

What does the evidence tell us about resilience?

Building Resilience to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) is the biggest global effort to build resilience locally, in highly vulnerable places, yet at scale. After three years of implementation, the BRACED Knowledge Manager has collated and synthesised evidence from project monitoring reports, to understand how resilience is being built on the ground.



Resilience building is not just determined by what you do but how you do it. Programmes need to think beyond activities and begin by considering the key processes that underpin resilient outcomes. Project designs need to clearly show the pathway for identifying and assessing the logic, sequencing and integration of the right combinations of activities and actors, in addition to a clear understanding of the processes that will lead to change.



Adaptive and flexible programming approaches are essential to deal with potential trade-offs and mitigate the risks of future maladaptation. Such approaches are essential to manage the potential trade-offs of addressing short and long-term resilience capacities, maintain the relevance and appropriateness of project activities, and to ensure that communities are not 'locked in' to one pathway that may become obsolete in the future.



Addressing climate variability is more important than providing long-term climate information. Long-term climate information does not need to be an essential element of building resilience. Projects should make sure that people are able to make choices based on short-term weather information while planning over the longer-term.



Building resilience requires equality – projects must move beyond participation of the most vulnerable towards addressing the root causes of exclusion. Future projects and programmes should tackle the root causes of social exclusion and reflect realistic timeframes to achieve change from the start.



Building resilience is not enough – change also needs to be sustainable and transformational. Adaptive, anticipatory and absorptive capacity can be built in ways that are or are not transformational. This depends on whether they affect social and political structural changes, are catalytic, impacting at scale and sustainable. Programmes need to combine community-based projects with national and regional engagements to effectively influence policy and decision making.

Through a 3-year,
£110 million UK
Government-funded
programme,
BRACED supports



across **13 countries**
in East Africa, the
Sahel and Asia



to help up to
5 million
people...



... to become more resilient to climate extremes and disasters

Going forward: what does this mean for future resilience programmes?



The level of achievement depends on the context. BRACED has shown that progress towards results is relative to the starting point. There are different trajectories of change, and projects operating in enabling contexts may see more 'results'. A more nuanced understanding of progress relative to the starting point is needed.



There are certain things projects cannot achieve within three years. While assessments of progress should be relative to the starting point, there are certain things that projects cannot achieve within three years – some questions require longer time frames to be tested. Future investments should build in and consider these questions from the start:

- How can flexible and adaptive approaches support resilience building?
- Do climate information services lead to better decisions that enhance anticipatory and adaptive capacity?
- How are different capacities drawn upon to tackle different types, magnitudes and recurrences of shocks and stresses?
- How can we track and manage the trade-offs between resilience capacities?
- What does it take to build resilience in ways that are most sustainable?
- What approaches can influence structural processes towards greater downward accountability, changing broader social norms, and/or sector-wide resilience?

Phased delivery would help match design to context. To overcome the challenges related to trade-offs of achieving both short and long-term objectives, as well as ensuring sustainable and transformational resilience is built, future programmes should consider phased delivery approaches. This should include longer lead in times for design and allow for a deeper analysis of the context in which the project is working; an extended inception phase to build relationships and trial new ways of working; and several phases of implementation without assuming that full results can be delivered in one project period.



For more detail about the learning from monitoring BRACED, see *Chapter 6 of the 'Routes to Resilience: Insights from the final year' report.*

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