policymaking* and development planning in national and local governments, regional and international initiatives.

## 2.2 Resilience in BRACED project M&E systems

Defining resilience in order to 'measure it' is inherently complex. Within BRACED, resilience is understood as the 'ability to anticipate, avoid, plan for, cope with, recover from and adapt to (climate-related) shocks and stresses' (DFID, 2014, cited in THE 3As: tracking resilience across BRACED, page 11).

### 2.2.1 The '3 As'

As part of their M&E systems, the BRACED projects have been following a common approach to measure the 'outcomes' of resilience-building processes, thought of as a set of interlinked capacities to **absorb, anticipate and adapt** to shocks and stresses (the 3As – Badahur et al., 2015). These capacities in turn help ensure that wellbeing and human development of communities carry on in spite of shocks. The '3As approach' has been developed as a way of understanding the outcomes of processes to build resilience. It also provides a standard lens through which to analyse the achievements of BRACED as a programme (across all projects). The 3As approach is informed by a foundational analysis of close to 50 resilience frameworks undertaken by the KM in the inception phase

(see BRACED M&E Guidance Notes – Note 4 on Measuring Resilience Outcomes – the 3As approach; and also Note 7). **We use the 3As as a framework for our discussion in Section 5.**<sup>5</sup>

In addition, BRACED projects are expected to demonstrate progress towards achieving **transformative change**, moving beyond supporting incremental changes in people's resilience to supporting a more radical shift in human systems, 'to fundamentally and sustainably improve the resilience of vulnerable citizens to climate impacts' (Silva Villanueva et al., 2016: 62). What evidence is there that the interventions and the mechanisms that support them have the potential to deliver 'amplified results' and/or 'transformational impact'?

### 2.2.2 Areas of Change

Four **Areas of Change** support project and programme-level lesson learning on the key processes by which resilience is built across contexts, at different scales and over time. The Areas of Change explain how BRACED projects, and the programme as a whole, improve resilience. The Areas of Change framework illustrates and explores the causal pathways that link project outputs to resilience outcomes and ultimately to impacts on human wellbeing.


The four Areas of Change are:

- **Changes in knowledge and attitude** in relation to resilience building, in order to further strengthen policies and practices;
- **Changes in the capacities and skills** of national and local government, civil society and private sector to manage the risks of climate extremes and disasters;
- Changes in the **quality of partnerships** to deliver interventions;
- Changes in **decision-making processes** through inclusive participation, as one key aspect of a resilient system.

<sup>5</sup> IPs are also required to estimate the numbers of people with improved resilience to climate shocks and stresses as a result of climate change that are due to the resilience-building and adaptation projects. The goal is for projects to report against the UK International Climate Fund's Key Performance Indicator No. 4 (KPI4). IPs choose indicators based on their theory of change that are relevant to their activities, by identifying the factors that affect the resilience of beneficiaries, and how the project will influence these factors to improve resilience. KPI4 is a mandatory indicator specified in the BRACED logframe, at the outcome level. At this stage of implementation, reporting against KPI4 is somewhat premature as the data on outcomes is still nascent. Further, this evaluation activity is concerned most with answering questions about how and why resilience outcomes are achieved and, where possible at this early stage, for whom, and less with measurement.

### 2.2.3 Relevance of these frameworks for this evaluation

It is important for our evaluation activity to be aware of the conceptual framings and methodologies used in the IPs' M&E activities, which offer some useful standardisation in reporting of outcomes. However, our focus has been on simplicity and clarity of thinking. To this end, the evaluation team supported and encouraged the IPs to link their theory of change to the actual activities they are implementing and the contribution that these make to a clearer and evolving understanding of resilience. The realist approach helps to drive that understanding 'from the ground up', by challenging IPs to define what resilience means to them, how their activities address it, and benchmarks they are using to measure it. It asks them to examine their roles and actions as implementers and the quality of their own work. It also reinforces an appreciation of how external factors, or context, not only shape the way they implement their projects and the responses to and outcomes of their activities, but the resilience of the people they serve.



# 3. EVALUATION AND SYNTHESIS METHODOLOGY

Image: Jennifer Leavy

The BRACED project-level MTRs and this synthesis were guided by common research questions and methodology. This section provides a brief overview of realist evaluation – the basis of our methodological approach – which guided the formulation of research questions, choice of methods, and enquiry focus on ‘packages’ of interventions. This section also defines a set of criteria for assessing quality of evidence, as well as elucidating limitations to the evaluation and how potential sources of bias were managed.

A more detailed evaluation design, including an outline of the steps involved in the evaluation, can be found in Annex 4.

## 3.1 Research questions

As discussed in Section 1.2, BRACED project-led evaluations and this synthesis set out to address the following central question:

*How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned/how can good practice be replicated?*

In order to help us answer this overarching question, we examine two further sub-questions in the synthesis:

**Across the BRACED project portfolio, how and why have different 'packages' of interventions strengthened resilience in particular contexts?**

**What can be learned from across the BRACED portfolio about future resilience-strengthening programming?**

## 3.2 BRACED approach to realist evaluation

### 3.2.1 What does it mean to take a realist lens?

Realist evaluation identifies theories about how a project or programme is expected to work. These are used to build explanations of why interventions may or may not work in practice. Either implicit or explicit theories may have informed the design of the project or programme interventions, as well as other relevant theories that offer alternative explanations. These are referred to as 'programme theories'. Realist evaluation tries to understand how contextual factors – such as changes to the climate, political structures, cultural norms, location and participants – shape and influence how the programme theories play out in practice.

The core idea behind realist evaluation is that a particular intervention will interact with the local context to activate different mechanisms (or change processes) and can lead to a variety of outcomes in different contexts. Context is understood as the most important influence on whether an intervention succeeds in activating a particular mechanism. This is because people respond to the intervention according to their context – so an intervention that activates a particular set of mechanisms in one context may activate a very different set in another.

We separate out features inherent in (or under the control of) the programme as intervention factors or interventions (I), from other contextual factors (C) or mechanisms (M) that are not, to give the formulation  $I+C+M=O$  (ICMOs).<sup>6</sup> These are HYPOTHESES about how a programme might work. Some examples of ICMOs are provided in Box 1, below.

<sup>6</sup> Building on learning from the BCURE evaluation experience with realist evaluation (Itad is conducting a 3-year realist impact evaluation of DFID's programme Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence (BCURE) [www.itad.com/projects/evaluation-of-approaches-to-build-capacity-for-use-of-research-evidence-bcure](http://www.itad.com/projects/evaluation-of-approaches-to-build-capacity-for-use-of-research-evidence-bcure))

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**Box 1: ICMO examples**

'By providing access to and training in the use of improved seeds (intervention), in a context where output markets are functioning and accessible (context) this results in reducing farmer risk and increasing their confidence in using improved seeds (mechanism), leading to improved yields, productivity and income from crop sales (output level outcome).'

'By supporting access to savings and loans groups and providing financial training, e.g. budgeting (intervention) in a context where women have poor access to financial services and depend on high interest, informal loans during times of stress (context) women recognise the value of savings and loans (mechanism), are actively saving and providing loans to one another (output), and are able to accumulate assets, invest and reduce stress in times of crisis (outcomes).'

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### 3.2.2 'Packages' of interventions

The synthesis process builds theory from the 'packages' of interventions up. Why are we doing this, and how does this help us to understand how and why BRACED is strengthening resilience in particular contexts?

Interventions are where the 'rubber hits the road' for programmes like BRACED, which aim to strengthen resilience. They are the specific activities that are aimed to support women and men to reach a particular resilience outcome. Each has an explicit or implicit theory of change (ToC) about how they will work, and in turn, how they contribute to resilience.

To build on an example in Box 1, an intervention that improves access to improved seeds may cause a mechanism to fire (increased confidence in using, and demand for, improved seeds), leading to an outcome of improved yields. However, this does not necessarily mean that the farmer has improved her resilience – and this is unlikely to be the sole activity aimed at improving resilience. It is more likely to be part of a bigger package. One example could be combining improved seed supply with more equitable access to markets, so that the farmer can negotiate better prices and therefore increase income. In this way, interventions come together in a 'package', which has an outcome that has the potential to strengthen resilience.

Within a BRACED project, multiple 'packages' may interact to strengthen the resilience of a target population. An intervention package to improve local access to weather and climate information, for instance, may mean that the same farmer can now use seasonal climate information to make planting decisions. This reduces exposure to losses as a result of climate variability. A financial inclusion package may give the farmer an opportunity to participate in savings and loans groups where she can save some of her improved income. This spreads risk and provides the farmer with a financial safety net to manage the impacts of extreme climate events.

In this way, multiple packages of interventions, each featuring multiple ICMO configurations, build up into a detailed ToC, or sets of hypotheses, as to how and why a particular BRACED project builds the resilience of a target population.

The job of the project-level evaluations and synthesis is to generate robust evidence to support and refine the theory of how and why BRACED strengthening interventions are working to improve resilience. Findings are not universally applicable, but they do help to make sense of complex processes in implementing projects and achieving outcomes.

## 3.3 Gathering the data

This section provides a brief overview about how the realist approach was applied in practice. It outlines in detailed steps how evidence was built around ICMO configurations within particular packages of interventions. These steps are:

### 3.3.1 Synthesis team desk-based review and guidance

The synthesis team conducted a detailed review of the BRACED programme (or Common) ToC, and project-level project documents. This review was intended to identify project-level ToCs and build a typology of intervention 'packages', which were common between different IPs. We also developed guidance notes (see Annex 2) and an outline evaluation matrix for IPs to structure their MTR process.

### 3.3.2 IP-led mid-term reviews

IP-led MTRs were carried out in mid-late 2016, using a range of both qualitative and quantitative methods, depending on their chosen design. Each represented a significant piece of work for the IPs. **Of the fourteen MTRs, six IPs did the MTR themselves and eight IPs commissioned consultants.** The evaluation findings were documented in reports and a range of supporting documents.

The MTR required IPs to define and explore the key 'mechanisms' that enable a particular intervention or package of interventions to lead to a change. Changes can be desired or undesired, positive or negative. BRACED M&E Guidance Note 7 (BRACED, 2015b) guided IPs in conducting their MTR and final evaluations.

The IPs were encouraged to take a reflective approach, in order to identify mechanisms, capture lessons and refine project-level ToC. This contributed to the MTRs as an opportunity for course correction in the second half of the project.

### 3.3.3 Supplementary data collection

Following an initial review of the 14 MTR reports, the synthesis team carried out a 2-hour long key informant interview (KII) with multiple staff in each IP. This allowed us to dig deeper into particular case studies and mechanisms, fill gaps in evidence, and explore the reasons why their projects have progressed the way they have.



## 3.4 Synthesising across projects

A synthesis workshop was held 28–30 November 2016, following a review of the project MTR reports, bringing together all the members of the evaluation team. The evaluation questions extracted from the MTR reports and the KII transcripts were synthesised using realist principles and thematic analysis focused on outcomes and mechanisms. The mechanisms were informed by both the evidence from MTR reports and KII transcripts, as well as the expert knowledge of the evaluation team and the literature.

Links between outcomes, contexts and mechanisms from across the range of projects were explored and, where possible, synthesised. We used a typology of activities (described in Section 5) to group the projects, clustering and analysing the programme theories and contexts, mechanisms and outcomes, to draw out lessons and implementation experiences across the projects.

Under a realist lens, a range of techniques help us to ‘think about evidence and draw conclusions’ (Michaelis and Westhorp, 2016: 13):

- juxtaposing (‘for instance, when one study provides the data to make sense of the outcome pattern noted in another’);
- reconciling (identifying differences which explain apparently contradictory sets of findings);
- adjudicating between studies (quality of research);
- consolidating (multi-faceted explanations of success);
- situating (this mechanism in context X, that one in context Y).

## 3.5 Limitations, bias and risk

The evaluation synthesis faces certain limitations, risks and potential biases, which the evaluation team has taken measures to mitigate (see Table 1 below).

The evaluation team is external to the BRACED programme and to the IPs, which goes some way towards institutional independence. As a team separate from the implementation and management of the projects, we were able to take an impartial stance in considering both successes and things that did not work so well – deriving lessons from both. However, as part of the KM team we had access to all BRACED project documents and the MTR was a contracted reporting requirement of the IPs. As practitioners (researchers and consultants) working in climate change adaptation and resilience, we benefited from an understanding of how the IPs work and the context and issues they are grappling with. This lent credibility to our input in guiding IPs through the MTR process.

It is important to note that the evaluation team did not have the resources for field-based primary data collection and was dependent on the quality of evidence gathered and presented by IPs in their MTR reports. The evaluation team invested significant time in working one-to-one with IPs as they designed

and carried out their project-level MTRs to ensure that they provided the evidence necessary to carry out the synthesis with a realist lens. This was a departure from IPs' standard evaluation practice. The MTR process generated a number of lessons of how to support and synthesise across diverse and complicated resilience-building programmes using a realist lens. A supplementary reflections paper will document these lessons. This is intended to inform the final evaluation, as well as share lessons with the broader aid, development and evaluation community.

**Table 1: Evaluation synthesis limitations, bias and risk, with mitigation strategies**

LIMITATION, BIAS OR RISK	EXPLANATION	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
Limited evidence of outcome-level results at project level by project mid-term	BRACED projects have laid strong foundations in their first year. However, the short implementation period and complex contextual factors meant that by the time of the MTR, many project-level activities were at early stages of implementation and were not yet able to provide evidence of outcome-level results. This means that the projects were unable to provide specific evidence on for whom the project is working, except for activities where they were specifically targeting women and girls where outcomes had been achieved.	Evaluation synthesis considered different levels of outcomes – both <b>higher-level outcomes and outputs as building blocks to change</b> – with evidence of key mechanisms at play for both in this evaluation. While we could not control whether or not outcomes had been realised, we were able to use the data provided to draw important lessons, specifically, in focusing not only on mechanisms but also intervention factors – the ways in which the projects had been implemented influence how change happens. However, the lack of data on outcomes means that only limited synthesis could be carried out. Nevertheless, collating data and analysing emerging patterns provides important insights to guide implementation and to form the basis of the final evaluation.
Weak links between activities and outcomes in project-level ToCs	The MTR required projects to examine ICMO configurations at activity-package level. This was a departure from some of the project ToCs, which also did not always make explicit links between packages of activities.	One-to-one support to IPs to help and encourage them to think through programme theories and ICMOs at the activity level. A number of IPs are revising their ToCs with the FM based on the MTR, which should strengthen evidence generated in the final evaluation.
Quality of evidence in mid-term review reports	The MTR guidance and approach provided IPs flexibility to develop approaches that met minimum requirements but responded to their own project needs. Projects had varying resources (staff time and financial resources) and the quality of evidence presented in reports was mixed. Although some projects presented quantitative evidence updating the baseline, other projects will not collect such data until the final evaluation.	The evaluation synthesis uses a criterion for assessing quality of evidence – see Section 3.7. Insofar as it is possible, this includes considering the methods used by IPs to collect the data and degree of triangulation undertaken in analysis. Supplementary data were collected by the evaluation team in interviews with each IP project team.

LIMITATION, BIAS OR RISK	EXPLANATION	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
'Self-importance bias'	Overstating role in events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplementary interviews with IPs and project teams sought to clarify MTR findings and triangulate. The final evaluation is required to be carried out by independent consultants in all projects.</li> <li>• In-depth examination of the causal chain and interrogation by the evaluation team of assumptions and theorised causes.</li> </ul>
'Friendship bias'	If an evaluator has spent time with programme staff and has developed a good relationship with them, it becomes difficult to upset them with a critical report.	The evaluation team worked in pairs with the IPs in different combinations, ensuring that there was always a third team member who had not had contact with the IPs in supporting them through the MTR process available to review reports, analyse data and carry out KIIs. The MTR reports were also reviewed separately by two team members, with the team leader reviewing all 14 reports. This minimised any tendency towards positivity bias that might arise from developing good relationships with the IPs. However, given the self-reflective nature of the MTR process, there need to be a high level of trust between the evaluation team and the IPs so building a good relationship was key in ensuring quality of data necessary for realist reflections.
No independent verification of project-level MTR findings	IPs used a mixture of in-house project teams and independent consultants to carry out MTRs as permitted in the BRACED M&E Guidance Notes. However, resources are not available for the evaluation team to carry out an independent review of evaluation findings. There is a risk of bias from this self-reported evidence.	<p>A key objective of the MTR process for the IPs was to gather data to inform learning and course correction in their projects. It was in IPs' own interests to be as frank and self-reflective as possible so as to derive maximum value from the MTR process and ensure project success.</p> <p>IPs were encouraged and supported to report on both barriers and constraints to achieving outcomes, including reflecting on activities or ways of implementing that had not worked.</p> <p>Supplementary interviews with IPs and project teams sought to clarify MTR findings and triangulate. The final evaluation is required to be carried out by independent consultants in all projects.</p> <p>This evaluation is only one of five activities and as such needs to be considered as just one component alongside the other EAs, and just one part of the story.</p>
Attribution biases	<p>(i) 'fundamental error of attribution': people are more likely to attribute changes to individuals than to contextual factors. Significant danger that respondents will emphasise the role of individual actors, while ignoring the more general social or political context and its effects on the timing and course of events.</p> <p>(ii) 'self-serving bias': biased view of own contribution to changes, taking credit when things go well, but blaming other factors (people, situation, fate) when things go badly. Can be present in groups as well as individuals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of the MTR data collection around gathering data using a realist lens, with its strong focus on contextual factors.</li> <li>• IPs were encouraged and supported to report on both barriers and constraints to achieving outcomes, including reflecting on activities or ways of implementing that had not worked.</li> <li>• Supplementary interviews with IPs and project teams sought to clarify MTR findings and triangulate. The final evaluation is required to be carried out by independent consultants in all projects.</li> <li>• In-depth examination of the causal chain and interrogation by the evaluation team of assumptions and theorised causes.</li> </ul>

## 3.6 Variations on the design

The detailed design for this evaluation activity is given in a separate design document.<sup>7</sup> Steps and activities are summarised in Table A4.1 in Annex 4.

There have been three key 'deviations' from the original design:

1. **Supplementary data collection:** The original design identified three potential activities: (i) digging deeper into case studies of 'positive and negative deviance', with visits to selected IPs; (ii) filling potential gaps in the data; and/or (iii) gathering evidence on quality of delivery, that could form the supplementary data collection to complement the IPs' MTR reports. The team deliberately kept this component 'open' in order to assess the needs of the evaluation activity once the MTR was under way and in considering the evidence already being generated by IPs. From the 1-2-1 engagement on the realist approach with the IPs, through Skype sessions and in some cases face-to-face meetings, it made sense for the evaluation team to dig deeper into all the projects to fill gaps in the data, rather than to select in-depth case studies of 'positive and negative deviance' at this stage of implementation. KIIs, which used a uniform set of underlying questions with all of the IPs who had submitted their MTR reports by the end of October 2016, provided a dataset focusing on getting the depth and clarity needed to analyse intervention factors and mechanisms in pathways to outputs and outcomes.

The team considered an assessment of quality of delivery that would involve visits to each of the IPs in order to carry out process evaluation-type activities and investigation. However, this was beyond the scope of this evaluation activity.

2. **Evaluation matrix produced by IPs:** In the original design, the evaluation team produced an excel worksheet containing a skeleton of underlying evaluation sub-questions to be tailored by the IPs to their projects. This would form an analysis template for IPs to record data in a systematic way and the findings would be set out in the MTR reports. Early consultation with IPs suggested that this process would be too burdensome so we modified the requirements in favour of a completed evaluation matrix, in Word table form, detailing only the IPs' proposed approach to the MTR data collection. Some IPs chose to fill out their Word table evaluation matrices with MTR data anyway, in the manner of an analysis grid, and they found this a useful way to summarise their findings.
3. **Analytical approach to the synthesis:** Originally, we considered a meta-ethnographic approach to be appropriate for the analysis and synthesis of the MTR data across the range of BRACED project contexts. In this way, we would retain the original language of the underlying reports, while 'translating' across the findings to identify common mechanisms and themes. Once we received the reports and carried out initial analysis to

<sup>7</sup> BRACED, 2016. Evaluation Activity 2 Design Report: Evaluating the set of BRACED resilience-strengthening interventions. Submitted to DFID 27 January 2016.

identify outcomes that were clearly evidenced in a realist way, we considered the volume of findings not to be large enough to warrant such a layered and in-depth approach. At this stage, the synthesis leans more towards a collation of diverse ICMOs across a range of outcomes. Instead, we undertook thematic analysis of the data (described in more detail above). Our decision to change our analytical approach was guided not only by the empirical realities of the MTR process, but also by the team leader's experience of a realist evaluation of another project, and the experience of the team who are carrying out the evaluation of DFID's BCURE programme (see footnote 6). We consider this to have had no effect on the analysis. By employing the techniques listed in Section 3.4 of this report, as cited by Michaelis and Westhorp (2016), we were able to summarise and synthesise the evidence and draw conclusions.

### 3.7 Quality and strength of evidence

This evaluation activity aims to synthesise across the projects what we can learn about what works and what does not in implementing resilience-building activities, and how and why they work in these ways. In basing our analysis on the evidence presented in the MTR reports, we need some way of judging the strength and quality of this evidence.

Under the realist approach, evidence is used to refine theories: 'an iterative process moving towards the best possible explanation of evidence', acknowledging that evidence is 'always partial and incomplete' (Michaelis and Westhorp, 2016: 12). What is important is that the evidence is relevant to the theory under consideration.

The evaluation team considered using the **Quality of Evidence in Realist Evaluation** criteria set out in Michaelis and Westhorp (2016: 14). However, the data suggested that the criteria were not appropriate given the size of the dataset and early stage of implementation.

The extent to which evidence presented in the MTR reports is reliable is considered at this stage to depend on each project's methods of data collection, the extent to which findings have been triangulated from different sources and any techniques to make an assessment about the level of contribution or attribution from project interventions. Evidence reported in this report has been assessed along the following criteria:

#### **For each IP**

- MTR data sets were collected using appropriate methods;
- MTR evidence has been triangulated across sources, and sources are appropriate;
- MTR considers attribution and contribution from project interventions.

# PART 2. WHAT DID WE LEARN?



This section presents the main findings of the MTR synthesis process. It draws on evidence generated by the IPs set out in their MTR reports and KIIs. These KIIs were carried out with IPs by the evaluation team, to contribute towards addressing the overarching MTR synthesis question:

How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work,  
and what can be learned/how can good practice be replicated?

Two sub-questions to help us to answer this overarching synthesis question are:

- Across the BRACED project portfolio, how and why have different 'packages' of interventions strengthened resilience in particular contexts?
- What can be learned from across the BRACED portfolio about future resilience-strengthening programming?

Section 4 addresses the first of these sub-questions, setting out hypotheses that form plausible explanations about how the projects are working. Section 5 then examines the extent to which project outcomes contribute to resilience, and Section 6 concludes with lessons learned from across the MTR process.

Overall, the MTR reports provide detailed analysis of how and why projects lead to change, affording valuable insights into how interventions, responding to context, can achieve outputs and outcomes on the way to improving resilience, and why. This offers important lessons for BRACED in designing and implementing resilience-building interventions.

Most evidence reported by IPs concentrates on how interventions are responding to context, leading to outputs achieved and, in some cases, outcomes. Many of the interventions are trying to get men or women to change their behaviour by a process of changing awareness, knowledge, skills, confidence and practice. Projects employ a range of tools such as training, demonstrations, provision of inputs, targeting of specific locations or times of the year etc. What is distinctive is the way in which these interventions are customised to suit the context.

**As noted in Section 1.2, at the time of the MTR, the BRACED projects were not yet at a stage whereby they were seeing outcomes from their activities, for the most part. This means that the necessary volume of data for a full synthesis is not yet available. Some limited synthesis is possible and this is presented in Section 4.4. In order to achieve maximum learning from the MTRs, we have additionally analysed what works and why by considering what lessons we may learn from individual events as well as analysing pathways towards outputs achieved as building blocks towards change.**

There is some evidence of mechanisms (those aspects that lead to changes in individual behaviour, comprised of social processes such as reasoning, choice, norms, collective beliefs, incentives, peer pressure, social interaction etc.). However, the stronger focus on intervention factors reflects the stage of implementation of the projects and the degree to which more time is needed for outcomes to come to fruition.



# 4. HOW AND WHY CHANGE HAPPENS

Image: Jennifer Leavy

This section focuses on synthesising the evidence across the BRACED portfolio project MTR reports and KIIs to address the first synthesis sub-question about how and why have different 'packages' of interventions strengthened resilience in particular contexts. We present the findings in sections that align with the 'extent of evidence' categories described in Table 2 below. We start with programme theories, then move straight to outcomes as the key point of interest of this evaluation activity. We then discuss progress towards outcomes, signalled by achievement of outputs.

The stage of implementation of the projects means that in most cases, it is simply too soon to tell what the outcomes are. As such, the pathways towards intended outcomes are also not yet well evidenced although we have tried to analyse progress as much as possible by focusing also on outputs achieved as building blocks towards change. We highlighted this lack of evidence in Section 3.5 when we discussed that our analysis is more akin to a pooling of findings from across the projects than a synthesis. The necessary volume of data is simply not there. It is very difficult to synthesise when you have individual instances of an outcome or of CMO configurations – effectively, we were collating and seeing what lessons we could learn from individual events. Some limited synthesis is possible and this is presented in Section 4.4.



In considering outputs, there is a natural overlap with the Annual Report Synthesis (Silva Villanueva et al., 2016). However, here, we discuss **only those outcomes and outputs reported in by the IPs in their MTRs in a realist way**; that is, those with stated context-mechanism-outcome pathways, or those that explicitly considered context and how implementation has responded to contextual factors. Those that remain at the theoretical level (programme theories and theoretical ICMOs) are expected to be evidenced in time during the final evaluation; but at this stage, evidence does not yet tell us anything about how and why the programme works.

We group outcomes reported at the MTR stage dependent on the degree to which they have been achieved, as described in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Extent of evidence for ICMOs in the BRACED MTR**

EVIDENCE 'STRENGTH'	DESCRIPTION	NO. OF INTERVENTIONS
Evidenced	Clear ICMO configuration evidencing an outcome and clear evidence of contribution from BRACED activities. May include lines of evidence from multiple projects.	20
Partially evidenced	It is too early for projects to demonstrate outcomes in this area, but outputs and 'process' outcomes may have been achieved and plausible pathways to resilience and wellbeing outcomes appear to be in place and there is a clearly articulated ICMO configuration explaining how the output was generated.	18
Theoretical	Implementation has not yet achieved outputs. There is not yet a pathway to change and any reported ICMO is still articulated at the level of the Grant Theory of Change.	>20

**BRACED project typologies**

At the design stage, we analysed background documents, including project proposals and ToCs, and compiled an early typology of project intervention packages (sets of activities leading to outcomes) to help us to structure the synthesis. The exercise also provided an initial synthesis of the actual sets of interventions of the 15 BRACED projects. This was updated using information from the MTR reports to reflect any changes that had taken place between project design and actual implementation.

Table 3 sets out the refined typologies of the main activity groupings of the BRACED projects, based on reported outcomes that emerged from the analysis of the MTR reports. This helps us to group 'like with like' – forming an organising framework for our synthesis and discussion of what has worked, how and why, in strengthening resilience across the projects.

The remainder of this section is organised as follows:

Section 4.1 sets out programme theories – how the programme expects to effect change – for the BRACED projects and for the different activity areas described in Table 3 below.

Section 4.2 examines the evidence for specific outcomes of the BRACED projects to date. These are the ICMO configurations generated at the project level related to outcomes. They represent detailed programme theories or **hypotheses** for specific activities. In terms of extent of evidence, these are considered to be **evidenced**: outcomes (O) have been achieved by projects and are evidenced in the MTR reports and KII interviews with contexts (C), and responses to that context in the form of intervention factors (I) and mechanisms (M) that can explain that change. **These may be tested at the final evaluation to determine which ICMOs offer the most plausible explanations of observed patterns of outcomes.**

Section 4.3 examines evidence on context and mechanisms contributing to outputs and lowest level outcomes for activity areas where the BRACED projects have not yet reported and evidenced outcomes. These are the building blocks for, or progress towards, change leading towards achieving anticipated outcomes in terms of improved capacity and greater resilience. For example, the project provides seed (I), farmers choose to plant the seed (M) and the crop is in the ground (output). From here we can get a sense of whether or not the building blocks appear to be in place to achieve desired change – are they the right building blocks? In realist terms, these are the lower 'levels of abstraction'. In this example, one might expect that once the crop is harvested, it will be sold and contribute to increased incomes (outcome) or consumed contributing to household food security (outcome) or nutrition (outcome), which may all contribute towards increased resilience.

**Table 3: Typology of activity groupings for the BRACED projects**

PACKAGE OF INTERVENTIONS	ANUKULAN (IDE – NEPAL)	BRICS (CONCERN – CHAD AND SUDAN)	CIARE (CHRISTIAN AID – ETHIOPIA)	DCF (NEF – MALI AND SENEGAL)	IRISS (CONCERN – SOUTH SUDAN)	MAR-E (FARM AFRICA – ETHIOPIA)	MYANMAR ALLIANCE (PLAN)
1a) Horticulture and Cropping	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
1b) Livestock Management	•	•	•	•	•		
2. Nutrition and Health (including training, behaviour change)	•	•					
3. Water Supply (system development, water management for households and agriculture)	•	•		•			
4. Natural Resource Management (forest and watershed governance, pasture management, cookstove technology)	•	•		•	•		•
5. Financial Inclusion (village savings and loans schemes, linkage to financial service providers)			•		•	•	•
6. Entrepreneurship (training, group formation, value chain development, service providers)	•		•		•	•	
7. Planning and Policy Influence (community planning, local capacity building, grant making, advocacy and lobbying, national policy influence)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
8. Disaster Risk Management and Early Warning (group formation, early warning systems, hazard mitigation, improved forecasting and climate information)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
9. Gender and Social Inclusion (organisational change, training, policy influence, self-help and support)	•	•		•			•

\* Senegal, Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso

**Table 3: Continued from page 34**

PACKAGE OF INTERVENTIONS	LIVESTOCK MOBILITY (AFL – 5 COUNTRIES*)	PRESENCES (CARE – NIGER)	PROGRESS (MERCYCORPS – KENYA AND UGANDA)	RIC4REC (IRD – MALI)	SUR1M (CRS – NIGER AND MALI)	WHH (BURKINA FASO)	ZAMAN LEBIDI (CHRISTIAN AID – BURKINA FASO)
1a) Horticulture and Cropping		•	•	•	•	•	•
1b) Livestock Management	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2. Nutrition and Health (including training, behaviour change)					•	•	•
3. Water Supply (system development, water management for households and agriculture)		•		•			•
4. Natural Resource Management (forest and watershed governance, pasture management, cookstove technology)	•		•	•	•	•	•
5. Financial Inclusion (village savings and loans schemes, linkage to financial service providers)	•	•	•	•	•		
6. Entrepreneurship (training, group formation, value chain development, service providers)			•	•	•	•	
7. Planning and Policy Influence (community planning, local capacity building, grant making, advocacy and lobbying, national policy influence)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
8. Disaster Risk Management and Early Warning (group formation, early warning systems, hazard mitigation, improved forecasting and climate information)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
9. Gender and Social Inclusion (organisational change, training, policy influence, self-help and support)		•	•	•	•		

## 4.1 Programme theories

A BRACED change proposition for the resilience-building projects (Components A and B) was derived by the evaluation team from the BRACED ToC:

By investing in 15 projects directly targeting households and communities, working with a whole variety of stakeholders, BRACED aims to support changes along seven themes (climate and weather information; basic services, including social protection; gender and social equality; technology and innovation; markets and local economic development; governance and natural resource management; and resilience metrics and concepts). This will enable change to happen in four areas (knowledge and attitude, capacities and skills, quality of partnerships and decision-making processes). It will lead, at different scales via a set of four outputs, to the BRACED outcome of poor people in developing countries have improved their levels of resilience (measured along three dimensions: anticipatory, adaptive and absorptive capacity) to climate-related shocks and stresses.

An overarching programme theory reads as:

By investing in directly supporting poor people to become more resilient to climate extremes and disasters, improving the capacity of developing countries and regional organisations to plan for (un)expected frequency and severity of climate extremes and disasters, and by generating learning and evidence from this support, **improved knowledge and capacity will lead to changes in practice and action**. Targeted communities will be more resilient, and there will be a better understanding of what works and what does not work in building climate resilience. This will result in improved policies and institutions at the national, subnational and local levels and a better integration of disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation and development programmes. This will lead, in the long term, to improving the wellbeing of millions of people despite exposure to climate extremes and disasters.

### 4.1.1 Programme theories for BRACED projects' main activity areas

For the different activity areas, the evaluation team derived specific programme theories, drawing on BRACED project documents (project proposals, annual reports, MTR reports). We do not necessarily know what the mechanisms will be, but by intervening in response to local context our ToC anticipates that farmers'/ project participants' behaviour will be successfully changed.

**Agriculture and livestock management** (e.g. agro-pastoralist field schools; training in vegetable growing; poultry rearing; provision of improved seeds): By offering support to farmers in ways that respond to their context, farmers will change their behaviour to learn new approaches, develop their skills in a range of agricultural production activities, including livestock and animal husbandry, leading them to both diversify enterprises and increase productivity and production, which could also lead to increased food consumption (volumes and varieties) and/or sales. Such improved livelihoods are expected to be more

resilient to (climate) shocks and stresses and will minimise farmers' vulnerability to the effects of climate change and climate extremes.

**Health and nutrition** (e.g. traditional birth attendant training; support to health centres; support groups for mothers; training volunteer community health workers): By offering support to project participants in ways that respond to their context, they will change their behaviour to learn about, understand and carry out improved health and nutrition practices contributing to improved health and nutrition outcomes. This is expected to improve overall wellbeing, reduce vulnerability to shocks and stresses, and contribute to reducing people's vulnerability to the effects of climate change and climate extremes.

**Water supply** (e.g. watershed management; latrine construction; provision of boreholes): By providing technical and other support for the supply of water, projects – in ways that respond to their context – will support farmers to change their behaviour to improve watershed management. This will ensure that households have access to sufficient amounts of clean water. This in turn will contribute to improved health and nutrition as well as water for productive needs, improving welfare and resilience to climate shocks and stresses.

**Natural resource management** (e.g. run-off management; regeneration training; cook stove technology training): By supporting participant households and individuals in a range of aspects of natural resource management in ways that respond to their context, they will change their behaviour to manage natural resources more effectively. This will in turn support rural production, contributing to strengthened and diversified livelihoods activities, increased incomes and enhanced resilience to climate shocks and stresses through sustaining the resource base that provides ecosystem services.

**Financial services** (e.g. establishing and supporting savings and loans groups; training savings groups in bookkeeping and business planning): By helping poor rural people, particularly women, to access loans and savings products in ways that respond to their context, it is expected that people will establish micro-businesses or have an increased ability to manage daily financial demands. Training is given to interested poor individuals to form savings groups and/or on basic financial or business skills. Anticipated behavioural change includes loans used to manage household expenses such as school fees or health fees; or to finance micro-business start-up. Savings and loans are also used to manage shocks and unexpected events such as illness and bereavement. In the longer term, IPs hope to achieve sustained access financial services, business development as well as household stability or developmental growth through increased incomes, savings or expenditures on the education of children.

**Entrepreneurship and small business development** (e.g. women's networking training; connecting clean energy suppliers with retailers): By providing participants with business skills or support to develop a new market or product, in ways that respond to their context, it is anticipated that behaviour will change, with moves from farming or livestock activities to other businesses. As a result, small sustainable business will develop. These businesses are assumed to help insulate incomes from climatic shocks by providing alternative sources that are not as susceptible to climate impacts.

**Planning and government capacity building and policy influence**

(e.g. establishing climate adaptation committees; training government officials on climate proofing; supporting township development planning): By supporting community organisation, local planning processes, and building the knowledge and skills of local and subnational government, in ways that respond to the context, BRACED project support will (i) influence national policy and practice related to managing the impacts of climate extremes and disasters. This will lead key government actors to change their behaviour to integrate climate and disaster risk, and community priorities into local planning and budgeting process; (ii) improve local capacity and stimulate action to plan and manage climate extremes and disasters; and (iii) change government behaviour, increasing responsiveness and accountability.

**Disaster risk management and early warning** (e.g. setting up early warning systems (EWS); strengthening quality and accessibility of climate forecasts): By working with women and men in communities, and local and national institutions, to reduce losses (agricultural and property) from climate hazards, in ways that respond to their context, the project will strengthen local and regional disaster risk management institutions, improving knowledge and provision of climate information. This will change behaviour towards the safeguarding of assets and livelihoods, leading to reduced loss from hazard events.

**Gender and inclusion** (e.g. gender equality training; gender responsive budgeting processes; women's empowerment training; community-level gender analysis): By strategically targeting activities to ensure they address the practical needs of women and men, working with both women and men, and with staff and partners to build organisational capacity for change, in ways that respond to context, the BRACED programme seeks to effect behavioural change that will in turn change gender stereotypes and norms, strengthen women's voice and decision-making power within households, communities and government institutions. By recognising that vulnerability and resilience are shaped by social norms and power relations, transforming inequality is an important part of the broader process of building resilience.

## 4.2 Outcomes: what the BRACED programme has achieved and how the projects got there

This section sets out and interprets outcomes achieved to date that have been described by IPs using context and mechanism 'pathways', **comparing project-level findings and conclusions**. These outcomes emerged from evaluation team analysis of the MTR reports and project documents, and are **those reported by the IPs with an accompanying analysis of how and why their particular project achieved that change**. Section 5 explores how these outcomes relate to resilience. In this section, the evidence for pathways to outcomes is described as sets of ICMO configurations (fine-grained theories) that have contributed to these outcomes. These are hypotheses formulated on the basis of the outcome having happened and the IP uncovering the pathways

towards that change during the MTR data collection process. The ICMO configurations contain sequences of intervention factors and, where reported, also mechanisms sparked by the project contexts leading to different levels of outcomes where relevant. In some cases, an activity has triggered a change in behaviour or reasoning but the detail of the precise mechanism is still unknown and unreported. The final evaluation can examine these in greater detail when more time has elapsed to achieve outcomes, including determining what the most plausible explanations of the observed patterns of outcomes are. Nevertheless, we still report these pathways to change in the format of an ICMO because a behavioural change is there even though we may not yet know its exact nature.

In some cases, we see 'layers' of outcomes. This happens where an initial mechanism, or sequence of mechanisms (responses to the intervention and the way it has been implemented), leads to a particular outcome and effectively changes the context, which then sparks the next mechanism along the chain.

Table 4 summarises the outcomes so far that have been described in the MTRs with a realist lens against the associated activity area.

**Table 4: Outcomes achieved by activity area**

OUTCOMES	AG	NUT	WAT	NRM	FIN	ENT	PLAN	DRM	GENDER
Increased food supply	•							•	
Dietary diversity	•								
Incomes: Sustained new income source/ increased incomes					•	•			•
Improved health outcomes		•	•		•				
Able to pay for other costs, e.g. school/ university	•				•				
Accumulation of savings to manage 'hard times' without stripping assets or engaging negative coping strategies					•				
Women have greater voice and decision-making power at household level and in local institutions					•		•		•
Improvements in girls' wellbeing									•

**Key:**  
 AG = Agriculture and Livestock; NUT = Nutrition; WAT = Water Supply; NRM = Natural Resource Management; FIN = Financial Services; ENT = Entrepreneurship and Business Development; PLAN = Planning and Government Capacity Building and Policy influence; DRM = Disaster Risk Management; GENDER = Gender and Inclusion.



## 4.2.1 Increased food supply, dietary diversity and incomes

All of the BRACED projects have packages of activities in agriculture and livestock, generally supported by complementary interventions and training – for example, in health and nutrition, climate smart technology, business and enterprise training. Three projects reported outcomes related to increases in food supply, providing a wider variety of vegetables and other crops in people's diets, and increased incomes (BRICS, RIC4REC, Anukulan).<sup>8</sup> Most of the reported links to behavioural change focus on the way the activities are being implemented, which has knock-on effects on the way participants receive and respond to the interventions.

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### Box 2: Increased food supply, dietary diversity and incomes

#### ICMO A1

In contexts where there are strong traditional institutions and local and subnational government are poorly resourced (C), and men migrate to pursue economic opportunities (C), supporting vegetable garden development in Chad and providing training, seeds and tools to women's groups (I), where there was mutual support among women, collective action and competition (M), has changed behaviour resulting in: more vegetables grown for consumption and sale (output), leading to direct beneficiaries consuming vegetables to meet immediate food needs (O) and selling vegetables to raise cash as a buffer and for investment in other business activities e.g. livestock (O2).

In addition, Outcome 2 changes the context in the way that it increases local supply of vegetables to the wider community (O).

*Source: BRICS MTR Report Annex 1; BRICS KII*

#### ICMO A2

In areas that were largely dependent on rain-fed sorghum and millet production (C), training on food processing and storage, business management, grant support for market garden development and other livelihood diversification (I), creating space and time for women to meet (I) and women to meet and build relationships (I), and where technical training is developed in consultation with women on their needs (I) and women are satisfied with the intervention (M), means that women acquire the skills to manage their business and the grant allocation (output), local processing and value adding takes place (output), increasing local stores of preserved foodstuff (output). This contributes to improvements in women's income (O) and greater diversity of local foodstuff (O).

*Source: RIC4REC (MTR Report)*

<sup>8</sup> Braced projects: BRICS – Building Resilience in Chad and Sudan; RIC4REC – Renforcement des Initiatives Communautaires pour la Résilience aux Extrêmes Climatiques; and Ankulan.

**ICMO A3**

Building knowledge and capacity at household level for farmer-managed natural resources to cultivate moringa and fruit trees – providing training in nursery establishment and propagation techniques that are more reliable (I), where previously farmers could only propagate from seed (C). Targeting areas with a water source (C) and community natural resource groups are already established (C), with knowledge and active concern about desertification (C), and the project is operating within a traditional context at the village level with deeply entrenched gender norms (C) AND training is hands-on (I) follow-up demonstration is rapid (I) with frequent visits by project staff (I), using technology that is more reliable (IM), with a sanctioning system in place (I), combining an immediate income stream with long-term benefits (I). This means that demonstration plots and nurseries have been established (output), people are propagating using improved practices (output) and trees have been planted (output) with cuttings being sold providing extra income to households (O).

*Source: BRICS (MTR Report)*

**ICMO A4**

Trainings and provision of improved seeds (essential oil and vegetable) (I), where projects are operating in areas with limited market access for agriculture and essential oils (C), and farmers on the whole were producing vegetables before the project (C), [farmers have taken up climate smart technology] (C) AND farmers like the project approach (M) [they find it credible, they like the integrated approach/cycle of support, like the input support, they like the training on nutrition/health – (I)]; AND can see benefits of potential increased income due to increased land in cultivation (M); AND farmers like the practical way the training is carried out (M), so it is easy to carry out the technique (M), results in farmers scaling up production (output) leading to 94% of farmers now cultivating new vegetables they were not doing before; and increased annual incomes from sale of vegetables and essential oils (average income of £114 for vegetables and £183 for the oils) (O).

*Source: Anukulan (MTR Report)*

**ICMO A5**

Project support to establish distilleries, collection centres for vegetables (I), operating in areas with limited market access for agriculture and essential oils (C); [farmers have taken up climate smart technology] (C), where the project is using and mobilising existing (forming and reforming) farmers groups to run the collection centres (M), women are well-represented on distillery and marketing committees (M); farmers are confident their crop will sell at a reasonable price (M) – results in distilleries and vegetable collection centres operating (output) and increased annual incomes from sale of vegetables and essential oils (average income of £114 for veg and £183 for the oils) (O).

*Source: Anukulan (MTR Report)*

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The provision of training and materials for vegetable gardens for 600 beneficiaries has resulted in improved vegetable availability, for project participants and in their wider community (Box 2). Vegetable sales have provided income for basic needs and investment in other productive activities:

*Direct beneficiaries have started consuming vegetables and some are able to sell to raise cash for immediate needs. People are now able to source vegetables within Adar whereas previously there was limited access to vegetables from markets in Geneina. Groups are not only providing for their own consumption, but also for the wider community*

*Source: (Community Discussion topics from Adar Geneina) BRICS MTR Report Annex 1 2016: 2.*

The underlying context for this intervention is a common practice of men migrating for work for long periods during the year, leaving women to 'fend for themselves' (C). This suggests that supporting women (e.g. with establishing and improving livelihoods especially during the dry season) is a key response to context. Therefore, working with women's groups has been an important intervention factor in getting the activities off the ground, with the **right people being targeted** (I) and the activity is responding to women's/participants' needs. Proof of concept is seen to **enhance the credibility** (I) of interventions, as does 'speaking to' existing concerns (e.g. where existing groups are already concerned about climate impacts such as desertification – BRICS KII), working with existing groups (ICMO A5) and delivering the activity as part of an integrated design including nutrition and health (ICMOA4). There was evidence that farmer's groups that had received seed last year, had retained seed for this year's planting season. This, combined with apparent willingness of the groups to work together again (M), indicates sustainability of the activity.

This is also reflected in participants being able to acquire the right skills (e.g. to manage their grants) and being satisfied with the intervention – making them more likely to put their learning into practice (ICMO A2).

Another important factor is the **emphasis on the value and role of networks** (I): the activity 'creates space and time for women to meet' and as a result 'women meet and build relationships' (RIC4REC MTR Report).

The evidence suggests that parallel and complementary training activities support the likelihood of achieving outcomes: for example, parallel work on health and nutrition makes increased vegetable consumption more likely; complementary **business management and food processing trainings** (I), ensure that crops can be stored and sold, also revitalising markets in some areas.

One group of intervention factors relates to **the way the training is provided and sequenced** (I): **hands-on training** (ICMO A3 and ICMO A4) with **timely follow-up field activity** (I), in terms of leaving only a short gap between the two activities. This was highlighted as important in the pathway towards farmers putting training into practice and establishing demonstration plots and nurseries

(ICMO A3) and scaling up production (ICMO A4), having been trained in techniques that they find **easy to apply themselves** (I) (ICMO A4).

Focusing on establishing just a small number of tree nurseries means the implementation team can make frequent visits, suggesting the **importance of not spreading resources too thinly** (I). Using more reliable technology (propagating from established root systems rather than seed) (I), was also seen to be important in ensuring success. Instead of having to wait for the trees to mature to realise the long-term benefit (selling fruit), an immediate income stream has been generated from selling cuttings (O), further **incentivising farmers with a quick win** (I). On the flipside, a **sanctioning system** was also set up (I). There is a strict no tree cutting policy and a hefty fine for breaking the rules (BRICS MTR Report).

Differential impacts on men and women and other social groups are not discernible in the data, beyond whether or not the activities are designed for and targeting women especially. In addition, while in many projects demonstration plots and nurseries have been established (output), people are propagating using improved practices (output), trees and crops have been planted (output), and in at least one project cuttings are being sold (O), (tree) crops are not ready yet so outcomes at a higher level are not yet evident.

#### 4.2.2 Improved health outcomes

We have most evidence for intervention factors and mechanisms leading to health outcomes (as higher-order wellbeing outcomes) from the BRICs project experience of implementing health and nutrition training. The project has been carrying out activities at scale, including training community traditional birth attendants and volunteer community health workers, setting up mothers' support groups, and supporting a range of government ministries (health, agriculture, livestock, environment) to strengthen advisory services to deliver nutrition and health support. The contexts in Chad and Sudan are of patriarchal societies with low levels of female literacy. Maternal mortality rates are high, and death has an enormous impact on household resilience to shocks and stresses. Health services are sparse, with an extremely low ratio of health centres to population. So far, the project has seen care of pregnant women improving, as are health and hygiene practices as a result of the project activities. In addition, knowledge about the value and importance of exclusive breastfeeding has increased from a low baseline.

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#### Box 3: Improved health outcomes via health and nutrition training

##### ICMO H1

Traditional birth attendant training (I) in areas with high maternal mortality rates (C), a high impact of death on household resilience (C) and an extremely low ratio of health centres to beneficiaries (C), timing training to avoid the rainy season (IM), the formation of mothers' groups to provide support (IM) and providing simple messages and clear images on materials left with communities (I) and ensuring the pace of training not too fast (I) has

led to behavioural change, including an increased number of referrals to health centres for births, and awareness of the importance of giving birth in health centres (O).

### ICMO H<sub>2</sub>

Volunteer community health workers (I) in areas with high maternal mortality rates (C) where deaths have a particularly negative impact on household resilience (C) and an extremely low ratio of health centres to beneficiaries (C), ... AND volunteer community health workers are recruited and work at community level (trained and organised by project) (I) ... dedicated community facilitator to a small number of villages (I) ... pace of training not too fast ... (I) avoiding rainy season for training (I) triggers behavioural change that leads to improvements to the care of pregnant women (O), improved health and hygiene practices (O) and higher levels of knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding (O). This is premised on the theory that health is a critical determinant of household level resilience, and improved health will have flow on effects at community level.

### ICMO H<sub>3</sub>

Care and mothers' support groups (I) in areas with high maternal mortality rates (C) where deaths have a particularly negative impact on household resilience (C) and an extremely low ratio of health centres to beneficiaries (C), ... AND women like coming together and peer-to-peer support (M) ... simple messages and clear images on materials left with communities (I) ... supports behavioural change that leads to improved health and hygiene practices (O), higher levels of knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding (O).

*Source: BRICS (MTR report and annexes); BRICS KII*

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The BRICS project team identifies a number of important intervention factors for achieving the outcomes seen so far (ICMO H<sub>1</sub>–H<sub>3</sub>). Training involves a number of **complementary activities**, notably knowledge of food preparation alongside improved practices. This means that participants are able to follow good feeding practices as long as they have the means – mainly that **quantity and variety of food are available** (C). As with the agricultural training, there are intervention factors related to the way the training is organised and delivered. **Getting the timing right** (I) in scheduling trainings sessions is crucial, in particular avoiding the rainy season. The importance of timing and avoiding the rainy season is also highlighted by Welthungerhilfe (WHH) in relation to constructing wells. **Clarity of training** (I) has also been key: making sure the pace of the training is not too fast, conveying **simple messages** (I) and using clear images on **materials that are left with communities** (I). The social element is also important: volunteer health workers are recruited at the community level (trained and organised by project). Again, **resources are not spread too thinly** (I), with one dedicated community facilitator to a small number of villages. The **mode of implementation is appropriate** (C): **women enjoy meeting together and reportedly like the peer-to-peer support** (M):

*The 'Mother-to-Mother' approach – with 'lead' and 'follower' mothers – has been generating a lot of excitement. When combined with the training that the women are getting, facilitators feel like women are getting the right messages, especially when it comes to exclusive breastfeeding (BRICS KII).*

One crucial contextual factor appears to be that this progress has been seen in communities that tend to stay in one place (agriculturalists and agro-pastoralists). The project has highlighted that they are still learning about how best to carry out training for nomadic/pastoralist women who tend to move between locations (BRICS KII).

The BRICS project has been implementing a suite of complementary activities under the WASH component of their project. These range from infrastructure-focused interventions such as constructing latrines and water storage, to 'institutional' activities in the form of setting up water user committees, as well as training and home visits related to hygiene and sanitation. So far, the boreholes provided by the project are supporting dry season agricultural activities, as well as supplying water for household consumption (output). In focus groups, communities have also provided qualitative evidence of reduced incidence of diarrhoea in project participants – which will be fully assessed in the final evaluation (ICMO H4). The context that they work in is one where 'people are habituated to illness and think it's normal' (BRICS MTR Report Annex 1). A number of intervention factors have been highlighted in the MTR. Given the context, using **incentives to mobilise community members** (I) to carry out work digging latrines and setting up taps, in exchange for the borehole, appears to be a key intervention factor in getting this set of activities to work. In terms of infrastructure maintenance, water committees received practical, **hands-on training** (I), **with the chance to practice** (I) carrying out repairs. The project **continues to provide support** (I) beyond the initial training to encourage the local committees to take on full responsibility for the boreholes. Complementary activities by the project both to invest in the spare parts network and to raise awareness of its existence mean that **conditions are put in place to ensure take up** (I). In terms of behavioural change, this has been most likely if **village and community facilitators are 'local' to the villages** (intervention factor) rather than being outsiders – suggesting that this is important in fostering **trust** and enhancing **credibility** (M) of the messages (we also see this with Improving Resilience to Climate Change in South Sudan (IRISS) project working with local leaders to select the lead farmers to act as role models in improved farming techniques). This is further enhanced by the project's deliberate decision to **focus resources** (I), which allows for concentrated efforts and stronger support in fewer locations. According to the BRICS MTR reports, people who originated from outside the community were also more likely to change their behaviour.

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**Box 4: Watershed management and improved water availability impacts on health outcomes**

**ICMO H4**

Watershed management/WASH activities to ensure sufficient access to water [latrine construction; setting up water user committees; water storage] (I) in contexts where people are habituated to illness and think it's normal (C); the project is building on experience from another programme (C); AND use of incentives (I) hands-on training of water committees with chance to practice repairs (I); follow-up with water user committee over long period to support them to take up responsibility for the boreholes (I)... project has invested in spare parts network (I) making sure that communities' awareness and understanding is raised so that they know there is a spare parts shop and will use it (I); village facilitators and community facilitators are in and come from the villages (I); and effort to concentrate activities in villages (I) leads to improved water availability (boreholes) (O), supporting dry season agricultural activities (vegetable gardens, fruit trees and household consumption) (O).

Improved water availability (O) complements ICMO H6:

**ICMO H5**

Watershed management/WASH activities [hygiene education (handwashing) and home visits by community facilitators on sanitation] in contexts where people are habituated to illness and think it's normal (C) and the project is building on experience from another programme (C), AND village facilitators and community facilitators are in and come from the villages (I) effort to concentrate activities in villages (I) resulting in behavioural changes that leads to reduced diarrhoea (O).

*Source: BRICS (MTR report and annexes); BRICS KII*

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SUR1M have led health and nutrition interventions including training nurses and community health workers in the correct identification of infant and child malnutrition, and support to prevent malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women. As a result, 11,063 cases of malnutrition were screened (O). Community messaging was reinforced by 1,063 cooking demonstrations and complementary radio messaging (I). Despite the large number of screenings, and some evidence of changes to customary cooking practices in targeted households (O), a number of contextual factors are limiting the achievement of outcomes expected from these interventions. More than 40% of communities reported insufficient equipment, lack of pharmaceutical products, repetitive absence and the lack of professionalism of the health workers as a major barrier to accessing services (M). So, although training and kitchen demonstrations were appreciated, the recommended approaches were beyond the reach of participants (M). This demonstrates the importance of targeting training to the means and resources

available to project participants. It also demonstrates that in the context of low health system capacity, community-level rating of health services is likely to remain low.

### 4.2.3 Ability to pay for other costs and accumulation of savings for 'hard times'

The ability to pay for 'lumpy' expenditures such as school fees, and savings to fall back on, are largely reported as a result of activities supporting financial services provision (savings and loans groups). In terms of 'process' outcomes, most IPs reported a strong uptake of the activities as well as numbers of people saving and the amounts they saved. Increased income – either through growing existing businesses or starting new ones – was reported at levels considered significant by the IPs. Groups were formed and operating, with participants saving and lending to each other. Loans were used to establish or grow businesses. Some businesses were graduating to formal financial services. Individuals reported using the loans or their increased income to make expenditures on their children's education, health expenses, or to re-invest it into their businesses (wellbeing outcome). Participants were overwhelmingly rural and female. There was a mix of groups based on growing income from rural production (commercialisation) and others that looked for non-farm opportunities.

Important intervention factors to explain their progress include that activities had addressed an urgent, unmet need (I), with farmers' reasoning leading to behavioural change (M) (ICMO F1). Other IPs highlighted the value of building on existing savings groups or businesses (I) (particularly farmers looking to commercialise). Successful groups tended to be those that were well selected (I) AND supported with skills to manage group dynamics (I) (i.e. managing non-repayment), as much as or more than business technical skills.

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#### Box 5: Improved access to and availability of cash

##### ICMO F1

Formation of savings and loans groups (I) in a context where women are vulnerable to extremes of climate and need immediate access to liquidity (C) and their business are viable (C) ... awareness is raised about the value/use of group savings and loans, and this reasoning (M) leads to behavioural change whereby people are saving and accessing loans (output) resulting in people being able to pay school fees, healthcare/medicine costs, achieve income smoothing (O).

*Source: CIARE MTR report*

##### ICMO F2

Individual and collective business plan support to village, savings and loan associations (VSLA), where groups already practising regular savings and loans (C) ... and people already have their own individual businesses (C) ... people choose to run the business as a group (I)... use profits individually (I)



... proven track record developed (output) ... increased financial acumen (output) ... group members do not experience shock (C) ... collective savings capacity increases (output)... groups are able to access government loans and grants (output)... households diversify their livelihoods (collective business proceeds invested in personal business) (output) ... results in ability to: pay school fees (O); pay medical bills (O); savings for hard times (O).

Source: PROGRESS MTR Report

SUR1M also reported, during the KII with the evaluation team, seeing some tangible outcomes from their support to financial services:

*We are working in areas with extremely low levels of literacy, and minimal exposure to things like business skills and entrepreneurship. This means that people can initially be slow to understand what they can do with micro credit ... but once a few people adopt, taking small loans and investing in business people see the potential and the idea spreads like wildfire.*

*In this context, where education and experience is low, **solidarity and support within [savings and loans] groups is extremely important.** The project allows for this by encouraging groups to make their own rules around the governance of loans. The project builds on the strength of **existing social ties** – strengthening them further. Before people went to town to make money but now they are able to make it in the village – and spend it in the village. The money is going into education and health fees, baptisms and meeting other social expectations/ contributions (SUR1M KII).*

#### 4.2.4 Women have greater voice and decision-making power at household level and in local institutions

For projects with an explicit focus on transforming gender inequality, training and mentoring are a key intervention for changing attitudes and practices. Interventions include a 5-week 'life skills' course for women and men who are part of the BRICS project in Chad and Sudan, and PROGRESS is providing training and mentoring through in-school and out-of-school girls' and boys' clubs.

BRICS is operating in patriarchal contexts, where rates of polygamy are high. Women in Chad and Sudan, for instance, bear the primary responsibility for most household tasks, including collecting water and wood, childcare, cooking, working in fields and market gardens. Men often migrate to find work during the lean season. In many cases, women may have very limited decision-making power, including over their own health. In this context, it was critical that the training provided by the project was **inclusive of both women and men** (I) in order to bring about change. Another important intervention factor was **starting**

**slowly with a few groups** (I) to provide intensive quality training. Outcomes from the initial training have led to **women talking more openly** (M) about the pressures that they feel at household level as well as both men and women making commitments to change the distribution of household tasks, particularly in ensuring that women have enough resources to cope when men migrate for work. It remains to be seen as to whether this results in longer-term changes in attitudes and behaviour (ICMO G1).

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### Box 6: Voice and decision-making power in the household

#### ICMO G1

Life skills courses (I) where the context is patriarchal (C) with low levels of literacy among women (c), a highly mobile male population who are in search for economic opportunity (C), and discriminatory gender attitudes and norms are entrenched, even among project staff (C), ... employing a dedicated gender advisor to design training modules... (I) ... investing in staff as change agents ... (I) ... working with both women and men ... (I), and starting 'slow and steady' (I) leads to women talking more openly about the pressures that they both feel at household (HH) level (M) and results in HH commitments to change, particularly around the sharing of HH tasks, in ensuring that women have enough resources to cope when the men migrate (O).

Source: BRICS MTR Report; KII

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Project requirements around women's participation – including 52% quotas for participation and female leadership in project groups (Anukulan), and for ensuring at least 50% of beneficiaries for project grants are women (Ric4Rec) are also contributing to changing voice of women.

*Social norms were inhibiting women's participation, but the sensitisation and mobilisation work: it is gradually changing thinking and scenarios. The 52% quota for women's participation, as well as women's empowerment and group activities means that we are actually seeing so many women members participating. Why is it working? Income. Most of the income [from project activities] is going to women. Their decision-making role has increased quite a lot and they are more actively participating at community level – groups simply can't make a decision without consensus from women (Anukulan KII).*

There is also preliminary evidence from at least two projects that increased income is changing relationships within households, with women having greater financial resources and they no longer have to ask their husbands for money (Anukulan KII, Ric4Rec MTR). This will be investigated in the final evaluations.

### 4.2.5 Improvements in girls' wellbeing: school attendance, hygiene, confidence

Also, operating in a patriarchal context, PROGRESS has developed training and mentoring targeted towards different groups – developing safe space clubs for girls and boys in schools, as well as out-of-school girls' clubs. The out-of-school girls' clubs in some areas involve older married and unmarried women. In this context, low priority is afforded to girls' education. Girls often miss lessons to attend to domestic responsibilities and during their periods. Early marriage – particularly in times of stress – is common in Karamoja, where girls are often married by their families during drought in order to obtain a bride price. Variation in the consistency and quality of mentoring between different project sites revealed the importance of sustained, **high-quality coaching and mentoring** (I) as an intervention factor, allowing participants to develop a **relationship with their mentors and bond as a group** (M) (ICMO G3).

Another important mechanism is that **participants feel that the groups deliver tangible benefits** (M). School girls' clubs are having positive outcomes: both the girls and their parents reported that the girls feel more disciplined, and more are now attending school when they have their periods (Wajir West), and feel that they have better information about how to manage their periods, understand more about the consequences of early marriage and pregnancy, and feel more confident to speak out without fear (O).

*Parents reported that the girls enjoy the club, which encourages them to work hard and be disciplined – 'these are the things that will prevent them from dropping out of school' (PROGRESS MTR Report).*

Similarly, out-of-school girls' clubs are being supported through VSLA programmes, and during the MTR process many participants said that their favourite club activity was savings and loans, providing them with tangible benefits and something to work towards as a group. In contrast, participants in the schoolboys' clubs said that they were much less likely to recommend the groups because they did not feel there was a clear benefit to their participation. PROGRESS is currently considering whether to integrate savings and business skills development into the boys' school groups, to increase participation.

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#### Box 7: Improvements in girls' wellbeing

##### ICMO G3

In-school girls' and boys' clubs with education and mentoring activities/out-of-school girls' clubs with savings (VSLA) activities ... Where there is an upward trend in the length of women's workday (C); girls miss lessons due to domestic responsibilities and menstrual cycles (C); where early marriage is common during times of drought (C) and illiteracy is high, school completion rate is low, and girls' education is low priority (C) rates of gender-based violence and female genital mutilation are high, and men blame women for gender-based violence (C); quality, motivated mentors understand the curriculum (I) AND

... networks are built and girls know who they can ask for help (M) ... girls and boys can see benefits in participating in club activities (M); young people build relationships with each other and their mentors (M); gender champions are working in communities to facilitate dialogue on gender-based violence (M), which results in: girls in the in-school groups are now reporting attending school when they have their period, and feeling that their hygiene has improved (O); girls are feeling encouraged to finish their education (O); girls in both in- and out-of-school groups feel more confident and empowered (O); and girls are saving money (O).

*Source: PROGRESS MTR Report*

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## 4.3 Building blocks for change

This section discusses the findings of the MTR synthesis process on 'building blocks for change', **describing and comparing project-level experiences**. These data sets fall under the category 'partially evidenced' (Table 2). For activity areas where the BRACED projects have not reported outcomes evidenced with ICMO configurations, or where outcomes have not yet been realised because implementation is still at an early stage, we highlight here outputs (or 'process' outcomes) evidenced with ICMO configurations that suggest the conditions may be in place to effect desired change in time.

### 4.3.1 Early warning and disaster risk management

Although a number of BRACED implementing contexts have been shaped by disasters and instability, projects are not yet in a position to assess outcomes from local and national-level EWS and disaster risk management interventions. Many projects, however, have laid strong foundations in this area.

Outcomes of disaster management interventions are being achieved where there are co-benefits with other packages of activities. For instance, in Anukulan, citronella is being used to stabilise slopes (reducing landslide risk), which links to the outcome of increased income from essential oil sales (Anukulan MTR). Improved weather and climate information is included as part of early warning packages and agricultural packages in a number of projects, so there is potential for outcomes related to agriculture (improved food availability and diversity, improved income) as these activities progress.

The BRACED project Decentralising Climate Funds (DCF) is supporting the National Meteorological Agencies in Mali and Senegal to improve the quality and reach of their seasonal forecasts (ICMO N1). In the Senegalese component of the project, the project is working with government agencies, radio stations and model farmers in communities to increase the use of seasonal climate information for agricultural decision making. They are also organising workshops with four government agencies to discuss upcoming seasonal forecasts and the best advice for planting. This is combined with work with model farmers at the

community level who are testing the agro-climate advice and providing feedback on using the advice on local radio. As a result, seasonal climate forecasts are available in more areas, and attitudes and behaviours towards using climate information are starting to change (DCF MTR report). The significance of working with model farmers ('influential women') in terms of wider community uptake is not clear – for example, via peer-effects, generating confidence in the value and enhancing the credibility of weather and climate information.

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### Box 8: Using seasonal forecasts to adapt production strategies

#### ICMO N1

Supporting the National Agency for Civil Aviation and Meteorology to strengthen and expand reach of seasonal forecasts (I) where the National Agency for Civil Aviation and Meteorology already produces seasonal forecasts (Senegal) (C) and where characteristics of the rainy season vary year on year (C) AND ... influential women are taking part in field tests on the use of weather and climate information (M) ... government departments are sharing forecasts knowledge in workshops (linking forecasts to advice about the type of seeds to sow) ... (output) ... means that forecasts are strengthened and available across greater number of areas (output) and there has been ... changed knowledge and behaviours: farmers are using seasonal forecasts to adapt production strategies to the type of rainy season (O).

*Source: DCF MTR Report*

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Zaman Lebidi (ICMO N2) is also putting significant attention into improving the quality of weather, climate and other hazard information in radio broadcasts. The project is working with eight local FM radio stations to provide training on various topics related to weather and climate, disasters and improved agricultural approaches (including soil and water conservation). They have also provided new equipment to community radio stations; and radio staff's increased understanding of climate topics means they are **more motivated to broadcast** this kind of information (M). Despite these interventions, radio weather forecasts are still the highly technical versions provided by the Direction Générale de la Météorologie du Burkina, and have not yet been provided in plain language. Furthermore, access to the information rests on having **access to a radio**. An intervention mechanism that seems equally important to the transmission of early warning information is the connection to early warning committees. Although there was no significant overall increase between the number of people who reported receiving early warning information in the baseline and quantitative mid-term review, the use of early warning information was higher in communities with functioning early warning committees in place (Zaman Lebidi MTR Report; KII).

Projects have been working with meteorological agencies to improve the quality and locational accuracy of climate information. A critical intervention mechanism for improved climate information for early warning is the establishment of

effective working relationships with meteorological departments. This has been an area where a number of projects have faced delays, including delays in signing agreements with meteorological agencies (DCF, Zaman Lebidi, WHH, Market Approach to Resilience – Ethiopia [MAR-E]). This has, in some cases, resulted in projects scaling back ambition for working with meteorological information, and reprioritising local uptake (DCF KII). The national governance and political context affected other areas of early warning and transmission of climate information. Changes in administrative arrangements in Ethiopia resulted in a negative government reaction to planned local language programming about weather and climate information and climate change, and the Climate Information and Assets for Resilience in Ethiopia (CIARE) project had to postpone this activity (CIARE KII).

Early warning systems have been set up in five districts by Anukulan to address flood hazards. They are in locations where communities previously reported no early warning messages. The systems use precipitation information as well as hydrological information from river basin monitoring. These systems focus on preventing loss from flash flooding to give downstream communities extra time to prepare. EWS will function via coordination between district level stakeholders and communities on the basis of precipitation information (through rain gauges and river gauges from disaster risk management field stations). The EWS will come into function through a communication mechanism designed by district level stakeholders followed by the District Disaster Response Committee, a district level institution (government authorised network). The EWS is managed by the community with the support of the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology. It works by phone calls made based on orders provided in the EWS communication mechanism. **Community participation** (M) in the Local Adaptation Plan of Action has been an important foundation for raising awareness about other EWS.

### 4.3.2 Planning

Almost all BRACED projects are undertaking some form of community-level analysis and planning. These activities – including participatory risk, vulnerability and capacity assessments, and developing local plans – are linked to a variety of outputs and outcomes. These activities have been an entry point for community engagement for many projects and have informed other components of projects to varying degrees. For some projects, such as DCF (Mali and Senegal), SUR1M (Mali and Niger) and Ric4Rec (Mali), the planning has been a central focus. Community-level resilience plans have been used to prioritise activities that the project has gone on to fund using devolved grant mechanisms. In other projects, planning is more strongly linked to disaster risk management and responding to early warning. All projects have either formed institutions to carry out this analysis and planning (such as community disaster risk management groups) or are working through existing structures. Many projects invested early time and effort into developing tools for analysis and planning, training partners, and have achieved significant outputs in terms of planning approaches, and in the scale of the planning efforts.

In a number of projects, there has been strong emphasis on engaging local and subnational governments in the planning process, with a general focus on strengthening government capacity and advocating for the integration of community-level priorities. Projects are working in very different institutional and policy contexts:

- in Nepal, where the Anukulan project is working to integrate established frameworks for local adaptation planning and disaster risk management at local level;
- in contexts, where local elections and the 5-year Social, Cultural and Economic Development Programme plans have been delayed due to political instability, Ric4Rec, DCF and SUR1M are working to integrate community and resilience priorities into the delayed planning cycle;
- to Chad and Sudan, where the BRICS project is working with state and regional governments with very limited institutional capacity.

BRACED projects are also seeking to use research and evidence from broader project implementation to influence national policy on climate change adaptation and resilience building, and in the case of DCF (Mali and Senegal), international practice related to the Green Climate Fund. A significant outcome from DCF has been their support for the establishment of the National Implementing Entity of the Green Climate Fund.

Planning processes are achieving results at the output level, suggesting building blocks for change are beginning to be in place:

- Projects have mobilised large numbers of community members to carry out analysis and planning through the formation of community working groups (Ric4Rec), climate adaptation committees (DCF), resilience and adaptation committees (PROGRESS), early warning committees (Zaman Leibidi, Committee Locale Action BRICS). These groups have an important role in supporting local ownership and knowledge transfer (Annual Report Synthesis, Silva Villanueva et al., 2016). In the same projects, analysis and planning processes have been undertaken using a range of tools adapted by the project teams. Implementing these tools has required training of consortium partners, local government officials and community facilitators involved.
- Ric4Rec, DCF and SUR1M are using these structures to channel funding into locally managed projects through sub-grants for resilience-building initiatives prioritised in adaptation plans. DCF is prioritising 'public-good' investments implemented by local governments. Both Ric4Rec and SUR1M are in some instances providing sub-grants to support private initiatives managed through local groups, such as livestock fattening, and agricultural and small business activities. In this case, support is provided through the establishment of a revolving fund.

Key intervention mechanisms include activities (including training) that build relationships (I) and dialogue (I) between elected officials and communities, and strong local ownership over initiatives. In Ric4Rec, the community working

group structure and planning process has supported communities to advocate for priorities to local government. In this project, the IP was more involved in the grant (it was less devolved to communities). Having said that, there was a strong interest among communities in making sure that the support provided was not a 'one-off'. Community working groups have expressed interest in using the grants to create community-level revolving funds to support individuals and community-level activities to build resilience.

### 4.3.3 Entrepreneurship and small business development

BRACED projects are supporting small business development among beneficiaries, as well as working through private sector and value chains to provide improved access to markets and services for beneficiaries (particularly in the case of MAR-E and Anukulan, as well as SUR1M). Agricultural activities with a business orientation have led to improved income (see Section 4.2.1).

However, both activities relating to the provision of services are in early stages of development. Community-level savings and loans groups have been successful, with groups formed and members building savings and relationships that act as a safety net, and supporting small business development (see Section 4.2.3). However, moves to connect these groups to larger schemes and credit programmes (i.e. in CIARE, MAR-E and PROGRESS MTR reports) are still in the early stages. Project teams have played a role in building trust between communities and financial service providers. But, as with other services (such as sharia-compliant banking or livestock trader insurance products), they have just overcome lengthy and complicated negotiations and product development processes, including complex negotiations with government, so will only become operational in the post-MTR phase of the programme.

Sales of solar lights and charging equipment, and water pump repairs have already resulted in operational businesses. Their success was explained by a demand for the product or service, identification of motivated individuals (M) and subsidies on new technologies (PROGRESS MTR Report).

The reasons some businesses did not work were that demand did not materialise, or profit margins proved to be less than originally anticipated. Some projects that are introducing new technologies either for services (mobile banking plans) or as business/marketing opportunities at community level have been delayed, with some of them meeting resistance from government (mobile banking in Ethiopia) or low uptake (solar lights in Uganda).

## 4.4 Summary and reflections – synthesis of key findings

Many of the catalysts for change reported by the IPs are implementation-related (intervention factors) rather than mechanisms in a strict realist sense, representing behavioural change and/or 'reasoning'. This reflects two key factors:



- The MTR took place at a relatively early stage of implementation for many activities. IPs, therefore, tended to focus their reflections closer towards the activity end of the pathway to change, rather than on participant behaviour related to outputs and outcomes because these are at nascent stages of being realised. Longer timescales are needed to effect change.
- Applying a realist lens is challenging, even for evaluation specialists. On the whole, IPs are new to the approach; they have had to grasp and put into practice some tricky and 'slippery' concepts with support from the evaluation team, but have had no realist evaluation training.

Having relatively few reported outcomes at the MTR for synthesis is compounded by the diversity/ heterogeneity across the case studies. The spread of projects across outcomes and the wide variety of reported intervention factors and mechanisms reflects the way that each BRACED project is unique in design, target beneficiaries, activities and operating context. As a result, this synthesis has a high degree of 'pooling', or collation, of data and it is difficult at this stage to analyse or get a sense of which mechanisms are the most important for building resilience, or how widespread they are.

Nevertheless, some synthesis and grouping of IPs and activity areas under frequently-cited mechanisms and intervention factors is possible. These are described below.

## What is the evidence telling us?

### MECHANISMS:

People's responses to project activities relate strongly to social factors – their appreciation of 'spaces' to meet and the value that they get from group interaction and peer support. Developing or capitalising on good relationships between projects staff/community facilitators and project participants also link to effective implementation and achieving outputs and outcomes. This relates to engendering trust in participants. People also need to feel that the project and its approach are credible. Specific, promising mechanisms are:

- **Value and role of networks:** activities create space for people to meet, people enjoy meeting up, people enjoy the activities, people feel solidarity and are able to collectively negotiate and provide mutual (financial) support (e.g. RIC4REC market garden training, BRICS mother-to-mother approach where women enjoy meeting together and reportedly like the peer-to-peer support; SUR1M financial services; Myanmar Alliance gender training; PROGRESS bonding in out-of-school girls' clubs, Anukulan Collection Centres and Oil Distillation Units).
- Participants have **good, sustained relationships** with project staff/group facilitators (e.g. BRICS – focus on working with small numbers of communities with frequent visits; PROGRESS mentoring and out-of-school girls' clubs).
- People find the intervention and/or approach **credible**, they **trust** it (e.g. BRICS proof of concept; BRICS activity reflects existing concerns of participants; Anukulan integrated project design, agriculture alongside

health and nutrition; BRICS WASH activities: village and community facilitators are 'local' to the villages rather than being outsiders).

- This extends to relationships with local governments and private sector actors.
- An important contextual factor identified by some of the IPs has been the way their current BRACED projects have been developed as a result of and built upon previous experience, foundational work that acts as a springboard for the resilience-building activities under BRACED (e.g. livestock mobility; BRICS). This also contributes to building and sustaining trust between project implementers and participants.

#### INTERVENTION FACTORS:

Training and mentoring achieve results when they are inclusive, sustained and linked to practical outcomes for participants. Working with existing institutional structures is also important. People act when the incentives are tangible and appropriate, but the means to act needs to be there if training and community-level planning are to be put into practice. Key intervention factors are:

- participatory, paying **attention to participant needs** including meeting an existing unmet need (urgent or already expressed by participants) (RIC4REC training on food processing and storage, business management, grant support for market garden development and other livelihood diversification; CIARE financial services; Livestock Mobility social agreements for right-of-way for transhumant pastoralists);
- participants responding well to **practical, hands-on training** which have clear links to tangible outcomes (BRICS moringa and fruit trees; Anukulan improved seed);
- working with **existing structures** and institutions (Anukulan; BRICS; PROGRESS; SUR1M; Myanmar Alliance; Livestock Mobility);
- **incentivising people** with a quick win (BRICS – nurseries, selling cuttings; BRICS providing borehole if community digs latrines; PROGRESS out-of-school girls' clubs, participants see tangible benefits);
- having the **means to act** accompanies the support/ training (increased confidence in market access – Anukulan providing distilleries, collection centres for vegetables; participants are able to follow good feeding practices as long as they have the means, i.e. quantity and variety of food are available – BRICS health and nutrition training; investment and support to spare parts network – BRICS water supply activities; activities are low cost and easy to implement – CIARE small businesses support).

#### Barriers and constraints to change:

In addition to the factors that have enabled pathways towards desired and observed change, the MTR process also highlighted a number of important, potential barriers:

- deeply held cultural beliefs and gender norms may act as barriers to behavioural change (e.g. birth spacing under BRICS programme; MAR-E; land ownership – RIC4REC);
- lack of material resources for Local Action Committees to put local disaster risk reduction (DRR) and early warning action plans in place (e.g. BRICS DRR and early warning activities);
- knowledge transfer barriers: too many topics covered at the same time in the training (e.g. BRICS); lack of confidence in putting training into practice (BRICS); the means to act is not there (e.g. participants are not able to practice good hygiene if soap is affordable and available locally – BRICS; poor access to radios for climate information – CIARE and Zaman Lebidi; solar cookers lack of suitability to context – RIC4REC; lack of water access – WHH) limits to appropriateness of training (e.g. DCF); low literacy levels, particularly of targeted females (e.g. PROGRESS);
- EWS working well at the national level but information not getting through to the local level (e.g. BRICS);
- implementation delays (e.g. late planting due to supply issues related to hyperinflation – IRISS; CIARE weather forecast information; Zaman Lebidi climate information systems; seed shortages – CIARE; early onset of rainy season curbing well construction activities and early end to rainy season reducing crop yields – WHH; political upheaval – WHH, Zaman Lebidi);
- weak synergies between activity packages limiting potential impact (e.g. MAR-E);
- long time to build up trust between participants and the project, and to build effective relationships with local government actors; limitations on influence over the actions of government actors (e.g. MAR-E; Zaman Lebidi; WHH; Anukulan);
- operating in times of crisis or conflict: for example, drought means that humanitarian activities may be prioritised over project activities (e.g. MAR-E); conflict holding up seed promotion activities (CIARE); conflict constrained movement of project staff (WHH; DCF).

**It is notable that experiences of the intervention by different groups or types of people have not been captured in the MTR reports – we cannot say much about 'for whom' the project is working apart from when activities are targeted at a specific group, as in the case of the out-of-school girls' clubs, or women's groups. Even within these groups, there will be differential experiences of the project. When more outcomes are reported across the projects and activity areas in the final evaluation then we would expect a more differentiated analysis to be present in the IPs' reports.**

Section 5 discusses what our findings mean for resilience.



# 5. TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THESE OUTCOMES CONTRIBUTING TO RESILIENCE?

Image: Jennifer Leavy

The third stage of our synthesis generated ICMO configurations from the MTR evidence to identify what is working and why. These fall largely within the first Area of Change – Changes in Knowledge and Attitude (Section 2.2.2). The next step is to reflect which of those outcomes not only work but lead towards resilience and to transformative change, and how and why the projects got there.

The outcomes documented in the MTR meet BRACED's resilience criteria embodied in the 3As, but they do so differently and to different degrees. Each outcome reported in Section 4 reflects a different notion of resilience, and what is required to build it. In this section, we provide insights on the degree to which different outcomes contribute to resilience and what kind of resilience, defined around the 3As, mapping outcomes onto the relevant capacity towards resilience and reflecting on lessons learned under the three pillars of the conceptual model.

## 5.1 MTR outcomes and the 3As

The 3As approach, described in Section 4, guides IPs' conceptual framing of resilience. It sets out the following interlinked capacities for people and systems to absorb shocks and stresses:

- **Anticipatory:** before a shock or stress – ability to undertake proactive actions to avoid upheaval, e.g. heeding early warnings, changing the way houses are built, reduce landslide risk, targeting by radio announcements.
- **Absorptive:** after a shock or stress – ability to buffer shocks in the short term, e.g. access to savings and finance, disaster preparedness, social protection.
- **Adaptive:** during and after a shock or stress – able to react to evolving/dynamic risk of disturbance to reduce likelihood of harmful outcomes, e.g. growing drought resistant crops, diversifying livelihoods, irrigating agricultural production.

The analysis and discussion presented here once again focuses on ICMO-evidenced outputs and outcomes to complement and deepen the analysis and findings from Section 4. Applying the '3As' lens to the findings reported in Section 4.2 above (see also Table 5, below), we can characterise the outcomes that IPs evidenced with contextual factors and mechanisms (how and why things worked the way they did), in the following way (with relevant outputs and lower level outcomes given in parentheses):

**Table 5: Outcomes and capacities**

OUTCOME	CAPACITY
1 More diverse food available to communities (through: more vegetables grown for consumption and sale)	Absorptive
2 Sustained new income source/ increased incomes (through: technology adoption; climate smart technology; diversified livelihoods)  (Also: improved agricultural techniques)	Adaptive/ absorptive  Anticipatory
3 Improved health outcomes (through: access to water; WASH; better diets)	Absorptive/ adaptive
4 Able to pay for other costs, e.g. school/ university (through: improved incomes; access to savings/ financial services)	Absorptive
5 Savings used for periods of hardship (access to financial services)	Absorptive
6 Women have greater voice and decision-making power at household level and in local institutions	Transformative
7 Improvements in girls' wellbeing	Transformative

However, in the absence of a shock or a stress, the link from capacity to resilience is theoretical: whether or not a particular capacity is 'applied' in the case of a shock or a stress remains to be seen and is not observed or reported empirically here. The MTR reports do capture some of the attitudes and choices, through

exploring mechanisms, which people apply in getting from activity to output to outcome. This sheds some insight on the underlying factors that may enable or hinder these capacities when a shock hits.

## 5.2 Anticipatory capacity

When it comes to progress towards putting building blocks in place for developing anticipatory capacity, evidence is strongest where projects are implementing community-based early warning systems. This reflects the higher number of IPs reporting on this as an outcome indicator for KPI4 (see also Silva and Villanueva et al., 2016).

There have been cases where BRACED activities have directly reduced losses from climate-related hazards. A community in Myanmar, supported by BRACED through training and equipment, was able to respond to a fire before official services could arrive, potentially saving a large number of homes (Silva and Villanueva et al., 2016). Several BRACED IPs have also been engaged in emergency response alongside project implementation. This includes work funded by DFID's Providing Humanitarian Assistance for Sahel Emergencies (PHASE), which are subject of a separate evaluation by the KM.

BRACED projects are establishing or building upon existing EWS for climate-related hazards:

MAR-E, Zaman Lebidi and WHH are all working to improve forecasting and climate monitoring capacity in project areas through partnership with National Meteorological Agencies, and the provision of automatic weather stations in project areas. These are linked to national forecasting systems. However, the outcomes of these initiatives are at an early stage, in some cases delayed due to time taken to finalise partnership agreements (MAR-E, Zaman Lebidi and WHH MTR reports and KII).

By partnering with local radio stations, Zaman Lebidi have improved the reach of climate forecasting and early warning. By increasing radio staff's understanding of climate issues, they have become more motivated to broadcast forecasts and other climate information. This means that seasonal forecasting information has become more regular, reliable and comprehensible. As long as people have access to a radio, they can benefit from improved provision of climate information, contributing to enhanced anticipatory capacity.

In the case of DCFs, we see changed knowledge and behaviours in the form of farmers using seasonal forecasts to adapt production strategies to the type of rainy season. We also see evidence of farmers using improved agricultural techniques (e.g. in the case of BRICS' support to moringa and fruit tree production).

## 5.3 Absorptive capacity

The main ICMO-evidenced outcomes demonstrating progress towards improving absorptive capacity relate to two key overarching outcomes:

- improved health outcomes (through: access to water; WASH; better diets)/ more diverse food available to communities (through: more vegetables grown for consumption and sale);
- access to financial services (able to pay for other costs, e.g. school/university/ savings used for periods of hardship).

These echo the findings of the BRACED year 1 programme-level synthesis (Silva Villanueva et al., 2016).

### 5.3.1 Increased food supply and dietary diversity

The work of three Implementing Partners (BRACED, Ric4Rec and Anukulan) shows promise towards increasing the food supply and household diversity of beneficiary households. In terms of improved food availability, the BRICS project evidence focused on how and why this outcome occurred at the local level, mainly for project participant households with some mention of multipliers into the local community with increased sales:

*Communities reported that the hunger gap had been reduced through the availability of vegetables both for consumption and for sale. A number of families stated they had been able to buy livestock through the revenue they had earned through the vegetables sold (BRICS MTR Report Annex).*

Importantly, the KII discussion with BRICS project staff highlighted explicitly the links between the climate smart agriculture, health and nutrition, and WASH activity packages of their project.

By contrast, Ric4Rec report potential absorptive capacity increases through increased food availability at a higher level, via processing and value added, and subsequent sales resulting in more food available in the wider community.

These outcomes are unlikely to make a significant change in resilience. They are not systemic changes but are centred on the practices of individual farmers. They do not engage with the seed supply system or value chains and are unlikely to see the benefits of the project extending beyond those farmers. By contrast, linking activities into local social systems helps to make the activities successful. They also indicate secondary benefit in the form of improved social standing of women involved.

The agronomy, seed or plant varieties promoted by these activities may result in sustained change, but the magnitude of that change (additional food or income) is likely to represent a marginal increase in their annual nutritive requirements or household income. Changes of this order are unlikely to lead to other changes that would alter the fundamental nature of the poverty and vulnerability of these households or communities.

Agronomy improvements, or the use of improved seed varieties, could help to stabilise vegetable and grain production or income levels due to fluctuations in rainfall in the future. The agronomy activities, however, are not linked to any contingency (insurance, labour migration, etc.) outside of agriculture to ensure that farmers can manage years of significant crop losses. The level of risk which can be managed by changes in agronomy and seed is limited. Anukulan has linked its agronomy activities with business skills training, which stands to multiply the value of the agronomy activities. It is important to note that in isolated locations, or areas where there is severe food insecurity, food production that meets basic immediate needs can deliver tangible benefits to communities.

### **5.3.2 Able to pay for other costs and accumulation of savings for 'hard times'**

Improved access to financial services offers credible risk management on two levels: on a strategic level, it helps to distance or cushion incomes from climatic shock; on a tactical level, savings or access to loans are being used to manage immediate and idiosyncratic needs. Where VSLA/saving and loans groups centre on connecting people and small enterprises who ordinarily would be ineligible for banking with financial institutions, or micro-businesses with commercial systems, systems thinking is demonstrated.

Outcomes where VSLAs or financial skills are used as tools to allow individuals or groups to use financial services for their own purposes is reporting good progress (mutual support – SUR1M; micro-business development – MAR-E; or business growth – PROGRESS). Where the same skills sets are used to further a programme-prioritised outcome, such as the formation of a certain type of business (cooperative crop sales – CIARE) or to promote a certain sector (tree sales – PRESENCES), MTR reports suggest more ambiguous progress. There is also a difference noted between programmes engaging across a range of levels of financial service provision and those that do not. Some programmes work with individuals at a grassroots level and also with companies and government. PROGRESS is developing sharia-compliant services with a local provider. MAR-E has negotiated with the government to allow them to work with a local insurance provider to offer insurance products to livestock buyers. While these arrangements have only been made recently, it has the promise of linking marginalised individuals into national systems. The potential transformation is in contrast to other forms of financial service provision that are more oriented towards social protection. These do not necessarily work at different levels of the financial services but create a community-level dynamic (i.e. SUR1M). They do, however, provide a valued social mechanism for the participants (mainly women).

Microfinance activities indicate good progress towards achieving their objectives of both savings and equitable access to credit to cope with shocks and to meet future needs. This group of activities and their outcomes reflect well many of the aspects of resilience at the intermediate outcome level. Those participating in these activities vary, but in most cases, include rural women, and in some cases young people. The methodology of village savings and loans allows implementation at scale within certain communities. Due to a greater emphasis



on financial graduation in CIARE and PROGRESS, there is a stronger engagement with local financial institutions. Helping the 'un-bankable' to reach the 'first rung' of the financial ladder of formal financial institutions opens the door for sustained benefit of project activities and to potentially increasing levels of benefit. The focus on finance, leaves beneficiaries complete flexibility to pursue business opportunities they deem appropriate and with potential.

The savings and credit component is well suited to manage actual idiosyncratic shock. The progressive nature of this form of risk management is reflected in the outcome – in which families are able to avoid compromising long-term transformative opportunities for their children (such as pulling them out of school). It casts the financial activities in a transformational light, albeit a long-term vision – to which the project only contributes. Building linkages to sectors related to these outcomes – such as education (for their children), health or business insurance, or professional development resources would add a layer of synergy.

### 5.3.3 Improved health outcomes

BRICS has noted behaviour change attributable to their health-based interventions. The outcome complies well with several aspects of resilience. The direct benefits of the activity are limited to reproductive age mothers and under 5-year-old children, in certain communities. The activities (a mix of preventive and curative) combined can help avoid and manage health conditions that are severe and possibly lethal, promising a substantive 'change'. As the changes were brought about by extending the reach of the health system – improving formal health care instruments: traditional birth attendants, volunteer community health workers – and increasing demand for service and local improvements, they have an increased likelihood of sustainability. The innovation brought by the project has a possibility to modify practice or policy. Realisation of these outcomes was also in part due to BRICS engagement of other sectors that provided behaviour change messaging into these same populations. The health risks that the activities are addressing are endemic, and seasonal in the case of acute malnutrition.

Breastfeeding is an important means of ensuring children under five avoid malnutrition. The high prevalence and seasonal spikes of acute malnutrition in some project areas of operation are strongly correlated to caring and breastfeeding. If links to other programme activities sought to enable women to increase their time with small children, the synergy across the two groups of activities could give women greater control over their ability to breastfeed their children and prevent malnutrition.

## 5.4 Adaptive capacity

Projects expect to achieve adaptive capacity in many different ways, including improving production and incomes, adopting climate smart technology, via credit and savings for investment in climate-resilient production, through to more general, systemic socio-cultural changes such as women's empowerment

(see Silva Villanueva et al., 2016: 59 for a comprehensive list of BRACED project adaptive capacity indicators). Improvements in adaptive capacity are much more difficult to evidence within the lifespan of the BRACED programme given the timescales likely to be required to achieve change at this more systemic level.

The MTR data suggest that adaptive capacity improvements have potentially been achieved via the higher-level outcomes of achieving sustained new income sources and/or increased incomes. These have been achieved mainly through agronomy-related activities, applying and building on BRACED project training and support: technology adoption including climate smart technology, improved agricultural practices (linked to NRM), and diversified livelihoods/crop portfolios. The projects showing progress are those focusing on farm level change, and less so those seeking change in value chains. These are hard won changes, which if they produce value to the farmer, can be sustained, providing more stable yields in years to come.

While these activities tend to operate on a smaller scale, they reflect strong changes in attitudes, capacities and partnership. The level of adoption by other farmers (beyond 'lead farmers' and beyond project participants) of these practices, or the durability of these processes will determine the order of resilience change that can be attributed to this group of activities. Changes in agronomy are intended to either sustain a traditional, rural status quo by making traditional agriculture better able to manage climate variability (risk management) or to transform it, helping it become a more commercial, progressive venture. It is a different order of resilience (risk management through transformation).

## 5.5 Transformation

Some outcomes are more likely to deliver a transformative change than others. Food availability outcomes make positive but small contributions to impoverished rural farmers. Those outcomes will make contributory but not significant changes in food availability or income, nor will those outcomes substantively alter the farmer's underlying poverty. In contrast, outcomes aimed at generating new business opportunities that can be graduated over time can make substantive improvements to income in the short term and have the potential to transform their situation in the long term. Interestingly the long-term transformation for nutrition and savings outcomes is generational. Those outcomes focus on transforming the conditions for the children of beneficiaries. There is also an interesting contrast between the two outcomes supporting change in gender relations. One seeks to transform the social and economic opportunities for young women, and the other helps older women play a more active role in their communities by significantly challenging existing gender norms.

The magnitude of change of different outcomes also is greater where activities engage systems, not only immediate beneficiaries. The health system work or financial services work illustrates how grassroots work can be sustained and magnified by their linkages to systems. If those activities influence change in policy or practice of those systems, as PROGRESS hopes to do by establishing

sharia-compliant financial services, then there is potential for sustainability and change at scale. Engaging education systems, to protect young women and help them to have as equal social and economic opportunities as their male peers, has the potential to be scaled within the system.

Linking outcomes with other sectoral work or other programme activities, adds weight to the contribution of a single outcome. While many ToCs speak of synergies accruing across their different sectors of activity, that synergy is often anticipated to be an end, and not a means. Some groups of activities and outcomes show those linkages at the intermediary stage. The outcome, improvements in girls' wellbeing strongly demonstrates how that criterion can be met.

### **5.5.1 Women have greater voice and decision-making power at household level and in local institutions**

Three projects are reporting progress towards changing the participation of women in household and community-level institutions. Although this is encouraging social development progress, more work needs to be done to explain linkages between gender-related outcomes and resilience. These activities focus on married rural woman and centre on addressing, in culturally appropriate ways, structural gender inequities not 'managing shocks or stresses, nor climate-related vulnerability'. The progress of the work reflects an understanding of local social norms and systems, which are being influenced at the household or local community level. Projects such as PROGRESS have started working with subnational governments to look at how these changes can start to make changes to social norms and decision-making systems beyond the immediate local level, but these changes are at early stages. The changes, facilitated by the IPs may be difficult to reverse even after the programme ends and, if so, could be expected to be sustained. However, as these are isolated changes, there is potential to extend the changes outside of the project communities. These improvements in the status of women are related to other activities, if not outcomes, in BRICS and Anukulan.

### **5.5.2 Improvements in girls' wellbeing: school attendance, hygiene, confidence**

Married and unmarried young women – from patriarchal ethnic groups – are participating in clubs that are helping them more confidently engage with a range of issues of fundamental importance to them. The clear social gender agenda of these clubs is wedded with criteria of resilience. In Karamoja, improving the standing of young, rural or peri-urban women explicitly aims to help them avoid a drought-related risk, of being sold at a young age into marriage (particularly in times of economic stress) and, in the Somali community of Wajir, it helps young women not to be forced from school. The school clubs are undertaken with the Ministry of Education, and if proven successful, can be expanded to other schools. Out-of-school girls' clubs are linked to PROGRESS' village savings work and business development support. The outcomes reported by the programme indicate behaviour change is beginning to occur. Changing the social standing of young women within these traditional communities is a substantial

change in and of itself. As those changes are linked to formal education and business opportunities, this outcome could be fairly transformative. Embedding the process of change within local norms, within the formal education system and small business development could help to ensure these changes are sustained and multiplied, but it is not yet demonstrated. The programme has noticed a lower level of satisfaction with change among the boys in the school programme, which is leading PROGRESS to consider making programmatic change to ensure both young boys' and girls' benefit.

## 5.6 Summary of resilience outcomes

Experience during Ethiopia's El Niño drought or insecurity in South Sudan or Mali have highlighted that resilience programmes cannot ignore deteriorating or crisis conditions during their period of implementation. It was felt that resilience programmes should, in fact, give people the tools to manage actual crisis – not only make long-term developmental investments to reduce vulnerability and potential risk. Some BRACED outcomes are providing that form of intermediate ability to manage shocks. Health and savings outcomes demonstrate an ability to provide that intermediary support. In addition, they are also positioned to manage idiosyncratic risk and not only risk induced by climate extremes.

It is important to note that BRACED projects are operating in fragile and challenging contexts, and many projects have already been punctuated by political instability (Mali, Burkina Faso, South Sudan), and climate shocks with resultant impacts on food and income security (in particular, the 2014–16 El Niño event). In these cases, BRACED IPs have matched longer-term transformational goals of BRACED with meeting immediate humanitarian imperatives. In many cases this has resulted in adaptation of programming (including redeploying project resources to humanitarian response). A number of BRACED IPs are simultaneously implementing humanitarian response using funding provided by the Providing Humanitarian Assistance in Sahel Emergencies (PHASE) funding window. This is the subject of a separate evaluation (Peters et al., 2016); however, the availability of early warning and humanitarian response appears to be an important mechanism for ensuring that early gains are not lost:

*We had people telling us 'given that we received food, we haven't had to touch our reserves of seeds for next year's planting'. So it's really important to recognise that we will have to have emergency interventions that sit alongside our development work. [A] package of interventions with parallel early warning systems that trigger early enough for people not to dip into their reserves and engage in asset stripping. Just because we have do some emergency interventions doesn't mean development work is failing – the two have to be seen side-by-side. (BRICS KII)*

This closer examination at the resilience intermediary level provides interesting reflections on how resilience is conceived within different projects or packages of activities. Some have applied the concept to protect and to enable older

rural people to live traditional rural lives. Others have conceived resilience as an ability of older and younger people to successfully transition into changing economic and social opportunities. Some see risk as an immediate threat, such as hunger or poor nutrition. Others see resilience vested in the next generation and transformational opportunities for children or young people. Risk for the former would be articulated in traditional hunger or food insecurity terms. For the latter, risk is children who are not able to complete their education or pursue non-traditional livelihoods. Lastly, by using an intermediary resilience criteria, outcomes which comply with the rhetoric of the 3As, can be more clearly demarcated as resilience outcomes distinct from community development outcomes.

# 6. WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM BRACED FOR FUTURE RESILIENCE- STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES?

Image: Jennifer Leavy

The synthesis across BRACED project MTRs using a realist lens has focused on addressing the overarching evaluation question:

*How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned/how can good practice be replicated?*

The MTR provides us with some rich insights into how, by designing and implementing their activities adapted to context, the BRACED projects are making progress towards achieving wellbeing outcomes and resilience. The reflective nature of the realist approach allows us to uncover how and why an intervention is working, going beyond narrow indicators of output and outcome. While mechanisms, in a realist sense, are related to reasoning, behavioural change and social processes, realist questioning about an intervention includes considering how the ways in which an intervention is implemented make it work, and what matters about the context.<sup>9</sup> The MTR provides evidence and insights to start to answer these questions.

<sup>9</sup> Westhorp (2014) provides useful guidance to developing realist evaluation questions, and a list of examples or proposed realist questions. These include: What matters about how it is done in order for it to work? What matters about the contexts into which it is introduced, in order for it to work?

However, the extent of evidence at this stage is limited and many of the MTR reports lack of sufficient depth in explanations of how activities lead to reported outcomes. In combination, this means there is a distinct lack of data available to address the synthesis question to any great degree at the MTR stage. If there are few outcomes achieved then what we can learn about what works, how, where, when and why is also limited.

**Key 'lessons' emerging from the synthesis are:**

- Interventions have been successfully adapted to respond to context and as a result are more effective at stimulating mechanisms that lead to change in behaviour. Importantly, the projects are 'good development projects': responding to context enhances credibility that in turn leads to reasoning, behavioural change and the likely achievement of outcomes. Key intervention factors highlighted across the projects are linked to successfully achieving outputs and outcomes are:
  - participatory design and implementation of activities, **paying attention to participant needs**;
  - providing **practical, hands-on training** which have clear links to tangible outcomes;
  - working with **existing structures** and institutions;
  - incentivising people with a quick win;
  - ensuring people have **means to act** following on from support/training.
- Projects also appear to work best when participants can see the coherence and linkages across packages of activities and these activities speak to their existing concerns. This also enhances the credibility of the projects, increasing the likelihood of changes in reasoning and behavioural change. In particular, across the projects we see the importance of:
  - valuing and supporting the **role of networks**;
  - **good relationships** between project staff/group facilitators and project participants;
  - **participant trust** in the implementer and the approach.
- Activities need time for outcomes to be realised. This is particularly true of planning, NRM and gender. Others, such as EWS, will only realise outcomes in the event of shocks and stresses. As Section 4.3 shows, the projects have put in the building blocks ensuring that progress towards change is already being made. But they also need to systematically record what actually happens if there is crisis.
- Time is also an important factor in achieving resilience aims – especially for those categorised as adaptive capacity.
- The magnitude of change of different outcomes is greater where activities at the grassroots work across systems, not only with direct project participants.

This can be seen with the health system work or financial services work, which is sustained and magnified by their linkages to systems – extending the reach of the intervention. The potential for sustainability and change at scale comes if and when those activities influence change in policy or practice of those systems.

- Many of the projects face deteriorating or crisis conditions during their period of implementation. Resilience programmes cannot ignore this and programmes need to address both immediate humanitarian needs, giving people the tools to manage actual crisis and to make longer-term investments in order to reduce vulnerability and improve the ability to manage potential risks.
- Without further highly detailed research we may not know at this stage the precise mechanisms by which people change their behaviour and generate progress towards desired outcomes. However, we do know that most of, if not all, the projects have arranged their interventions to respond to local context in order to foster that change in behaviour. This builds on a finding from the earlier 'Routes to resilience' synthesis of annual reports:

*While resilience-building projects focus on building absorptive, anticipatory and adaptive capacity to shocks and stressors, in practice resilience-building programmes seem to be, at their core, 'good' development projects (BRACED, 2016b: page 81).*



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## Annex 1. BRACED Components and Evaluation Framework

BRACED comprises four components:

- Components A and B see 108 organisations, in 15 consortia, implementing 15 projects across 13 countries in the Sahel (Component A), and East Africa and Asia (Component B). Each project has its own ToC, logframe and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan of activities. Progress is reported to a FM, who manage the grant on behalf of DFID.
- Component C refers to the KM's role in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) – to generate and assimilate knowledge and evidence from research, M&E about what works to strengthen resilience and to get this knowledge and evidence into use both within and outside BRACED countries. The Knowledge Manager leads M&E (as well as other functions) at the programme level.
- Component D builds the capability and capacity of non-BRACED countries and regional organisations to prepare and plan for the expected increases in the frequency and severity of climate extremes and disasters. It is currently being scoped.

Source: (BRACED, 2015, BRACED Evaluation Plan)

**Table A1.1: Summary of BRACED Evaluation Activities**

EVALUATION ACTIVITY	FOCUS OF EVALUATION	DATA SOURCES	MAIN ANALYTICAL METHOD	OUTPUT
<b>Evaluation Activity 1 – Evaluating the BRACED programme ToC</b>	Focus on the effectiveness of the BRACED programme as a whole – components A–D	All available primary and secondary from BRACED projects; Primary and secondary data generated through KM-led small sample of BRACED country case studies	Contribution analysis in country cases	Two or three summative country studies produced in year 3
<b>Evaluation Activity 2 – Evaluating the set of BRACED resilience-strengthening interventions</b>	Focus on qualitative and explanatory synthesis of the set of project intervention 'packages' in order to draw lessons on what works and why in particular contexts	Two primary data sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project mid-term and final evaluations</li> <li>• Project routine results reporting</li> </ul>	Synthesis method potentially applying meta-ethnography	Two synthesis reports – one following mid-term and one following final evaluations
<b>Evaluation Activity 3 – BRACED project-level results</b>	Primary focus is on robust causal inference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do BRACED interventions work, and to what extent?</li> <li>• Secondary focus on explanation – How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned?</li> </ul>	Primary data generated by projects through M&E plans bolster by KM evaluation support	Experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation	Set of three project impact evaluation reports as set out below

EVALUATION ACTIVITY	FOCUS OF EVALUATION	DATA SOURCES	MAIN ANALYTICAL METHOD	OUTPUT
<b>Catholic Relief Services – Mali and Niger</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative measurement of change in outcome measured by ICF KPI4</li> <li>Testing the project ToC to understand what works and why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household survey data</li> <li>Focus groups and KIIs</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation</li> <li>Contribution analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A research paper</li> <li>Reports at mid-term and year 3</li> </ul>
<b>Farm Africa – Ethiopia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative measurement of change in outcome measured by ICF KPI4.</li> <li>Testing the project ToC to understand what works and why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household survey data</li> <li>Focus groups and KIIs</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation</li> <li>Contribution analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A research paper</li> <li>Reports at mid-term and year 3</li> </ul>
<b>Plan International – Myanmar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative measurement of change in outcome measured by ICF KPI4. Assessment of effectiveness of three treatments on outcome</li> <li>Testing the project ToC to understand what works and why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household survey data</li> <li>Focus groups and KIIs</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation</li> <li>Contribution analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A research paper</li> <li>Reports at mid-term and year 3</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Activity 4 – World Bank Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) Programme Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-BRACED, but similar 'sister' programme – ASP. Focus is on learning about adaptive social protection for strengthening resilience to climate extremes and disasters from review of evidence at the intervention level (Track 1 – WB ASP impact evaluation synthesis) and at the 'system' level (Track 2 – theory-based evaluation of ASP 'system')</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track 1 – Synthesis of secondary data generated through WB ASP impact evaluations</li> <li>Track 2 – Primary data generated by KM supplemented by secondary data generated by WB ASP programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track 1 – Synthesis – specific variant TBC following evaluability assessment</li> <li>Track 2 – Theory-based design applying either Contribution Analysis or Process Tracing through two country studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track 1 – WB ASP impact evaluation synthesis report</li> <li>Track 2 – evaluation report with two country study reports as annexes</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Activity 5 – Flexible KM Evaluation Resource</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC</li> </ul>

## Annex 2. Terms of Reference Template for Project-level Mid-Term Reviews

The following template was provided to Implementing Partners in February 2016, to assist them in developing tailored project-level Terms of Reference for the mid-term review. It is consistent with M&E Guidance Note 7 (BRACED, 2015).

### A2.1 MTR aims and objectives

- The overarching aim of the MTR is to gather information about project progress and lesson learning up until the project mid-term. This should help us to understand 'How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned'. The MTR should enable you to undertake robust reflection and gathering of evidence on project success and failure in order to explore, test and revise assumptions.
- Your mid-term review should examine the 'activity packages' implemented under your project (such as climate information, community planning, financial services/inclusion, agriculture), as well as taking a broad view of the project as a whole. In order to understand what is working well (or in need of improvement), and why, your mid-term review needs to examine the mechanisms through which these activity packages are working. It also needs to investigate the way that the project context shapes these activities and outcomes.
- The MTR is also a chance to identify areas for improvement, including 'course corrections' to your activities and work plan for the remainder of the BRACED programme.

#### A2.1.1 Scope

- Your MTR should focus on project progress and lesson learning up to the MTR (January 2015 – June 2016)
- Evaluation planned and delivered against a standard set of headline evaluation questions with sub-questions tailored to project ToC
- Process-oriented and explanatory in nature
- Focus on 'packages of activities' and 'mechanisms' of change.

### A2.2 Evaluation questions

The following set of evaluation questions (from M&E Guidance Note 7) should be used as the basis for planning your MTR:

**What are your project's key intervention packages and how are they defined within your project theory of change?** This is a non-evaluation context-setting question which provides an opportunity for Implementing Partners to

consistently define the resilience-strengthening interventions their project is delivering, the changes they anticipate these will deliver, and the mechanisms by which change takes place.

- **Evaluation question 1 – To what extent have particular interventions led to anticipated changes and results?** This opening question, consistent across MTR and final evaluation, requires IPs to reflect on the evidence of results delivered against the results/changes anticipated in their ToC.
- **Evaluation question 2 – Specifically focusing on understanding ‘mechanisms’ (the causal forces or powers that explain why a change happens), how and why have particular intervention packages led to observed results and changes?** Projects should focus on defining ‘mechanisms’ in order to understand what it is about the nature and design of an intervention that has enabled it to be effective or not. Sub-questions under this question should explore:
  - What has the project learned about delivering these packages of interventions?
  - What evidence is there that the interventions and the mechanisms that support them have the potential to deliver ‘amplified results’ and/or ‘transformational impact’?
- **Evaluation question 3 – What have you had to change or adapt in terms of your intervention package design and why?** Sub-questions under this question should explore:
  - What unanticipated, positive or negative, enablers or constraints have they encountered?

The Evaluation Synthesis and Support team will work with you to develop a detailed and project-specific evaluation matrix. This is a guiding document for your MTR. When refining your evaluation questions and sub-questions, it may be helpful to review the BRACED ToC, The ‘3As Approach’ to measuring resilience, and the ‘Areas of Change’. You should also ensure that your questions address the OECD DAC evaluation criteria set out in Annex 1 of M&E Guidance Note 7.

## A2.3 Evaluation data collection and data analysis

### A2.3.1 Methods

#### A2.3.1.1 DATA COLLECTION

The KM is not prescribing specific data collection methods and tools for the MTR – you can use approaches that are appropriate to your project and budget.

We anticipate that:

- The project evaluations will be participatory in nature and generate data through a range of qualitative and quantitative methods.

- You are likely to combine the review of existing project routine results reporting data (including KPI4, the 3As, Areas of Change, and Evaluative Monitoring) with specific primary data collection activities.
- Primary data collection is likely to be primarily qualitative (through interviews, focus groups and participatory exercises and feedback mechanisms) but may also include quantitative data from fieldwork or web/email surveys.
- The reviews and evaluations will engage a broad range of project stakeholders, from project team members to project beneficiaries/ participants as well as wider key informants, champions and observers.
- IPs should aim to engage not just 'direct' project stakeholders but also those stakeholders who have an 'external' perspective on the project – for example, the teams of other resilience-strengthening projects operating within the same context.

It is important to note that the **Evaluation Matrix is intended as a summary and analysis tool, rather than a data collection instrument**, but you should keep in mind how you will complete the matrix as you design your data collection approach.

#### A2.3.1.2 DATA ANALYSIS

You must clearly describe the way that you plan to arrive at a set of robust and evidence-based findings and conclusions. You should explain how you would use the Evaluation Matrix to capture and summarise data.

You are required to use the evaluation matrix to summarise your MTR data, but beyond this you are free to select data analysis methods that suit the data that you collect. Evidence should be consistently cross-referenced throughout the MTR report, and claims made should be substantiated/validated through reference to the evidence to support these claims.

### A2.3.2 Evaluation team roles and responsibilities

The ToR should describe the MTR team, and include a summary of roles and responsibilities for the MTR team, including name, organisation gender, position in the project, and roles and responsibilities during the MTR – for example:

POSITION	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING MTR
<b>1. Project manager</b> Pia Das (Female) NGO A (Consortium Lead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTR team leader</li> <li>• Responsible for overall design and implementation...</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>
<b>2. ...</b>	

### A2.3.3 Limitations

You should use this section to outline key constraints to the MTR process that could affect the quality of data collected. This could include constraints due to seasonality, implementation delays etc.

## A2.4 Key cross-cutting considerations

### A2.4.1 Gender and social difference

See BRACED Working Paper 'Gender and Resilience' (Le Masson, Norton and Wilkinson, 2015).

BRACED interventions will make a better contribution to individual, household and community resilience to climate extremes and disasters if implementing agencies address existing social dynamics (including gender) and power relations.

The MTR methodology should account for influence of gender dynamics and social power relations on project implementation and impacts. During the MTR, you should:

- Assess how **all** packages of interventions (not just those aimed at empowering women and girls) affect and benefit gender and other social groups (including through the use of disaggregated data).
- Facilitate the participation of different gender and social groups in the MTR, including building comparisons (e.g. between data gathered from male- and female-only focus groups, or interviews with different members of the same household).
- Encourage reflection on how the implementation process is addressing gender and social relations. This could include a 'reality check' of your project ambitions for changes in women's empowerment and gender norms. This will ensure that these ambitions are realistic, and identify any changes that you need to make your programming more effective.

The evaluation matrix contains a module of questions specific to gender and other forms of social difference, and gender and social difference can be integrated into many of the other questions.

### A2.4.2 Quality, rigour and ethics

We expect MTRs to achieve the following quality standards (See M&E Guidance notes, Note 7):

- MTRs should be balanced and representative of overall project progress, results and learning.
- MTRs should be participatory in nature and generate data from a representative sample of project stakeholders – from project team members to project beneficiaries/recipients as well as wider key informants, champions

and observers, accounting for gender and other social differences among those involved in the projects.

- IPs should aim to engage not just 'direct' project stakeholders but also those stakeholders who have an 'external' perspective on the project – for example, the teams of other resilience-strengthening projects operating within the same context.
- MTRs should combine both primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data collection and data analysis methods.
- IPs should be explicit about the process by which you plan to arrive at a set of robust and evidence-based findings and conclusions. Evidence should be consistently cross-referenced throughout the review and evaluation reports and claims made should be substantiated/validated through reference to the evidence to support these claims.
- All data collection approaches should be in line with DFID's Ethics Principles for Research and Evaluation.

## A2.5 Expected outputs

1. Completed evaluation matrix, fully referenced (where relevant).
2. MTR report (25–30 pages long). The MTR report must contain (but is not confined to) the following sections:
  - Description of project and 'intervention packages' – the activities that it is undertaking.
  - Description of the MTR approach and data collection methods (e.g. routine data collection/interviews etc.) including participant selection, and the reasons for your choice of methods.
  - Description of the MTR team and data collection process.
  - Description of programme theories/ CMOs (further guidance will be provided on this).
  - Key evidence and analysis.
  - Key lessons.
  - Proposed 'course corrections' – adjustments to the project ToC, assumptions and work plan.
3. The KM Evaluation Synthesis and Support team may request your underlying dataset/transcripts as they complete the evaluation synthesis between October and January. The evaluation matrix and reports therefore should be fully referenced back to your underlying data sources. You should ensure that you have adequate data storage protocols so that data can easily be shared with the team (i.e. through Dropbox or Google Drive).

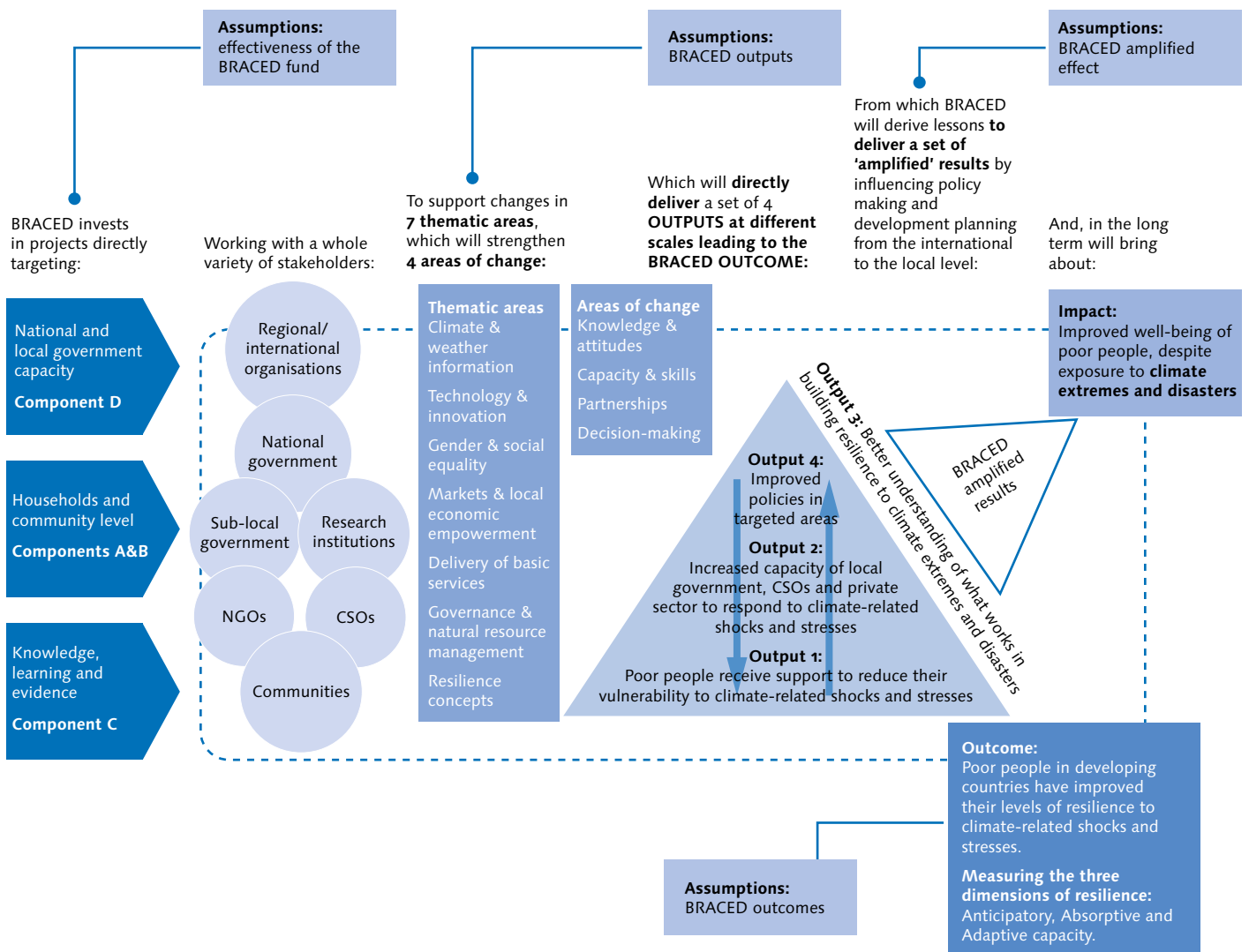


## A2.6 Timeline and budget summary

You should include a timeline that includes planning, data collection, analysis, verification (including any workshops), report drafting and time to respond to KM feedback before the October deadline.

You should also include a summary/headline budget. The KM will not be reviewing or approving this budget, but it will be important for us to understand the scope of the project.

## Annex 3. BRACED Theory of Change (March 2015)



## Annex 4. MTR Synthesis Methodology

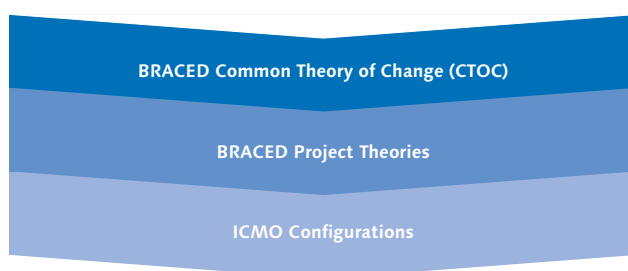
The BRACED MTR synthesis is grounded in the methodological approach of realist evaluation. As Section 3 outlines, the realist approach provides us with useful concepts and framework to guide the evaluation activity. The focus on contexts and the mechanisms that result, leading to particular outcomes, helps us to ask the right questions to address 'why' and the 'how' BRACED interventions work.

This Annex provides a detailed overview of the methodology used in the mid-term review evaluation. It also explains deviations from the original BRACED Evaluation activity design (BRACED 2016).

### A4.1 Theories of change: how the BRACED programme works

Our first task was to understand the different levels of theory underlying BRACED, from programme to intervention (projects) to activity areas, and how these layers are expected to bring about change. There is an inherent 'hierarchy' in theories about how the programme works. At the top level is the BRACED Common ToC (CToC – see Annex 3), the individual project theories of change then align to the CToC. Next come the programme theories for the IPs' activity packages, and lastly ICMO configurations (see Figure A4.1). Thinking about it in this way helps to think through how the programme gets from activities through to outputs, outcomes and ultimately impact.

**Figure A4.1 Theory levels in the BRACED programme**



The narrative underlying the CToC hypothesises how the programme will contribute to change. The central hypothesis of the programme is that:

If investments are made to:

- i. directly support poor people to become more resilient to climate extremes and disasters;
- ii. improve capacity of developing countries and regional organisations to plan for (un)expected frequency and severity of climate extremes and disasters;
- iii. generate learning and evidence from this support;

*then* not only targeted communities will be more resilient but also:

- iv. there will be a better understanding of what works and what does not work in building climate resilience.

This will result in:

- v. improved policies and institutions at the national, subnational and local levels and a better integration of disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation and development programmes. This will lead, in the long term, to improving the wellbeing of millions of people despite exposure to climate extremes and disasters.

The core assumptions of this ToC link to possible mechanisms – actions and processes (both within and outside the sphere of control of the IPs) – that will enable the project to achieve its outcomes and impacts:

Assumptions: BRACED outputs

- improving knowledge and capacity leads to changes in practice and action;
- learning will be a driver of the BRACED programme and BRACED Implementing Partners will apply the learning gained to improve their projects and maximise impact.

Assumptions: BRACED outcomes

- improving climate and disaster risk management leads to better developmental outcomes;
- improving access to climate and weather information, including EWS, strengthens resilience;
- improving basic service delivery in different sectors strengthens household resilience;
- improving access to markets (physical/regulatory systems/pricing information etc.) for smallholders and other producers strengthens resilience to climate extremes and disasters;
- lessons from projects about which approaches work, and in what contexts, can influence policymaking and development planning in national and local governments, regional and international initiatives.

The underlying mechanisms are the causal forces or powers that might explain why change or an outcome may or may not happen. For the BRACED IP interventions, this largely relates to the decision making and actions of human beings: how people react to the opportunities presented by the BRACED programme (Wong et al., 2013) **within their context**. Mechanisms go deeper than the intervention to explain why the intervention leads to change.

This evaluation activity is most concerned with: (i) how Implementing Partners are adapting and implementing their interventions in response to context and how this leads to change; and (ii) mechanisms that explain why change happens.

## A4.2 The data

The evaluation team drew on a range of data sources in conducting the evaluation. The main data sources for the synthesis are:

1. Desk study: background project and KM documents, including IPs' project proposals, work-plans and monitoring documents (secondary data).
2. BRACED project MTR reports (primary data).
3. KIIs with IP consortium staff (primary data).

### A4.2.1 Desk study

The evaluation team carried out a desk review of the BRACED programme project documents, including:

- project proposal documents
- project ToC narrative
- project monitoring and evaluation plans
- year 1 annual reports.

We reviewed the documents, compiling programme theories for the activity packages and generating initial theory-based ICMO configurations as preparation for reviewing and analysing the Implementing Partners' MTR reports. They were also used in conjunction with the MTR reports to tailor the KIIs that the evaluation team carried out with the BRACED project staff to provide a supplementary dataset.

### A4.2.2 BRACED project MTR reports

Project MTRs were largely expected to be IP-led, with data collection carried out by the IP project team, using a range of both qualitative and quantitative methods, depending on their chosen design. Of the 14 MTRs received, six IPs did the MTR themselves and eight IPs commissioned consultants.

The MTR required IPs to define and explore the key 'mechanisms' that cause a particular intervention or package of interventions to lead to a change. Changes can be desired or undesired/positive and negative. BRACED M&E Guidance Note 7 (BRACED, 2015b) guided IPs in conducting their MTR and final evaluations.

A key part of the evaluation activity has been to support the IPs to develop the ToRs and evaluation matrix for the MTR data collection. The process included:

- elaborating key evaluation questions into a skeleton evaluation matrix;
- testing the evaluation matrix and one-to-one support approach with three self-selected IPs on Skype;
- developing a draft Terms of Reference Template and MTR Guidance Note;

- working with each Implementing Partner to evaluate, quality assure and agree the Terms of Reference for the MTR, and the MTR Report itself;
- providing one-on-one planning and support sessions with each IP.

To help the IPs to generate evidence to answer the question: '**How, where, when and why do BRACED interventions work, and what can be learned/how can good practice be replicated?**', the evaluation team took the core evaluation questions (see Box A4.1 below) from Guidance Note 7 as the foundation for formulating evaluation sub-questions (e.g. asking for each activity package: how and why have the changes you've seen come about? Why has change happened? What is the context that influences this? See also Annex 5). These were set out in matrix form, and included probing questions to identify, test and refine contexts and mechanisms that will influence outcomes for each intervention, along with other key questions couched in a realist framing. The matrix requires IPs to locate the hypothesised programme theories within the CToC. This provided the basis for IP engagement and data collection by IPs for the MTR and realist synthesis across all 15 BRACED projects.

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#### **Box A4.1: The MTR evaluation questions IPs aimed to address**

**Evaluation Question 1:** To what extent have particular interventions led to anticipated changes and results?

**Evaluation Question 2:** How and why have particular intervention packages led to observed results and changes?

**Evaluation Question 3:** What has had to change or adapt in intervention package design and why?

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#### **A4.2.3 Evaluation team KII with project staff**

13 KIIs were used to supplement the data collected by the IPs. Interviews were conducted with IP staff, partners, and in some cases independent consultants who worked on the projects.

During the design phase for this evaluation activity, we identified three potential foci for the supplementary data collection:

1. Dig deeper into case studies.
2. Fill potential gaps in the data.
3. Gather evidence on quality of delivery.

We took an inductive approach in the design of the supplementary data collection, informed by the quality and content of the MTR reports as well as our ongoing interactions with the Implementing Partners.

We developed a 'skeleton' interview protocol in preparation and tailored this to individual IPs (see Annex 6 for the outline). All interviews included a combination of clarification questions on context, mechanisms and outcomes reported in the MTR reports. They also included questions to find out which achievements IPs considered to be the most significant, and why. Similarly the team probed to understand constraints – why certain things weren't working. This enabled us to pick up what IPs felt to be the key outcomes and achievements of the projects, and to map the pathways to getting to that point. It also supported the reflective approach which guided the MTRs.

### A4.3 Synthesis approach

A synthesis workshop was held 28–30 November 2016 bringing together all the members of the evaluation team. For the mid-term review, Implementing Partners effectively generated refined programme theories (EQ1) and recorded data on their activities' pathways of change (EQ2). These were extracted from the MTR reports and the KII transcripts and synthesised using realist principles and thematic analysis, focusing on outcomes and mechanisms. Mechanisms were informed by the initially theoretically informed, by the expert knowledge of the evaluation team and the literature, with others emerging from the data as we systematically analysed it.

The BRACED projects were methodically synthesised against common evaluation questions as there were broadly similar intervention factors, mechanisms and shared outcomes despite differing contexts. Links between outcomes, contexts and mechanisms from across the range of projects were explored and, where possible, synthesised. We used a typology of activities (described in Section 5) to group the projects, clustering and analysing the programme theories and contexts, mechanisms and outcomes, to draw out lessons and share implementation experiences across the projects.

ICMO data from the case studies and original ICMO configurations generated from the initial programme theories were pooled and grouped according to activity area, using Word tables to organise the data under overarching programme theories in each activity area.

Under a realist lens a range of techniques help us to 'think about evidence and draw conclusions' (Michaelis and Westhorp, 2016: 13):

- juxtaposing ('for instance, when one study provides the data to make sense of the outcome pattern noted in another');
- reconciling (identifying differences which explain apparently contradictory sets of findings);
- adjudicating between studies (quality of research);
- consolidating (multi-faceted explanations of success);
- situating (this mechanism in context A, that one in context B).

This allowed us to draw out patterns and dissonances in the experiences of Implementing Partners and to derive common lessons, where possible, on drivers and constraints in implementation and to progress towards impact. This was guided by the expert knowledge of the evaluation team and enriched by in-depth interactions with the Implementing Partners, and it forms the basis of the synthesis.

We then re-examined all of the case study reports (raw data) to check that the emerging 'headline' (synthesised) ICMO configurations drawn from the case studies reflect and encompass the ideas originally expressed in MTR reports and interviews, as well as key underlying programme theories.

The result of our analysis is a set of ICMO configurations about how BRACED interventions are leading to change. These provide new insights into how elements of our CToC lead to and reinforce other elements. They will be used to refine programme theories through making more explicit the expected outcomes and adjusting the anticipated links between them, which will be explored further in the final evaluation.

**Table A4.1: Detailed Steps and Activities – Mid-Term Review**

STEPS	TIMING	SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES
Initial planning	October 2015 – March 2016	<p>coordinate with the KM M&amp;E team to establish management arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EA2 send initial email to IPs to initiate contact, provide an overview of our role, proposed mechanisms for engagement, seek confirmation of planned timelines for the IP Mid-Term Review, and arrange one-to-one discussions on their MTR</li> <li>• EA2 draft detailed design document, outline of MTR ToR and skeleton evaluation matrix</li> <li>• EA2 share draft evaluation matrix and briefly outline design with IPs and offer initial conversation/consultation</li> <li>• Skype/teleconference one-to-one discussion with small number of IPs on their MTR and draft EA2 matrix and approach as initial consultations for feedback into EA2 detailed design</li> <li>• EA2 share matrix and design document with all IPs (from December 2015)</li> <li>• Skype/teleconference one-to-one discussion with all IPs on their MTR, feedback on the draft EA2 design. In this discussion, a programme of support leading up to the MTR will be agreed. In preparation for the calls, the EA2 team will do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review relevant background documents for each project</li> <li>• review BRACED implementers/grantees final set of M&amp;E tools and framework</li> <li>• sketch out preliminary programme theories based on background documents for discussion during IP calls and for IPs to develop further during MTR process, using evaluation matrix</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Follow up individual and group e-mails with IPs detailing proposed next steps</li> <li>• EA2 design checklist template for feedback/sign-off and share with IPs)</li> <li>• IPs Develop MTR ToR and evaluation matrices</li> <li>• IPs submit tailored matrix and MTR ToRs to EA2 for sign-off</li> <li>• EA2 team review IP output against checklist template for feedback/sign-off (deadline for sign-off: end March 2016)</li> <li>• EA2 team send detailed written feedback to IPs and request revision or directly sign-off</li> <li>• IPs revise and resubmit to EA2 – EA2 may provide further one-to-one support guidance on revising, as necessary</li> </ul>

STEPS	TIMING	SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES
MTR Preparation and document review (secondary data)	January – May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise MTR synthesis approach</li> <li>• Provide support to the development of IP MTR ToRs and evaluation matrices</li> <li>• Prepare 1 x methodology guidance notes for MTRs</li> <li>• Organise 1 x side workshop on MTR design and synthesis at the BRACED Annual Learning Event in February 2016</li> <li>• Organise 1 x webinar with all IPs in the lead up to their MTR to facilitate sharing of approaches and methodologies in May 2016</li> </ul>
Support to project-level MTR	June – October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EA2 Provide on call support to IPs during the MTR fieldwork and analysis (MTR data collection deadline 31 August 2015 – see Note 7. IP reports to EA2 team by 31st October 2016)</li> <li>• EA2 collate results from IP MTRs</li> <li>• EA2 quality review and sign-off of the reports as they come in</li> </ul>
Preparation of programme-level synthesis	November 2016 – January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and synthesis process of MTR findings by EA2 team (desk-based): may involve revisiting and interviewing IPs</li> <li>• EA2 to carry out supplementary modules/gap-filling activities</li> <li>• EA2 synthesis (drafting) workshop (end November 2016)</li> <li>• EA2 produce final report (10 December 2016)</li> </ul>
MTR Sharing and advocacy	January – April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis report (headline evaluation findings) disseminated and shared</li> <li>• 1 x 'Lessons' paper developed documenting learning from the MTR process (summary of what went well, what did not), to inform work towards the final evaluation</li> <li>• 1 x Annual Learning Event to celebrate success and share lessons emerging from the MTR synthesis</li> </ul>



## Annex 5. IP KII Interview Protocol

### Key informant interview guide for generating ICMOs

NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: SELECT RELEVANT SECTIONS/QUESTIONS TO COMPLEMENT WHAT IS IN THE PROJECT MTR REPORT.

#### Introduction

##### OUTLINE OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this interview is not primarily to provide feedback – it is for us to gather additional data about your project, clarifying our understanding and allowing us to make sure we clearly represent this in the synthesis that we are preparing.

Having said that, we know that you might have questions about the feedback we have provided. Would you like us to set aside 15 minutes at the end of the call to make sure we have time to discuss this?

#### A. Programme theory

The aim of this activity is to get a collective understanding of the programme theory. From here we can map these onto the Grant Theory of Change (GToC) and analyse where the intervention (GToC) sits in relation to the CToC. Talk the interviewee through the CToC. Through a facilitated process, ask the following questions:

- Ask them to tell you in their own words how they believe the activities they are planning will deliver the results they want to achieve. **These are the programme theories: How and why** do the grantees and Implementing Partners think their intervention influences change and **how** the grantees and Implementing Partners see **their theories fitting into the GToC**:
  - What (exactly) is the link between activities and outputs/ impacts? Which activities are the most important?
  - Clarify (exactly) what activities will be undertaken, sequencing, duration, linkages.
  - How do the significant changes that they foresee link to changes in the CToC? What are the important assumptions/risks underlying these changes?
  - What do they see as the links between their intervention and the longer-term changes in the CToC? (higher-level results)?

For the main outcomes identified, ask:

- Does it/do you think it will work like that for everyone? Why/why not?
- All of the time? Why/why not?
- In different seasons? Why/why not?

- Who benefits the most from this activity? Why? How?
- What else needs to happen for these results to be delivered? What are the key assumptions and risks?
- Could the changes they seek occur without the intervention? What might be the other drivers/factors/actors?
- Who are the key stakeholders? E.g. people they will work with, potential beneficiaries of their activities under this grant.
- What are the **top five most significant changes that the project hopes to achieve** (must be an attitude/behaviour change, practice change, institutional or behavioural change – lower levels of the CToC)?
- For each change identified, ask:
  - **Who** is involved in that change (farmers, other actors and stakeholders; institutions, organisations, enterprises, etc.)?
  - Follow up by asking what their key **assumptions** are, what the **risks** are, **how** they think their interventions will **influence the changes**, and **why**, in that **context**.
    - Explore partners' approaches (what? how? why?): Ask probing questions about the **approach** they have chosen, and repeatedly ask why (**Why** have you chosen this approach? Why do you think it will be effective? What is it about this approach that has worked well in the past? Why do you think it has been effective in this context?).
- What has your project learned about delivering these kinds of interventions?
- What have you had to change or adapt in the way the activities are designed and delivered?
- Why did you make these changes?

## B. Context, mechanisms and outcomes

The next stage of the interview focuses on asking probing questions to **tease out and identify the Cs and Ms that will influence Os** for each intervention (CMOs will be used in the later stages of the evaluation – mid/final): exploring and identifying contextual factors and mechanisms (that are important potential barriers or potential enablers) affecting the outcomes. This builds on the **programme theories** discussed earlier in the interview. We are particularly interested in answering the following questions:

1. **For whom** will this basic programme theory work and not work, and why?
2. In what context will this programme theory work and not work, and why?

3. What are the main **mechanisms** by which we expect this programme theory to work?
4. If this programme theory works, what **outcomes** will we see?

### **Outcomes, context and mechanisms**

Refer back to the conversation about the programme theory, and the causal links the interviewee has identified leading to specific outcomes, along with any assumptions and risks.

- Now we want to explore the bigger picture and the other factors which might influence the success of this project, or inhibit its success.
- Please describe any unanticipated enablers you have encountered, i.e. things that have helped the activity to work and/or bring about change.
- Please describe any unanticipated constraints you have encountered, i.e. things that have got in the way of the activity working and/or bringing about change.

### **Closing**

- What are your expectations of this specific project?
- How would you judge the project to have been a success in a few years' time?

## USEFUL PROBES

## Context (internal and external)

Individual skill levels, education of grantees and Implementing Partners

Patronage networks/political connections

Good civil society networks

Formation of partnerships

Programme governance/management

Economic incentives for service providers

Regulatory and legal frameworks

Community capacity and leadership

Local or national political priorities

Economic/market factors

Cultural factors/gender attitudes within society

Commercial context, e.g. prices, trade rules

## Mechanisms

Training mechanism: How training has been designed. Any unexpected consequences of or worries about training.

Self-efficacy: Improved self-efficacy – i.e. in people's beliefs about their capability to perform a particular task or handle a particular situation (e.g. access evidence; understand it; use it to weigh up different options and make evidence-informed choices).

Network facilitation: Building cross-functional coalitions among different groups; (i) Establishing and brokering relationships across different spheres (government, civil society, private sector); (ii) Recognising how best to bring different groups together around a common goal.

Social networks and trust.

Transformational leadership (Champions): champions can act as 'transformational leaders' who influence, persuade and build support for change.

Social learning (via champions and networks). Rationale: people are more likely to change their behaviours when practices are adopted by those close to them.

Social processing: opportunities to interact (e.g. through a network) leading to participants' beliefs and understanding shifting towards a consensus.

Change facilitation i.e. organisational tools and systems that provide practical assistance to enable people to change (in the form of technical, financial, organisational or emotional support).

Organisational capacity/learning/culture.

BRACED aims to build the resilience of up to 5 million vulnerable people against climate extremes and disasters. It does so through a three year, UK Government funded programme, which supports over 120 organisations, working in 15 consortiums, across 13 countries in East Africa, the Sahel and Southeast Asia. Uniquely, BRACED also has a Knowledge Manager consortium.

The Knowledge Manager consortium is led by the Overseas Development Institute and includes the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, ENDA Energie, ITAD and Thomson Reuters Foundation.

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The BRACED Knowledge Manager generates evidence and learning on resilience and adaptation in partnership with the BRACED projects and the wider resilience community. It gathers robust evidence of what works to strengthen resilience to climate extremes and disasters, and initiates and supports processes to ensure that evidence is put into use in policy and programmes. The Knowledge Manager also fosters partnerships to amplify the impact of new evidence and learning, in order to significantly improve levels of resilience in poor and vulnerable countries and communities around the world.

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