
LEARNING FROM HINDSIGHT

Synthesis report on Oxfam resilience research

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What can we learn about resilience by examining completed resilience, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation projects? Oxfam conducted three such case studies in Bolivia, Colombia, and Fiji, looking at the conditions required for successful resilient development as well as issues around timing and duration. This synthesis report presents a summary of the three projects and distills the findings that were common to our analysis of them as well as a related climate change adaptation project in Vanuatu.

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ACRONYMS AND KEY TERMS

ACRONYMS

CBDAMPIC	Capacity Building to Enable the Development of Adaptation Measures in Pacific Island Countries
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CRC	Colombian Red Cross
CLOPAD	Local Committee for Prevention of and Attention to Disasters, Colombia
COE	Emergency Operation Center, Bolivia
CREPAD	Regional Committee for Prevention of Disasters, Colombia
CRIC	Caucan Indigenous Regional Council, Colombia
DANE	Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (National Administrative Department of Statistics), Colombia
DEGIR	Special Directorate of Integrated Risk Management, Bolivia
DG-ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness European Community Humanitarian Office
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)
FEJUVE	Federación de Juntas Vecinales (Federation of Neighborhood Committees), Bolivia
FUNDEPCO	Foundation for Community Participatory Development, Bolivia
GAMLP	Gobierno Autónomo Municipal de La Paz (La Paz Autonomous Municipal Government), Bolivia
FRC	French Red Cross
GDP	Gross domestic product
IDP	Internally displaced person
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
SISRADE	National System for Risk Reduction and Attention to Disaster, Bolivia
SNPAD	National System for Disaster Prevention and Response, Colombia
UNISD	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

KEY TERMS

Aymara: the largest indigenous ethnolinguistic group in Bolivia.

Buen vivir (living well): *Sumak Kawsay* in Quechua and *Suma Qamaña* in Aymara. Andean indigenous concept pertaining to an alternative view of sustainable development, participatory democracy, respect for Mother Nature, and spirituality. It has been incorporated into the constitutions of Bolivia (2009) and Ecuador (2008).

Cabildos: indigenous political and social authorities; they are the political leaders of *resguardos* and communities.

Cosmology: in its anthropological sense, the body of knowledge, practices, and beliefs of a society or culture.

Caucan Indigenous Regional Council (CRIC): the oldest and most influential indigenous organization in Colombia; the CRIC is an alliance of 10 regional indigenous organizations.

Lahar: a landslide of volcanic debris and water.

Minga: indigenous collective physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and community work. According to our findings, collective *mingas* are key elements of resilient living in Nasa indigenous communities in Cauca, Colombia.

Nasa: ethnolinguistic indigenous group inhabiting most of the Cauca Department in Colombia.

Nasa Çxhaçxha: indigenous organization in Tierradentro, Cauca, Colombia, founded in 1994, in the aftermath of the deadly Páez earthquake and mudflow; Nasa Çxhaçxha is one of the 10 organizations that make up the CRIC.

Quechua: second-largest ethnolinguistic group in Bolivia.

Resguardo: collective land governed by one or more indigenous communities according to autochthonous customs and laws, based on Articles 63 and 329 of Colombia's 1991 Constitution; a *resguardo* is a protected collective property, inalienable and immune from seizure.

Social capital: a set of values, such as the norms of reciprocity, and social relations embedded in the social structure of a society that enable people to act collectively to achieve their desired goals (SPC, 2008).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfam defines resilience as “the ability of women and men to realize their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses, and uncertainty” (Jeans et al., 2016, 6). Although the field of development has been implementing programs that contain the elements of resilience for decades, there is still much learning to be done (Webb, 2017). Through this research project, which is part of a much larger program in Central America and the Pacific implementing resilient development programming, Oxfam has sought to learn with the advantage of hindsight, examining projects completed a few years earlier, so that the “dust has settled” and the sustainability is apparent. Since funding in the area of resilience is still fairly recent, however, it is difficult to find programs that were framed as resilience projects and ended five years ago, so we decided to expand the research to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) programs.

In this research we have sought to gather evidence about the impact of these projects on households and communities; the elements of such projects that make them more likely to succeed; ways of defining and measuring “success” in resilience projects; and the timeline, timing, and duration of resilience projects. Our selected case studies are as follows:

- A 2007–09 preparedness project funded by the Disaster Preparedness European Community Humanitarian Office (DIPECHO) and implemented by the French Red Cross and Colombian Red Cross around the Nevado del Huila volcano in Colombia;
- A resilience project implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Fiji in 2002–05; and
- An Oxfam landslide preparedness project implemented in La Paz, Bolivia, in 2010–11.

The research is not an evaluation of the specific projects by any means, but a comparative research exercise to learn as much as we can from them about resilience, in order to inform future programming by Oxfam and other implementers. The learning from the research will also be applied to Oxfam’s resilience framework and approach to programming. Given the geographic focus of the larger resilience program of which this research project is part, we sought DRR, CCA, and resilience projects in Latin America and the Pacific that were thought to have created resilience to multiple hazards.

This synthesis report presents the common findings across the three case studies, together with relevant findings from a related Oxfam research project that evaluates a concluded CCA program implemented by CARE in Vanuatu (Ensor, 2017). Separately, we are publishing research reports on each of the three case studies.

Although the projects varied widely in the nature of the targeted communities, their focus, their implementation, and their impact, certain findings appear consistent when the projects are examined through a resilience lens. A few findings are equally applicable to all development and humanitarian projects:

1. Women face different challenges from men in their everyday lives and in humanitarian crisis settings. As a result, their unique vulnerabilities, capacities, and rights must be considered when designing and implementing resilience interventions. We saw this in the case studies in Colombia and Fiji.
2. It is critical to seek the input of, and listen to, a wide cross-section of targeted communities, including the most vulnerable, who are often the hardest voices to obtain. We saw this, again, in Colombia and Fiji.
3. Particularly important with outside-led interventions is the relationship with the communities. Such relationship building requires trust and respect. Our research showed that trust and respect can begin growing through small steps, such as the honoring of traditions about approaching a community and requesting permission from the village elder to conduct

research or programming in the community. In the longer term, trust and respect require close attention to the voices of the community.

And a few of the findings were specific to resilience projects:

1. In most communities that are susceptible to natural hazards, community-led “resilience” efforts have been underway for decades, if not longer. According to Oxfam’s resilience framework, resilient development can strengthen absorptive, adaptive, and/or transformative capacities (see “Oxfam on Resilience,” below). Resilience programming, whether led by civil society, governments, or communities, most often focuses on absorptive and adaptive capacities. In some locations, these traditional practices have been led by indigenous populations. Resilience programming must be aware of, and build upon, such traditional practices—or else it risks being duplicative or parallel and not benefiting from the ground that has been gained and lessons that have been learned. Our research in Bolivia, Colombia, and Fiji all reached this conclusion.
2. Given that resilience projects are best served by building on previous interventions and traditional practices, resilient development should be viewed as a long-term, iterative process. It is perhaps widely accepted that resilience is not an endpoint but a process, but it is also important to be mindful of the fact that it is a cumulative process. Sometimes a project, particularly one addressing a locally defined problem, can serve as a catalyst, energizing a community to take action to create further resilience. Resilient development also cannot be reached in the span of a short project. Instead, we must think of achieving resilient development through long-term programming. We saw this in Bolivia, Colombia, Fiji, and the related project in Vanuatu.
3. Finally, we saw in Colombia and Fiji the importance of collaboration *within* communities for the ultimate effectiveness of resilience programming. In Colombia we learned of indigenous collective *mingas*, whereas in Fiji this was described as social capital. It involved collaboration and reciprocity among family and a wider network of kin and clan that effectively stretched to the boundaries of the community.

Other papers in this series

- *Addressing Water Shortages: A catalyst for more resilient development in Fiji*
- *Building Resilience Through Iterative Processes: Mainstreaming ancestral knowledge, social movements and the making of sustainable programming in Bolivia*
- *“Disaster is Nature Telling Us How to Live Resiliently”: Indigenous disaster risk reduction, organizing, and spirituality in Tierradentro, Colombia*

1 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This research project is part of a larger resilience program funded by the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies focused on building resilience and capacities for disaster risk reduction (DRR) in vulnerable communities in Latin America and the Pacific Islands. The three-year project, launched in late 2014, focuses on four countries: El Salvador, Guatemala, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. The project focuses on the following key outcomes:

- Reduced vulnerability to natural hazards through DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA);
- Greater absorptive capacity for increased resilience to natural hazards; and
- Greater capacity to adapt to hazards, create change, and ensure basic rights.

As part of this program, Oxfam has produced three case studies examining completed resilience, DRR, preparedness, or CCA projects in Latin America and the Pacific that were thought to have created resilience to multiple hazards:

- A 2007–09 preparedness project funded by DIPECHO and implemented by the French Red Cross and Colombian Red Cross around the Nevado del Huila volcano in Colombia;
- A resilience project implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Fiji in 2002–05; and
- An Oxfam landslide preparedness project implemented in La Paz, Bolivia, in 2010–11.

Examining these projects with the benefit of hindsight, we have sought to gather evidence about the impact of such projects on households and communities; what elements of such projects make them more likely to succeed; how we define and measure “success” in resilience projects; and the timeline, timing, and duration of resilience projects. The research is not an evaluation of the specific projects by any means, but a comparative research exercise to learn as much as we can from them about resilience, in order to inform future programming by Oxfam and other implementers. This synthesis report presents the common findings across the three case studies, together with relevant findings from a related Oxfam research project that evaluates a concluded climate change adaptation program implemented by CARE in Vanuatu. The learning from this research will be applied to the Oxfam resilience framework (Oxfam, 2016) as well as current and future resilience programming.

OXFAM ON RESILIENCE

Oxfam’s work toward a just world without poverty must address risk and its causes as well as the inequality in social relations that unfairly expose poor people and make them acutely vulnerable to shocks, stress, and uncertainty.¹ According to the Oxfam Resilience Framework, resilience is not the ultimate desired goal or outcome; rather, it constitutes a quality of the pursuit of sustainable development. We cannot achieve Oxfam’s vision if we do not integrate a resilience approach into our thinking, ways of working, and all our interventions.

Oxfam defines resilience as “the ability of women and men to realize their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses, and uncertainty.” Oxfam’s approach to resilience is rights-based, long-term, process-oriented, a gender-justice approach, and a systems approach.

Rights-based: Oxfam believes that risk and its impacts on people living in poverty is “no accident,” (Oxfam International, 2013) but the result of inequitable and unsustainable development that fails to address poverty, creates vulnerability, and lets the burden of risk unfairly fall on the poorest and most vulnerable people. Growing inequality, unprecedented climate conditions, faster change, and greater uncertainty are new realities that require new

knowledge and ways of working. The existing capacities of people living in poverty to prepare, cope, and adapt are stretched, and some existing strategies may increase vulnerabilities in the medium and long term. Therefore, existing absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities need to be recognized, supported, and enhanced.

- Absorptive capacity is the capacity to take intentional protective action and to cope with known shocks and stress. It is needed because shocks and stress will continue to happen owing to, for example, extreme weather events, protracted conflict, and natural disasters.
- Adaptive capacity is the capacity to make intentional adjustments and incremental changes in anticipation of or in response to change, in ways that create more flexibility in the future. It is needed because change is ongoing and uncertain and because intentional transformation can take time and sustained engagement.
- Transformative capacity is the capacity to make intentional change to systems that create risk, vulnerability, and inequality. It is needed to influence the drivers of risk, vulnerability, and inequality and because social and natural systems are themselves being transformed by, for example, globalization and climate change (Béné et al., 2012).

Our approach affirms people's right to determine their own futures by enhancing the capacities of people and institutions to address the causes of risk, fragility, vulnerability, and inequality.

Long-term: Resilience needs to be built continuously over time. It is not a fixed or end state but an ongoing process of social change.

Process-oriented: Oxfam considers six closely linked social change processes that, when integrated into our interventions, will enhance absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities at different levels of society and across multiple sectors:

1. *Empowerment* includes processes for promoting gender justice and enhancing voice, empowerment and participation, conflict resolution, and psychological resilience.
2. *Securing and enhancing livelihoods* refers to processes for securing and building human, social, natural, physical, and financial capital and household assets based on the sustainable livelihoods framework.
3. *Informing* encompasses processes that develop information and knowledge to support decision making and action.
4. *Flexible and forward-looking planning* refers to processes that enable and enhance collective, forward-looking, and flexible decision making.
5. *Accountable governing* encompasses processes that secure accountable and enabling states and institutions.
6. *Learning* includes processes that enable people to learn together, support experimentation, and increase the potential for social and technological innovation.

A gender-justice approach: Oxfam puts women's rights at the center of all of its programming, recognizing that promoting women's rights is necessary to achieve gender justice. This is also critical if we want to achieve resilient development outcomes. Women and girls face daily and regular hazards in their life cycle as well as structural inequality through discriminatory gender norms and gender stereotypes based on patriarchal societies. These increase the exposure and vulnerability of women and girls and limit their ability to participate and exercise their agency and leadership capacity. We need to understand both the existing capacities of women and men and their specific and different vulnerabilities. And we need to understand how vulnerabilities are caused by inequality and exacerbated by risks.

A systems approach: A systems approach recognizes and works with the relationships between the complex causes of risk and poverty and avoids approaches that are siloed by sector, discipline, or organizational structures, which are likely to increase vulnerability. It recognizes the limitations of short-term, technical fixes and requires teams to adjust strategies based on feedback from monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Such an approach is necessary to

address the causes of multiple risks, fragility, and vulnerability without causing new risks and vulnerabilities.

METHODOLOGY

Case Study Selection

The geographic focus of this research is based on the focus of the larger Oxfam resilience program funded by the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies on the Pacific and Latin America. We decided to conduct three case studies—two in Latin America and one in the Pacific—supplemented with findings from a recently completed climate change adaptation project in Vanuatu. We chose projects that were framed as either (1) resilience projects or (2) DRR, preparedness, or CCA projects thought to have created increased resilience within the beneficiary communities—that is, projects that were considered successful by the relevant Oxfam staff, external experts, and existing evaluations. They needed to have been completed at least three to five years ago (i.e., by the end of 2013) to allow sufficient time for reflection on the enduring impact. We also sought a mix of Oxfam and non-Oxfam projects.

We identified potential case studies through a literature review and scoping interviews with Oxfam staff working on resilience in country and regional offices in the two regions and with external experts. We then used the above criteria to narrow down the list to the three selected.

Research Methods

To address the research objectives, the researchers used a mix of qualitative methods, including a literature review, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The research was organized around case study analysis. The three case studies followed a common methodology that was adapted to each particular context.

The literature review included a review of project documents, including needs assessments, project design and supporting documentation, MEAL (monitoring, evaluation, and learning) plans, interim and final reports, evaluations, findings of listening exercises and learning events; materials written about the projects, including journal articles, research reports, news articles, blog posts, and newsletter articles; any related materials produced by the communities, including resilience frameworks, news articles, and interviews; documents from related projects conducted in the communities, including needs assessments, interim and final reports, and evaluations; assessments of the resilience of the broader region and country, including peer-reviewed articles, gray literature, white papers, government assessments, reports of donors, and reports of local, national, and international NGOs; and documents regarding Oxfam's framework for resilience.

The researchers engaged a broad range of stakeholders through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. They consulted project staff from the projects; project participants (i.e., primary change agents); government officials (relevant ministries and agencies across all levels of government); local and national NGO representatives; community-based organization representatives, including women's rights organizations, indigenous organizations, and organizations representing disabled people and youth; local civic leaders; members of communities, including men and women, members of social groups that might be affected differently, and informal groups; academics and researchers working in the communities or with national expertise; and multilateral organizations and international NGOs, at headquarters and in the field.

The research was conducted according to Oxfam's ethical guidelines. In terms of research subjects, we adhered to the standards of voluntary participation, informed consent, avoidance of risk of harm, and the practice of offering (and abiding by requests of) confidentiality.

Limitations

The projects selected as case studies are not intended to be representative of projects conducted in the respective countries but rather “success stories” offering lessons that could be applicable in other contexts within each country and ideally in other countries. The findings compiled in the synthesis reports are those that occurred in multiple case studies; they are thus more likely to be applicable in some, but not all, instances globally.

Because time has passed since the projects in question ended, the researchers have had to rely on people’s memory recall when seeking to pinpoint the facts, timing, and impact of the projects. Also, community-initiated or external programming in the relevant communities before or after the projects in question may have catalyzed resilience. Consequently, the researchers have been as careful as possible to pinpoint the immediate and longer-term impact of the projects, while acknowledging the potential impact of such developments and programs on the resilient development of the community.

Finally, because Oxfam is known as a provider of humanitarian, DRR, and resilience programming and funding to local partners, there is a risk of aid recipient bias—i.e., interlocutors may have told the interviewer what they thought he or she wanted to hear and what would best position them for future assistance, funding, or both. The researchers explained that they were independent of Oxfam and that responses were not tied in any way to assistance. But these practices only partly mitigate this risk. As a result, the triangulation of information—conducted through multiple interviews with various stakeholders and desk research—was critical.

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The report begins with an overview of the three case studies, including a description of the projects and their impacts and an analysis of what we can learn about resilience from them. We then present the common findings from the three case studies as well as the related research in Vanuatu. These are elements of the projects that are positively or negatively associated with improved resilience outcomes. Finally, we present our conclusions from the research project.

2 OVERVIEW OF CASE STUDIES

The case studies we examined in this research project differed from each other in many aspects, including the project goals, objectives, design, and impact. Yet as we will see in the following section, they offer some common lessons about resilience.

COLOMBIA

Figure 1: Maps of Colombia, the Department of Cauca, Páez Municipality, and indigenous *resguardos* within Páez (from left to right, top to bottom)



Source: Adapted from Making Cities Resilient (2015).

Background

Colombia has a demographically diverse population that faces high inequality, rural poverty, and vulnerability to natural hazards. The 2005 national census conducted by Colombia's Administrative and Statistical Institute (DANE) estimated the Afro-Colombian population at 10.6 percent and the indigenous population at 3.4 percent of the population. The latter group, indigenous people, consists of approximately 1.4 million people belonging to 87 ethnic groups (DANE, 2005).² The region where the case study project was implemented is populated mainly by indigenous Nasa communities. For the Nasa, the concept of *pervivencia*, translated as "resilient living," is fundamental. *Pervivencia* connotes the sustainable interaction and equilibrium of social life, spiritual life, and ecological life.

According to the World Bank, 27.8 percent of Colombians lived below the poverty line in 2016 (World Bank, 2017). Rural poverty is extreme, with 44.7 percent of the peasant population living in poverty according to the multidimensional poverty index (DANE, 2016). In 2011 the Colombian government announced a poverty reduction plan. The program was complemented by the adoption of the multidimensional poverty index, which goes beyond monetary income and includes health, education, and standard of living. According to the DANE, poverty measured by the multidimensional index was reduced by 1.7 percentage points, going from 21.9 percent in 2014 to 20.2 percent in 2016 (DANE, 2016; *El Tiempo*, 2016). Nevertheless, 7.9 percent of Colombians still live in extreme poverty (DANE, 2016).³

Colombia also presents a high level of inequality, with the Gini coefficient estimated at between 0.54 and 0.56 (Jiménez, 2015).⁴ Moreover, the Gini coefficient for land distribution in Colombia is 0.86, placing Colombia among the most unequal countries in the continent and the world.

Life expectancy for both sexes in Colombia is 74.8 years, placing the country in 73rd place worldwide (WHO, 2015). According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (CEPAL), social spending in Colombia is the second lowest in South America: 13 percent of GDP, compared with an average of 19 percent in the region.

Colombia faces a number of natural hazard threats, including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and landslides. The risk of damage from these hazards is exacerbated by unplanned urbanization.

Project

At the end of 2007 the French Red Cross (FRC) partnered with the Colombian Red Cross (CRC) to begin implementing DIPECHO-V, a 15-month-long disaster preparedness project financed by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO). One of the objectives of this program was to build capacity at the community and government levels to manage events related to natural hazards—specifically lahars, earthquakes, and mudflows in high-risk communities near the volcano Nevado del Huila.

DIPECHO-V set out to engage with eight broad sectors: infrastructure, early warning systems (EWSs), education, awareness raising, training and development of local capacities, institutional strengthening at the municipal level, mapping and digitalization of existing data, and coordination. Activities were performed in each of the eight fields, resulting in increased disaster preparedness in both civil society and local government institutions.

In 2007, humanitarian and development programs were not yet incorporating a resilience framework; hence the French and Colombian Red Cross did not approach DIPECHO-V as a resilience project. Accordingly, the project was not designed, executed, or evaluated by the implementers within a resilience framework. Claims that it had, in fact, created resilience were made by later observers in 2014 (see ECHO, 2014).

Impact

According to the literature consulted and material collected during field interviews, DIPECHO-V helped the municipality of Belalcázar prepare for the impact of landslides caused by volcanic activities and/or soil erosion. The collaboration between Red Cross program implementers, the mayor's office, the church, the radio stations, and the educational institutions helped create an environment of awareness and preparedness that saved lives during the 2007 and 2008 landslides.

Red Cross personnel, as well as municipal employees who participated in DIPECHO-V, argued that decentralizing steps taken by the Colombian government after 1998—including the establishment of the National System for Disaster Prevention and Response (SNPAD), the Regional Committee for Prevention of Disasters (CREPAD), and the Local Committee for Prevention of and Attention to Disasters (CLOPAD)—were significant in increasing the impact of the program. Specifically, working within the CLOPAD provided the local government with indispensable tools to manage prevention and response efforts and make the most of the DIPECHO-V project.

Although DIPECHO-V was implemented in a region where most of the rural population and a large percentage of the urban population belong to the Nasa ethnolinguistic indigenous group, the program lacked a specific ethnic approach. As a result, the project was implemented on the base of preconceptions and generalizations largely dismissive of the value of indigenous social and political structures and spiritual beliefs.

Assessed against current conceptions of resilience, the DIPECHO-V project resulted in a modest degree of resilient development, but not consistently across the focus area and not to the extent possible. Furthermore, the gains have not been sustained owing to the breakdown of tools, although there are differences of opinion among the relevant stakeholders on where responsibility sits for the sustainability of development projects.⁵ Red Cross personnel in charge of the program showed high degrees of technical skill and great commitment in their respective fields and beyond. What was lacking, however, was staff with specific expertise and the capacity to approach and incorporate indigenous organizations, knowledge, and perspectives into the program.

The DIPECHO-V also lacked a structured gender approach and was implemented as a gender-blind program.⁶

Resilience Lessons

Indigenous Nasa communities and members of the indigenous organization Nasa Çxhaçxha claim that their own CCA/DRR project, concomitant with DIPECHO-V, was contextualized and implemented as a resilience program. Specifically, indigenous informants pointed out that the notion of resilience presents affinities with a Nasa concept that they loosely translate into Spanish as *pervivencia*. In the context of this research, *pervivencia* is translated as “resilient living”—in other words, people's ability to live and survive within a spiritual-ecological system or, more broadly, a territory. *Pervivencia* connotes the sustainable interaction and equilibrium of social life, spiritual life, and ecological life. Each dimension is fundamental to the persistence of the spiritual life system within a territory. When humans push the boundaries of the life system in their quest to exploit its resources, the system is disrupted. This is the case with excessive mining, coca cultivation, cattle farming, and other types of extractive modes of production, which threaten the Nasa's territories in Cauca and beyond.

Nasa's own DRR program contextualized the eruptions and the landslides as warnings or ruptures of spiritual equilibria within their territory. In response to the warnings, Nasa Çxhaçxha implemented a holistic program, blending spiritual practices and local knowledge of the environment with new information provided by key allies such as geologists from the OSSO Corporation. This exercise was deemed highly successful by the participants—both indigenous people and scientists—and by outside observers. In 2015, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) awarded the title of Champion for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas to the Nasa communities of Belalcázar, Tierradentro, Cauca, Colombia.

Overall, both municipal and indigenous institutions showed a degree of non-homogenous, sustained improvements in specific absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities (Oxfam, 2016), as illustrated by two examples:

- Most of the informants interviewed for this research (civil and indigenous authorities) were familiar with specialized DRR knowledge and ideas, indicating that adaptations and transformations had taken place.
- Throughout the region most of the indigenous settlements now stand in safe areas, and no families have returned to risky locations affected by the 1994 and 2008 landslides.

The material gathered for the research does not provide sufficient evidence to ascribe all specific improvements to the indigenous project, to the 15-month-long DIPECHO-V project, or to the shocks themselves (1994, 2007, and 2008). It appears so far that they may be due to a combination of all of these factors.

The research suggests that resilient development and sustainability occurred in the context of several important and specific preconditions:

1. The communities involved showed a good degree of internal organization and cohesiveness tied to a long history of social struggles and processes.
2. Nasa Çxhaçxha, the main indigenous organization and the implementer of the indigenous DRR program, grew and strengthened itself through its own internal conflicts and long-term transformative processes. Within the organization a large constituency of women worked continuously to challenge gender inequality, opening spaces and acquiring agency in the organization and in Nasa society.
3. Spiritual knowledge and the practices of local traditional healers known as the *Wälas* form an integral part of development work and political organizing within Nasa Çxhaçxha. Resilient development or *pervivencia* is in fact conditioned on the existence of a spiritual understanding of life, the territory, and the world.

The findings thus suggest that disaster risk reduction/climate change adaptation (DRR/CCA) programs should make greater efforts to understand and assimilate the knowledge and the voices of local constituencies. This assimilation should be applied to every step of the process, from the project's design, to its implementation, to its evaluation. In the case of indigenous communities, spiritual knowledge and practices must inform and be incorporated into development programs in accordance with national and international legislation and covenants. Failure to do so might result in missing out on invaluable opportunities to generate inclusive and sustainable social and economic development.

Concerning sequencing and duration of DRR/CCA resilience efforts, the Colombian case study suggests that successful resilience programs are not extemporaneous. Rather, they rely on contextual preconditions and require follow-up programs.

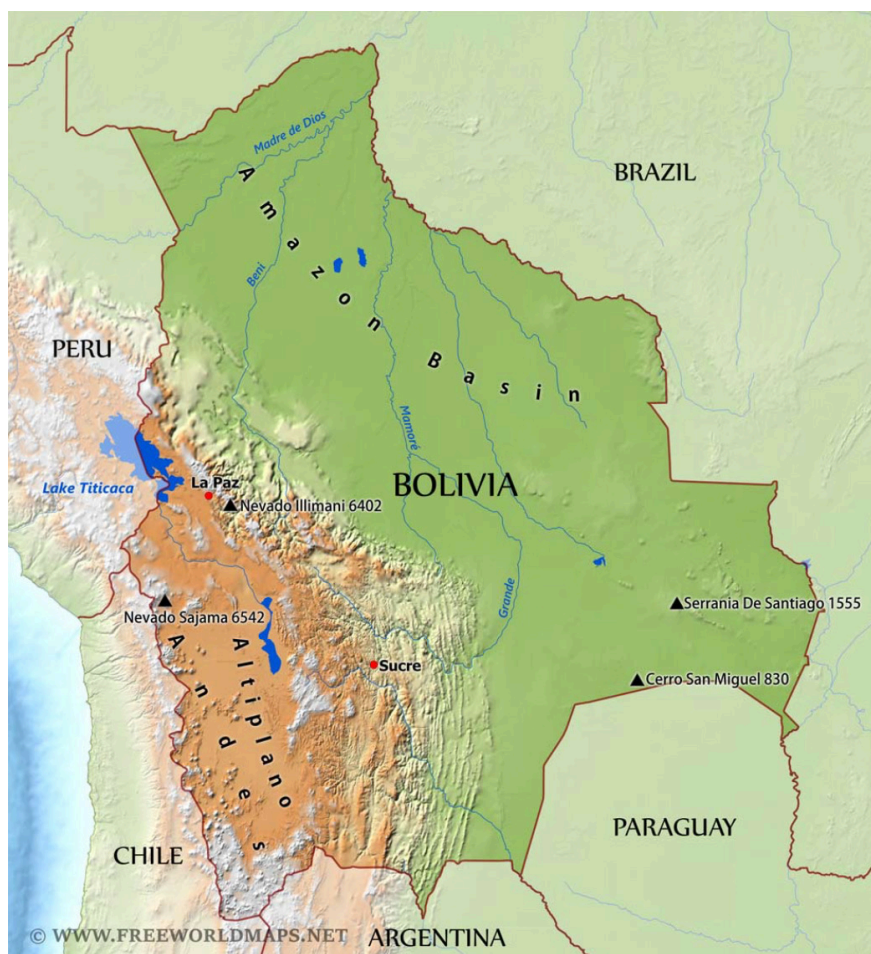
Further, the case study revealed that even though some DRR capacities remained in place eight years after the project, permanent structural changes have not occurred because of the obsolescence of the technical knowledge and the instrumentation used. These findings suggest that follow-up DRR programs, possibly integrated into departmental and national development plans, are necessary to sustain capacities over time.

In conclusion, the material analyzed for this research supports the argument that the experience of the Nasa indigenous communities in Tierradentro fits Oxfam's definition of resilience and complements it with culturally specific, yet universally important, notions:

1. Indigenous processes of self-determination, territorial defense, and cultural vindication are significant catalysts of resilient development in Latin America.
2. Indigenous ancestral, spiritual knowledge must be integrated in all development models. Resilient programming cannot occur if this crucial precondition remains unfulfilled.

BOLIVIA

Figure 2: Map of Bolivia



Source: Free World Maps (n.d.).

Background

Almost 90 percent of Bolivia's total foreign direct investment (FDI) is steered toward hydrocarbons, mining, and industrial manufacturing. Although Bolivian per capita GDP remains one of the lowest in Latin America, the country's economy grew approximately 4.9 percent annually between 2004 and 2014. Moderate poverty fell from 59 percent to 39 percent, reducing the Gini coefficient of income inequality from 0.60 to 0.47 (World Bank, 2016; Patzy, 2015). Similarly, extreme poverty dropped by 43 percent, and the average income of Bolivian citizens rose 45 percent. For the rural population living in extreme poverty, the income increase reached 182 percent (WPR, 2015). Thanks to prudent economic management, the Bolivian government has so far efficiently mitigated the effects of the fall in the price of hydrocarbons and other commodities.

Bolivian civil society is diverse. Social movements have played a determinative role in the country's recent history, and they continue to do so. The country's sociopolitical environment is a complex field of conflicting interests, which can have a strong influence on development initiatives.

Research carried out by Oxfam in Bolivia showed that poverty and vulnerability affecting rural women have been increasing owing to climatic changes that disrupt agricultural activities (Oxfam International, 2009). Other studies have also shown that the feminization of poverty is on the increase in urban settings. These trends are related partly to recent rural-urban migration

(Heins, 2011). These studies also reported that indigenous women are more exposed to hazards than men.

At the April 2010 People's Conference on Climate Change and Rights of Mother Earth in Tiquipaya, Bolivia, social movements and civil society from across Latin America and beyond made a significant step forward. The discourse that emerged from this event prompted the Bolivian government to effectively mainstream indigenous ancestral and spiritual knowledge. The result was the ratification of Law 300 of 2012: the Law on Mother Earth and Integral Development for Living Well. This unique law defines Mother Earth as a living, spiritual being in accordance with concepts derived from various indigenous Latin American cosmologies. Law 300 is a reiteration of the view, expressed by indigenous spokespeople in Bolivia and other Latin American countries, that sustainable, resilient development can be achieved only by integrating ancestral indigenous knowledge with scientific notions. No real changes will occur until this basic precondition, requiring true social egalitarianism, is established.

The tenets of Law 300, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all ecological systems, show significant analogies with the resilience framework of the Stockholm Resilience Centre. It is within this judicial, ethical, and theoretical scenario that the processes contemplated by Oxfam's resilience framework and the philosophy of living well advanced by indigenous movements can occur and thrive. This is the space, theoretical and de facto, within which communities and development professionals should build sustainable, resilient development projects "in order to realize their rights, improve their well-being," and live well (Oxfam International, 2016, p. 6; Plurinational State of Bolivia, 2012).

Yet while Bolivian social movements have greatly affected national and international environmental discourse, the reality on the ground is complex and rife with contradictions. The Bolivian economy depends on commodities, with a primary focus on the extraction of resources such as natural gas, iron, lithium, tin, and copper. This pattern not only is unsustainable in the medium or long term, but also implies high social and environmental costs (Patz, 2015; Fuentes, 2010).

Project

In 2010 as many as 300,000 people lived on the slopes of La Paz, in areas where the threat of landslides is high or very high. During particularly wet periods, landslides can make entire zones uninhabitable and pose a serious threat to people as well as physical structures. By December 2010, the Autonomous Municipal Government of the City of La Paz (GAMLP), after a geodynamic hazard and risk assessment, had identified 39 high-risk areas. Among these, four areas in Pampahasi Bajo, Metropolitana, Cervecería, and Suipacha (Villa Armonía) had to be evacuated immediately because of very high threat levels. The GAMLP intended to relocate the inhabitants into temporary camps, demolish their precarious homes, and stabilize the area. The evacuations were to take place before the intensification of the effects of the rainy season, which spans the months of October and April (European Commission, 2010–11).

As one of the few organizations in the country with experience managing temporary shelters according to Sphere Standards, Oxfam was an appropriate candidate for executing a relocation DG-ECHO Small Scale Disaster project. The Foundation for Community Participatory Development (FUNDEPCO) was Oxfam's chosen partner and local project implementer.

Specifically, Oxfam and FUNDEPCO conducted the following activities:

- planning and designing six temporary camps;
- preparing the campsites;
- acquiring shelters and sanitary modules that met Sphere standards;
- organizing camps' security protocols;
- performing electrical work;
- collecting data;
- creating and placing signs in all six camps that provided information on camp norms, instructions, and general information;

- managing camp staff and establishing teams, including teams focused on protection, gender, psychological care, education, and WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene);
- designing a media campaign to be disseminated by news organizations (print, Internet, TV, and radio);
- producing DRR banners and brochures;
- widely disseminating DRR and hazards maps; and
- phasing people out of the camp and closing it.

Impact

Analysis of the 2010–11 DG-ECHO Small-Scale Disaster project and the DIPECHO resilience, DRR, and CCA programs that followed showed that effective, sustainable programming is a building process that takes place over time.

The project's implementation began just before February 26, 2011, when a devastating mega-landslide hit the city of La Paz. Surprisingly, the disaster caused no casualties. This fortunate outcome was possibly related to the fact that the landslide moved very slowly, giving people time to evacuate, and to the fact that efficient early warning and information systems managed by the municipality were in place.

Solid background research work carried out before the 2010–11 Small-Scale Disaster Project allowed Oxfam, FUNDEPCO, and GAMLP to intervene quickly and efficiently. The background studies warned of the high risk of such a disaster, and alert systems were in place and activated when it occurred.

This case study shows that capacities were built upon other capacities in iterative processes. For example, operators at the Special Directorate for Integrated Risk Management of El Alto (DEGIR) improved their skills and expertise as the result of a series of consecutive DIPECHO projects that began with DIPECHO-VII in the aftermath of the mega-landslide.

These activities, according to informants interviewed during the research, empowered the students, adults, and elderly people of El Alto, who acquired new information about their environment and potential hazards and consequently adopted new, safer behaviors. This dynamic partly fulfills the Oxfam resilience framework in relation to absorption of new knowledge and the consequent assumption of adaptive behaviors.

Resilience Lessons

Preparedness programs can go only so far to reduce the vulnerability of urban populations living in unsafe areas. To best reduce vulnerability and to address the underlying risk, communities need the capacity to effect absorptive, adaptive, and transformative change (Oxfam International, 2016). Permanent solutions and structural changes require integrated blue-green and gray infrastructural interventions.⁷ These are the types of solutions advocated by citizens' groups such as the Federation of Neighborhoods Committees (FEJUVE) in La Paz and El Alto.

Previous Oxfam research showed that while DRR policies in Bolivia do acknowledge gender differences, ethnic and gender discrimination have not been addressed at the structural level (i.e., transformative change has not occurred). The statement holds true in the case of the DG-ECHO-SSD and DIPECHO-VII, which acknowledged gender and ethnic differences but were not structured within a gender or an ethnic framework. Previous Oxfam field research also documented important trends in resilient adaptations where women adopted ancestral agricultural techniques in response to climatic variations (Oxfam International, 2009; Salamanca, 2012); these constitute part of the process of strengthening capacities for resilient development (Oxfam, 2016). These are important initiatives that people designing development programming should learn from—always keeping in mind, however, the historical, cultural, and geographical specificity of resilient processes.

DRR and CCA programs must take into account, and be informed by, the social and political processes that shape the terrain where they are implemented. Program conception, design, and implementation should incorporate the point of view of the target communities (Oxfam International, 2016).

Bolivian Law 2140 of 2000 provided the first significant step to integrate risk management with sustainable development actions in Bolivia. The law created the National System for Risk Reduction and Attention to Disaster (SISRADE). This instrument allowed departmental and municipal governing bodies to coordinate with one another and work toward sustainable DRR and CCA programs.

Bolivia has made significant steps toward integrating DRR and CCA into development models. This is fundamental in a country where the consequences of climatic changes, such as the extreme droughts of 2016, are dramatically altering all ecosystems. Development officials and government should continue on this path, while also working to integrate civil society, indigenous movements, and the rights of Mother Earth in the development agenda.

FIJI

Figure 3: Map of the case study locations, Viti Levu island, Fiji



Source: Adapted from Geographic Guide (n.d.).

Background

The Republic of Fiji is a small island developing state in the Melanesian region of the western Pacific Ocean. Its archipelago of 330 mostly volcanic islands spans a territory of 2,000 square kilometers. Fiji is a lower-middle-income economy with a population estimated at 892,145 people.

The Pacific region, including Fiji, is one of the most exposed regions of the world to the risks of climate change and climate variability. El Niño and La Niña events drive climate variability in the Pacific, with El Niño patterns associated with unusually low rainfall and drought and La Niña

events associated with unusually high rainfall and floods. Extreme weather events, which include flooding, storm surges, droughts, and tropical cyclones, have had major impacts on Pacific peoples' social, economic, and ecological environments. Disaster-related economic losses in Pacific island countries, as a percentage of GDP, are higher than almost anywhere else in the world. This occurs because a high percentage of the population and infrastructure is exposed to disaster events in the Pacific, and a single event can affect the entire economic, human, and physical environment (World Bank, 2012; Barber, 2015).

Project

The Capacity Building to Enable the Development of Adaptation Measures in Pacific Island Countries (CBDAMPIC) program was implemented between January 2002 and March 2005 in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, and Vanuatu with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). It was implemented through the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)⁸ with national implementation hubs in each focus country. The CBDAMPIC project aimed to improve the sustainable livelihoods of Pacific Island people by increasing their capacity to adapt to climate-related risks. Besides offering national-level initiatives to raise awareness and commitment to mainstreaming climate change in national and sectoral politics, the project worked to

1. increase the awareness of pilot communities of the vulnerabilities associated with climate change and the adaptation options available; and
2. establish community projects that reduced the communities' vulnerabilities to climate change risks, including through community assessments to identify solutions to be carried out.

CBDAMPIC was one of the first adaptation projects in the Pacific that attempted to work at this community scale to build resilience to the longer-term impacts of climate change.

Fiji's pilot adaptation projects were established in Bavu, Tilivalevu, and Volivoli villages. This case study focuses only on Bavu and Tilivalevu, because Volivoli was extensively damaged by Cyclone Winston in February 2016. Bavu and Tilivalevu are located in the west of the main island of Viti Levu (see map above).

Through bottom-up community assessments, SPREP determined that both communities suffered from water shortages, and addressing them became the central aim of the community-level adaptation activities:

- In Tilivalevu, two water tanks were installed with the assistance of Lautoka's Public Works Department, now known as Water Authority of Fiji, with each household owning a water tap or faucet. The village has a dam that is connected to the two tanks and on which piped water is drawn. The CBDAMPIC project also contributed to the purchase of pipes to replace the old ones and the refurbishment of the dam.
- In Bavu, where the water shortage was the result of climate and non-climate conditions, the project increased the capacity of an existing, but insufficient, water tank in the village and installed gutters on the village church to collect rainwater.

Impact

An important element of the CBDAMPIC project was the extensive community engagement. The project used the participatory community vulnerability and adaptation action (CV&A) approach to understand the extent of the communities' vulnerability to climate change. This bottom-up approach promoted ownership and empowerment on the part of those whose voices were not usually heard—women and youth—and contributed to Oxfam's change process of empowerment, which includes processes for promoting gender justice and enhancing voice, empowerment and participation, conflict resolution, and psychological resilience. When it was implemented, the project built on its understanding of the community context, including livelihood assets and social and cultural norms and systems. In particular, social assets such as collaboration and social capital were an important foundation for the project. Securing and enhancing livelihoods, including social and human assets, is another change process based on the sustainable livelihoods framework (Department for International Development, 1999).

Informing is a social process that develops information and knowledge to support decision making and action leading to resilience. The project increased awareness of climate change at the national and community level through dissemination of climate information kits that were tailor-made for them. It also sought to use traditional and scientific knowledge to stimulate action.

Accountable governing by states and institutions is another important change process for resilience, and the project worked with the national government, communities, and all stakeholders at the planning stage to encourage ownership at all levels and to strengthen partnerships. This approach built linkages between national institutions and communities as both levels were given weight in local and national project plans and discussions.

Adaptive management was critical to the implementation of the project and to ongoing engagement with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the regional donor, through formal and informal mechanisms. A greater commitment to monitoring would have revealed that the water tank in Bavu was at risk of failing and allowed for it to be rectified before it did so. A linked contributing factor to the successful execution of the pilot projects was the funding for practical adaptation actions, which engendered “learning by doing” actions on the ground that were fully recommended and supported by the communities.

This study draws conclusions about the project’s contribution to the absorptive, adaptive, and transformative aspects of resilience. In both communities, the work undertaken through the CBDAMPIC project served as a catalyst for more resilient development, in particular by improving absorptive capacity with respect to water shortages. It provided an example of how addressing a locally defined problem—in this case extreme water shortage—can energize a community to take action to improve resilience. In both locations, the actions taken to alleviate water shortages have led to greater adaptive capacity through either increased incomes (as in Tilivalevu) or access to other donor funds (as in Bavu). A key factor in these communities’ resilience is their existing social capital, especially their family and traditional kinship ties, which encourage collaboration and working together as one family to achieve common goals. This collaboration in turn fosters social solidarity, builds long-lasting relationships, and further strengthens communities’ social capital and economic potential.

In Tilivalevu, villagers hailed the CBDAMPIC project as a success for having adequately addressed the community’s vulnerability not only to drought, but also indirectly to other hazards such as cyclones and hurricanes. Community members reported that they had not experienced any water shortages since the CBDAMPIC project, but rather had an abundance of water. Women reported that the installation of the water tanks brought specific relief to them, as they no longer need to expend vast physical energy collecting water to meet the daily needs of their families, let alone community obligations. The abundant water supply has also enabled the villagers to expand their agricultural activities from farming fruits, root crops, and green leafy vegetables to planting a variety of vegetables, including off-season vegetables, which previously could be farmed only in the Sigatoka Valley, dubbed the “salad bowl of Fiji.” Vegetables from Tilivalevu are now normally sold at the local market and sometimes sold to hotels and supermarkets upon request. Other produce is used for home consumption and provides a source of food security. The water supply also enabled villagers to build concrete houses, which are safer than their previous corrugated iron or wooden houses, and to install flush toilets. During Cyclone Winston, people took shelter in their concrete homes.

According to the chief in Tilivalevu, the CBDAMPIC pilot project has greatly influenced their social and economic lives. In fact, the abundant water they now enjoy has helped to trigger new ideas and projects, such as a mahogany tree-planting project that has become a source of income.

The impact of the project in Bavu, by contrast, was mixed. The guttering on the church roof was effective in collecting water during the rainy season and is still a useful water-harvesting mechanism leading to greater water availability. Further, women now need to walk less each day for water. However, the investment in a new large water tank was not successful; the metal tank rusted and became inoperational within one year. This is a source of frustration within the community. Many believe that a feasibility study conducted before the purchase of the tank would have prevented the problem and resulted in the selection of a more environmentally

appropriate tank—and that monitoring mechanisms could have detected the problem in time to rectify it and save the tank.⁹ In focus group discussions undertaken in Bavu, villagers identified their vulnerability to water shortages as an ongoing issue.

One positive result of the failure of the water tank has been that women have stepped in and played a key role in promoting water conservation. Women have taken the lead in their households to regulate the use of water, and there is growing recognition in the village of the important role of women as facilitators of change, particularly in leading such autonomous adaptation.

Resilience Lessons

The case study suggests that the following elements of the CBDAMPIC project are positively associated with improved resilience outcomes:

- an emphasis on collaboration among stakeholders at various levels;
- the building of linkages between national institutions and communities;
- a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches, which helped integrate global, regional, and national scientific evidence with local knowledge;
- the use of the participatory community vulnerability and adaptation action (CV&A) approach for the bottom-up aspect, which resulted in the inclusion of voices that often go unheard (i.e., women and youth);
- the prioritization of practical adaptation actions, which engendered “learning by doing” and the full support of the communities;
- recognition of the contribution of women to resilience building;
- recognition and use of traditional customs and practices to build relationships, rapport, and trust from the outset of the project; and
- a foundation in social relationships and social capital.

In terms of the sequencing and timing of resilience projects, the CBDAMPIC program is an example of the cumulative nature of creating resilient development. While the implementation of the project in Bavu was mixed, the needs assessment and design work were strong, and subsequent projects were able to build upon the capacities the CBDAMPIC program strengthened. In fact, these projects, which were responsive to the priorities of the communities, served as a catalyst for further resilience interventions.

VANUATU

The analysis by the Stockholm Environment Institute that serves as a fourth case study for the purposes of this synthesis report is based on research undertaken in Vanuatu in November 2014 and 2015. The 2015 fieldwork was centered on three villages: Leitokas (on the island of Malakula), Harald Bay (Futuna) and Tomali (Epi). Discussions and interviews were held in these communities, which had different histories of engagement with development organizations, exploring their experiences of Tropical Cyclone Pam and the ongoing El Niño event. Analysis focused on four topics: the significance of differences between social groups in determining resilience outcomes; the nature of local resilience among communities with little or no experience of development interventions; the consequences of development actions for local resilience; and the potential of an alternative framing—resourcefulness—to support a transformation in relationships between communities and different government authorities (Ensor, 2017).

The research in Harald Bay, Futuna overlaps most closely with this research, since it was the location of a completed 2013–14 climate change adaptation program implemented by CARE.¹⁰ Water access was ranked as the most significant current issue by participants in each of the focus group sessions in Harald Bay (Ensor, 2017).

3 COMMON FINDINGS

In a comparison of findings from the three case studies and the related research in Vanuatu, several elements consistently emerge as important in the design and implementation of resilience projects: including a gender analysis; soliciting and listening to the community, particularly less-heard voices; building upon ancestral and traditional practices around resilience; local ownership; building relationships with communities (i.e., trust, respect); and collaboration within the community (i.e., social capital). We also observed that resilient development is an iterative process, rather than a one-off action, and that strong legal frameworks are necessary conditions for humanitarian interventions and sustainable development.

GENDER ANALYSIS

It is well documented in development and humanitarian spheres that women and men face different challenges in society and more so in stressful contexts such as disaster settings. As a result, a gender analysis of planned resilience interventions—considering women’s rights and the gender aspects of vulnerability, capacities, appropriate interventions, and impact—is critical to effective resilient development. Without such an analysis, resilience programming could reinforce or exacerbate existing patterns of gender inequality and other vulnerabilities (Ensor, 2017; Le Masson, 2016). According to Oxfam’s resilience framework, “Our resilience programming should aim to develop ‘win-win’ solutions that respond to women’s immediate needs, address the systemic causes of their vulnerability, and enhance their capacities, agency and leadership” (Oxfam International, 2016).

People interviewed in Belalcázar, Colombia, spoke of a patriarchal mandate informing local gender relations and making the fulfillment of rights harder for women than for men. These informants mentioned intrafamilial violence and violence against women as high-priority issues in both rural and urban areas. Abuse, according to these sources, is often related to alcohol consumption.

Similar patterns appeared in the Fiji study, which reported that violence against women in the Pacific islands is higher than the world average. The report cited a United Nations Development Fund for Women study that found that 64 percent of women 14–64 years of age had been victims of physical and/or sexual violence in the previous 12 months (UNIFEM, 2010).

The DIPECHO-V project that took place in the municipality of Belalcázar, Colombia in 2007–08 was designed and implemented as a gender-blind program. The possibility that gender inequities might have affected women’s access to the capacities installed does not appear to have been contemplated. More research would be needed to ascertain whether the project failed to include a population group (i.e., women) or whether it contributed to the perpetuation of unjust power relations. According to the Colombian Red Cross, the best practices around gender programming in development have evolved over the past ten years, and the DIPECHO-V project followed the best methodologies for gender equality at the time (written communication with Colombian Red Cross staff, August 2017).

The CBDAMPIC project in Fiji did not focus on explicitly addressing gender equality and did not present disaggregated data or indicators based on gender. Nonetheless, according to people interviewed in Tilivalevu and Bavu, the project was judged to have generated a degree of resilient development by improving women’s access to water sources and increasing their capacity to adapt. According to these sources, in an environment where gathering water required several hours of women’s work every day, the changes brought by the CBDAMPIC positively altered gender community relations. In Bavu women took a leading role as managers of the water supplies and educators; according to the researchers, this resulted in empowerment and greater social agency.

Women within the Colombian Nasa indigenous organization Nasa Çxhaçxha argued that resilient development in their communities is an ongoing process. To describe it, they used the Spanish word *pervivencia*, or persistence within a territory. Persistence, according to Nasa woman activists, implies applying a gender approach to multiple social processes: territorial defense, family organization, and construction of indigenous education and health systems.

Most important, according to Nasa social activists, resilient development or *pervivencia* requires reinforcing indigenous institutions with spiritual strength derived from the natural elements that characterize their territories. Beatriz Saniceto, indigenous Nasa social leader explained as follows:

In 1996 I was back in Cauca and working with the Caucan Regional Indigenous Council (CRIC) in their women's program. I travelled from village to village and organized workshops about domestic violence, the family, and the spiritual world of plants. These things are related, and often family problems are tied to imbalances that can be addressed with plants and the spirits that inhabit them.

Nasa informants emphasized that resilient development and building women's access to social, cultural, and economic rights are ongoing processes. This gender connection tends to be overlooked if women do not take on leading roles as social activists within the indigenous organizations and in their territories.

Related research in Vanuatu offered examples of resilience programming that had both positive and negative impacts with respect to gender inequalities, with the latter witnessing entrenched patterns of violence against women (Ensor, 2017).

LISTENING TO COMMUNITY, INCLUDING VULNERABLE AND LESS-HEARD VOICES

Resilient development practitioners can learn a great deal from local communities. In fact, in light of findings from the Colombian and Fiji case studies, we could argue that resilient programming cannot be achieved without integrating local indigenous knowledge into development models and planning. Not only is it critical for resilience programming to address power inequities and enhance people's capacity, but it also requires collaborative, multistakeholder approaches (Oxfam International, 2016).

The 2008 DRR project in Tierradentro, Cauca, Colombia, which was managed by the indigenous organization Nasa Çxhaçxha, with support from the OSSO Corporation, showed that local resources and knowledge are fundamental building blocks of resilient thinking.

Interviews carried out in Belalcázar revealed important insights about what constitutes resilient development from the point of view of local Nasa communities:

- thinking and working collectively—the experience of *mingas*;
- empowering women as an ongoing process;
- building self-determination and autonomy and working toward the implementation of indigenous rights as defined by the International Labor Organization Covenant 169 of 1989 and by the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous People of 2007;
- being one with the territory and recognizing the interconnectedness of people with the environment they inhabit; and
- reviving spiritual practices and local ancestral knowledge, which strengthen indigenous political institutions and keep people connected to the energies and forces of the territories they inhabit.

The Fiji CBDAMPIC project employed a combination top-down/bottom-up approach to adaptation. While it is important to recognize the value of regional and global knowledge, incorporating the views of local communities and less-heard voices is a necessary condition for equitable and sustainable resilient development.

CBDAMPIC, for example, benefitted a great deal from a bottom-up vulnerability assessment. This exercise provided the communities with the space to express their views on climate change, connect the issue with local problems, and identify possible solutions. It was thanks to this approach that programmers learned that villagers in Bavu and Tilivalevu suffered from severe water shortages.

Social capital in Bavu and Tilivalevu is built through complex day-to-day interactions among individuals and families. Social capital is, however, also built through participation in collective work and manifestations of reciprocity—two important factors that mediate village life and interpersonal relations. Collective behavior and thinking in Bavu and Tilivalevu contribute to solving personal or village problems, making decisions on important village matters, and becoming competitive in the local food markets. According to a Tilivalevu village chief, “Our collaboration as a village is an essential element of our resilience” (village chief, Tilivalevu).

It can be a challenge for researchers to gather the perspectives of a wide representation of a community in both rural and urban environments. In rural settings it is often difficult for researchers to achieve a close level of access, while in urban contexts multiple and possibly conflicting interests are often at stake. This was the case during the research conducted for this project in La Paz, Bolivia, where opposing political sides all claimed legitimacy in an intricate context of conflicting interests. In all contexts thorough ethnographic research, based on sound methodologies and analysis of multiple coexisting narratives, must be adopted to make resilient programming as participatory an effort as possible.

While hiring local personnel is a good practice, this does not guarantee the inclusion of local perspectives. With the DIPECHO-V project in Colombia, for example, local people from the municipality of Belalcázar worked on the project, a fact which led the regional-level implementers of DIPECHO-V interviewed for this research to claim inclusion of an ethnic component in the project. Yet such involvement is not sufficient alone. In order to have a meaningful ethnic focus, for example, projects must incorporate local indigenous institutions.

While it may prove challenging, DRR/CCA programs must incorporate the voices and knowledge of local constituencies at every step of the process. The bottom-up approach adopted by the CBDAMPIC project in Fiji provides a significant example of inclusive programming. In this case a combination of internal village cohesiveness and thriving social relations, coupled with fluid communication with programmers, contributed a great deal to the project.

We find a similar scenario in Belalcázar, Colombia, in the context of the Nasa/OSSO DRR project for which local communities won the 2015 Regional Resilience Award of the UNISDR. In this case, fluid communication, horizontal relationships between local and regional stakeholders, and integration of ancestral and scientific knowledge assured the successful implementation of this locally managed DRR project.

BUILDING ON ANCESTRAL AND TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

As discussed, resilient programming must involve a collaborative, multistakeholder approach and always seek to strengthen people’s capacity (Oxfam International, 2016). Programming should also be context-specific and evolving, based on emerging evidence. In areas where there is a tradition of absorptive and adaptive capacity involving traditional or ancestral practices, resilient development must recognize and build upon indigenous forms of knowledge about risks and the traditional and cultural practices related to resilience (Webb, 2017).

Indigenous people in Bolivia and Colombia have been constructing and proposing a similar development discourse: a model for sustainable development that departs from neoliberal precepts and practices and embraces Mother Nature and respect for her spiritual forces as the primary driver of resilience and sustainability. Bolivia mainstreamed indigenous views through the ratification of Law 300 of Mother Earth and Integral Development to Live Well. This unprecedented legislation echoes ancestral indigenous knowledge, recognizing Mother Earth as a living, spiritual “collective subject of public interest,” and it provides an important background and framework for sustainable development. In the meantime, however, Bolivia has not yet been able to generate a sustainable economy to overcome its dependency on the commodity market as a main regional supplier of natural gasses and minerals.

Colombian indigenous Nasa spokespersons approached for this research explained how their communities transformed the threat posed by the nearby Nevado del Huila volcano into an opportunity for learning, cultural rediscovery, revival, and strengthening. According to one informant:

Education is a path that begins before we are born and continues after we die. Mother Earth and the spirits guide us in this path.... We build thinking and we build knowledge.... We learn to defend our territory and we learn to speak Nasayuwe.... Most of all we learn that our life is a holistic experience and that ancient practices and rituals are essential to perpetuate our communities (L.M. Venegas, personal interview, El Salado, Belalcázar, 2016).

The Colombian case study also showed how traditional practices of collective work known as *mingas* informed a culture of resilient living. The term *minga* comes from the Quechua language and means “working together for the benefit of the community.” *Mingas* can be organized to fix a road, build a community hut, harvest a collective field, or clean a village. “Thinking *mingas*” are summoned when there is a need to consider and discuss community matters. *Mingas* are a strong element of indigenous, collective identity, collective thinking, social solidarity, and social reciprocity. In 2008, Nasa, Yanacona, Eperara-Siapidara, Totoró, Coconuco, and Guambiano indigenous people organized an inter-ethnic protest *minga*. The Gran Minga for Life, as it was called, led to blockades of the Pan American Highway, a series of large protest rallies, and a large congregation in Bogotá. The *minga* demanded land restitutions to forcefully displaced indigenous communities.

Nasa Çxhaçxha, the leading indigenous organization in the municipality of Páez, Colombia created a Nature and Territory Team and put it in charge of mapping traditional and cultural coping strategies. The knowledge that resulted from the Nature and Territory Team was then added to and compared with geological data provided by the OSSO Corporation.¹¹ This interesting dialogue between ancestral and scientific knowledge made up the process that prepared indigenous communities for the 2008 mudslides.

The mixed bottom-up/top-down approach employed by the CBDAMPIC project in Fiji enabled implementers to incorporate traditional local knowledge into the project. Integrating global, regional, and national scientific evidence with local knowledge through participatory processes sets the tone for including communities in understanding the potential risks to which they are exposed and encourages their inputs in decision making (Des Combes et al., 2012). The bottom-up approach used in the CBDAMPIC project provided knowledge on the disconnect between policies and local practices, thus encouraging implementers to find ways to reconcile this divide and enable the formulation of new policies through local action. The Bavu village chief put it this way: “*Resilience is learning from what was done in the past and moving forward with our vision to ensure that we have water for the villagers*” (Bavu, village chief).

The Vanuatu research yields similar findings about the importance of indigenous and traditional knowledge. It also provides a warning of the potential risks of not taking into account traditional practices: there, the fieldwork suggested that externally led interventions can not only undermine local resilience, but also create a dependence on NGOs as sources of resources, knowledge, and skills. In the latter situation, as NGOs become trusted sources of knowledge and resources regarding livelihood resilience, local communities may end up choosing among the development options available to them rather than exploring their own interpretation of well-being and quality of life and devising their own responses. In articulating a framework around

resourcefulness, the report proposes that local knowledge and cultural norms and practices provide the source material for an alternative, locally owned development narrative.

RESILIENCE AS A CUMULATIVE PROCESS

In all four countries, the research corroborated the Oxfam resilience framework and outside literature suggesting that resilient development is an iterative process (Oxfam International, 2016; Eriksen and Marin, 2015; Mitchell and Harris, 2012; Bahadur et al., 2016). No project operates in a vacuum, isolated from locally and externally led interventions. In Bolivia, the case study reflected the importance of both the continuity and coherence of resilience programs, as well as the fact that resilience is a *process* rather than a single *project*. DEGIR personnel in EI Alto were clear that they were building upon the capacities installed by the DIPECHO workshops—and that acquiring skills frequently created the need to acquire further skills.

In Colombia, while the DIPECHO-V project had mixed results in terms of resilient development in urban areas, our research found that the project *together with* the concurrent indigenous-led initiatives did create the basis for resilient development. Overall, the case study suggested that resilient development should be viewed as an evolving process that relies on preexisting conditions and requires follow-up to sustain its resilient nature.

In Fiji, the work undertaken through the CBDAMPIC project was a catalyst in both communities toward more resilient development, through improved absorptive capacity with respect to water shortages. In Bavu, a project led by the Australian government and implemented through Fiji's University of the South Pacific followed and built upon the CBDAMPIC project, resulting in greater access to water for the community. The adaptation project led to improvements in the water piping system, resulting in one pipe or faucet per household and a new borehole water pump. This was a major boost to Bavu's water access to water. It was supplemented with an improved water reticulation system. Further, while the CBDAMPIC project began raising awareness about climate change, the subsequent Climate Change Adaptation Project (CCAP) project built upon this.

In the research in Vanuatu, the researchers concluded that resilience can best be addressed through long-term, strategic approaches. The challenge is to figure out how to move from short-term projects (e.g., DRR) to long-term programs that, for example, empower self-development and increase gender justice (conversation with Jon Ensor, February 2017).

As the Oxfam resilience framework describes, resilience is an ongoing process of social change that needs to be enhanced continuously over time. Oxfam considers its role in resilience programming as a catalyst for change, and the same can be said of most interventions: "Processes are ongoing in any community, institution, or system and will continue after we have left and into the future" (Oxfam International, 2016, p. 6).

IMPORTANCE OF LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Each of the case studies displays evidence of the evolution of legal frameworks related to resilience, DRR, preparedness, and CCA and the role they play in shaping effective resilient development interventions.

Ratification of Law 2140 for Risk Reduction and Attention to Disaster and Emergencies, amendment law 2335 of 2002 and the establishment of the National System for Risk Reduction and Attention to Disaster (SISRADE), Bolivia: In Bolivia, Law 2140 provides the main framework for DRR and emergency response in Bolivia, decentralizing responsibilities and putting municipalities in charge of DRR and emergency response. The SISRADE allows national, departmental, and municipal institutions as well as technical, financial, scientific, private, and citizens' organizations to cooperate with each other and complement each other's efforts. It also establishes the Fund for Risk Reduction and Economic Recuperation, with annual access to

0.15 percent of the national budget, as well as ordering the establishment of an Integral Information System.

Law No. 300 of Mother Earth and Integral Development for Living-Well, Bolivia: Law 300 mainstreams indigenous ancestral thought, providing a legal framework for the rights of Mother Earth as a “collective subject of public interest.” The law connects with the individual and collective rights of indigenous people as laid out in Covenant 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the 2007 United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP). Law 300 is a unique piece of legislation and calls for the implementation of sustainable, integral development models based on respect for all systems of life and the right of people to live in an equitable society that is free of injustice (Plurinational State of Bolivia, 2012).

Law 46 of 1988, Colombia: In the aftermath of the Armero mudslide disaster of 1985, which left more than 25,000 people dead, the Colombian government passed law 46. The legislation created the National System for Disaster Prevention and Response (SNPAD), which assigns roles and duties to all state bodies responsible for DRR, response, and reconstruction efforts. Through the creation of the Regional Committees for Prevention of Disasters (CREPADs) and the Local Committees for Prevention of and Attention to Disasters (CLOPADs), Law 46 also decentralizes power, shifting responsibilities toward departmental and municipal governments. The CREPADs are the bodies responsible for risk management, response, and prevention at the departmental level, while the CLOPADs have the same function at the municipal level.

National Disaster Management Plan of 1995 and Natural Disaster Management Act of 1988, Fiji: In Fiji the strong legal framework provided the top-down aspects of the case study project. The NDMP and the NDMA provide the legal framework for DRR, emergency response, and CCA for the Fijian government. Moreover, the National Climate Change Policy of 2012 was designed to help Fiji cope with climatic changes through the adoption of pertinent public policies and legal frameworks. The NCCP promotes the integration of development planning with efforts to mitigate the effects of climatic change. The document also calls for an emphasis on research, strategic partnership, and a multisectoral approach to development planning.

Green Growth Framework (GGF) of 2014, Fiji: In 2014 the Fijian government went a step further and approved Fiji’s Green Growth Framework (GGF). The GGF provides specific DRR and climate change guidelines for policy makers and private businesses. Its main goals include reducing carbon footprints at all levels; improving resource use and productivity; and developing an integrated approach, with all stakeholders working collectively for the common good.

Despite the Fijian government’s commitments to integrating climate change and disaster risk reduction, there has been no concrete outcome to date, and the governance structure in Fiji still facilitates separate work, tools, and networks with little room for collaboration. There is still a need for one policy and an authority or entity that integrates the two areas in practice. Financial resources to implement these policies are also lacking, as the policies are not backed with a financial mechanism. The budget for climate change is spread across the many government entities that play a role in climate change, and their activities are not coordinated or integrated under a shared vision or framework.

In the absence of strong legal frameworks and systems around resilience, DRR, preparedness, and CCA, influencing such legislation—contributing to transformative capacity—is often a critical component of resilience programming and a precondition to resilient development.

LOCAL OWNERSHIP

The notion of local ownership stems from the above finding that resilience projects are more likely to be successful if they incorporate and integrate all of the voices in the community, including the most vulnerable and less heard. Local ownership implies that interventions should be *led* by local actors such as local government, civil society, indigenous groups, women’s groups, youth groups, and other CSOs.

Both the CBDAMPIC project in Fiji and the Nasa/OSSO resilience project of Belalcázar, Colombia included a high degree of local ownership and responded to the needs of the communities in an appropriate, sustainable manner. This is in contrast to the DIPECHO-V project, which had some success in the urban area but fell short when it came to incorporating the voices of local rural indigenous peasants.

COLLABORATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY/SOCIAL CAPITAL

Building on the sustainable livelihoods framework, the Oxfam resilience framework describes as essential the following types of capital: human, social, natural, physical, and financial (Oxfam International, 2016).

Social capital refers to the social resources that people draw on for their well-being and includes family, friends and neighbours where there are strong relationships of trust, reciprocity, cooperation and exchange; community groups such as religious/spiritual groups, women's groups, farmers' groups and recreational groups; and institutions beyond the community, e.g. cooperatives, local markets and systems of informal dispute resolution (Oxfam International, 2016, p. 27).

In the Fiji case study, social capital was considered one of the primary keys to the overall success of the CBDAMPIC project. Important relationships in Fiji are not limited to the family unit but extend throughout the village, involving traditional kinship ties (i.e., clans and tribes), as well as relationships at the provincial, district, and national levels (Gibson, 2012). Everyone in a village is considered one family. This means that resources are owned not by individuals but communally. Social capital plays an important role in disaster response and recovery. Research into the flooding events in 2009 and 2012 of Viti Levu found that social capital aided in post-disaster response and recovery (Yila et al., 2014). Social capital is also an important element of resilience.

Our collaboration as a village is an essential element of our resilience (village chief, Tilivalevu).

The crux of social capital in Bavu and Tilivalevu is trust. With trust, members of the village are able to work collaboratively on common goals. This collaboration fosters social solidarity, builds long-lasting relationships, and, in turn, strengthens social capital and the economic potential of communities. In Tilivalevu, collaboration enabled the villagers to produce a sufficient and ready supply of vegetables to meet high demand from their new market: local consumers in a neighboring town as well as hotels and supermarkets. Managing farm operations as a community and collaborating efficiently to meet the needs of local consumers gave them a competitive advantage. This type of successful outcome requires a great deal of trust.

In Colombia, *mingas* are a source of social capital and provide an important example of indigenous customs and practices conducive to resilient programming. *Mingas* are crucial components of social relations in Colombian indigenous communities, where participation in collective work and collective thinking can define people's status and standing in the society.

The research in Vanuatu found that *kastom*—the expression of a shared perception of a link to natural resources—can also provide the basis for new types of collective action. In this case, the community in Leitokas, Malakula mobilized in response to a logging dispute with a neighboring community, relying on *kastom* forestry practices offering a sustainable approach to logging based on an understanding and respect for the forest.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The intent of this work was not to evaluate completed projects and certainly not to deconstruct them with the clarity of hindsight. Our purpose was to glean everything we could about resilience programming—the strengths, the weaknesses, the successes, and the failures—particularly from the vantage point of people on the ground. With this unique lens, we hope to have learned some lessons that will influence the prevalent thinking about resilience: by confirming consistent thoughts, raising concerns, and contributing new knowledge.

At Oxfam we will work to conduct internal learning, to make sure our current and future resilience programming reflects and builds upon the findings of this research. This includes revisiting our resilience framework to see which elements have been reinforced and whether any elements have been challenged or are missing.

Although some of our conclusions should not come as a surprise to people working in the development and humanitarian sectors—and in fact should be among best practices—powerful voices from the field insist that there is still much work to be done to make programming truly sustainable, equitable, and democratic.

Most urgent for us, based on this research, is the importance of not conducting resilience programming in a vacuum. In fact, in order to be *effective* and *sustainable*, resilience projects must take into account previous and ongoing approaches and initiatives. Moreover, resilience programming must incorporate and integrate indigenous notions and knowledge into its conceptual frameworks. And it must take into account the voices of those who are frequently forgotten. Resilience cannot be established without addressing gender inequality.

With this in mind, implementers can make sure resilience programming, with its limited funds, is conducted equitably, sustainably, and effectively.

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NOTES

1 This section is adapted from Oxfam International (2016).

2 The National Indigenous Organization (ONIC) contests the government's data, claiming that Colombia is home to 102 indigenous groups speaking 65 autochthonous languages (ONIC, 2006).

3 Poverty and inequality levels are of great relevance to our research because of the disproportionate risk and its impacts on people living in poverty, which is the result of inequitable and unsustainable development (Oxfam International, 2016). According to the Oxfam resilience framework, "Growing inequality, unprecedented climate conditions, faster change and greater uncertainty are new, and require new knowledge and ways of working. The existing capacities of people living in poverty to prepare, cope and adapt are stretched, and some existing strategies may increase vulnerabilities in the medium and longer term. Therefore, existing absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities need to be recognized, supported and enhanced" (Oxfam International, 2016, p. 6).

4 The one percent of the wealthiest Colombians have gotten wealthier over the last ten years while the most vulnerable 20 percent of the population have become poorer (Jiménez, 2015).

5 In the view of the Colombian Red Cross, it is not the Red Cross's duty to guarantee the sustainability of a program that they implement; rather, once they support the development of capacity, it is the local government's responsibility to sustain that capacity. (Written communication with Colombian Red Cross staff, August 2017).

6 According to the Colombian Red Cross, the project was implemented within the framework of gender notions and practices predominant in the country in 2007 (written communication with Colombian Red Cross, August 2017).

7 "Blue-green infrastructure" refers to city water management. It requires recreating natural water cycles and integrating them with "green" landscape interventions and classic "gray" civil engineering infrastructure.

8 The governments and administrations of the Pacific region have charged SPREP with the protection and sustainable development of the region's environment (SPREP, 2017).

9 According to SPREP staff, the community in Bavu shares some of the responsibility for the project's failures. They point to a difference in the level of engagement in the two communities: the community members in Tilivalevu were enthusiastic and supportive, going out of their way to assist the team, while the community in Bavu was less engaged and even perceived as passive. SPREP staff argued that the community in Bavu know the context best and should have taken action to address the problem before the tanks rusted, but they did not (written communication with SPREP staff, July 2017).

10 The CARE project was, in turn, part of a larger, multi-organization Vanuatu NGO Climate Change Adaptation Program. At the time of the fieldwork, CARE's larger program was still taking place.

11 The Nature and Territory Team relied heavily on exercises of social mapping both to learn from the communities and to prepare them for volcanic risks.

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