



COMMUNITY-LED PARTNERSHIPS FOR RESILIENCE



COMMUNITY-LED
PARTNERSHIPS
FOR RESILIENCE

GLOBAL FACILITY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

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Acronyms

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
CACCS	Constituency AIDS Control Committees
CBO	Community-based organizations
CEPRENAC	Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America
COPECO	Comisión Permanente de Contingencias de Honduras (<i>Permanent Commission for Contingencies in Honduras</i>)
CPP	Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Philippines
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GROOTS	Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
KVK	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
MAIS	Modulo Agroclimático Inteligente e Sustentavel
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MIF	Multilateral Investment Fund
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NACC	National AIDS Control Council
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NREGS	National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
REDEH	Red de Desarrollo Humano (Human Development Network)
SAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
SCHW	Shibuye Community Health Workers
SEPLAN	Secretaría de Planificación y Cooperación Externa (Secretary of Planning and Cooperation)
SSP	Swayam Shikshan Prayog
SWID	Slum Women’s Initiative for Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
YEU	Yakkum Emergency Unit



Visitors from India learn about the Adapta Sertão Project in Brazil.

Acknowledgements

This report documents a number of case studies where community based organizations are working in partnership with their local or national governments to effectively manage disaster and climate risk in poor communities. The report aims to demonstrate the value of facilitating community-led partnerships for strengthening disaster and climate resilience. The activity was supported by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) as part of its Inclusive Community Resilience program. The task was supervised by Margaret Arnold. The document was prepared by GROOTS International and the Huairou Commission on behalf of the Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience (CPP). Suranjana Gupta was the lead author. Contributors to the report and case studies include: Katia Araujo, Analucy Bengochea, Josephine Castillo, Puthiyottil Chandran, Thais Corral, Ana Liz Flores, Prema Gopalan, Patricia Herrera, Sobina Lama, Joyce Nangobi, Manuela Pinilla, Regina Pritchett, Hepi Rahmawati, Violet Shivutse, and Rachael Wyant. Tafadzwa Dube, Andrés González Flores, Elizabeth Acul and Gracie Ochieng provided valuable coordination and administrative support. Irene Leung provided editorial expertise to the case studies. Marian Mabel edited the overall report, and Miki Fernández provided design expertise.

Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience

Organized communities living and working in hazard prone settlements bring perspectives and priorities to policy discussions that are distinct from the rest of civil society. Recognizing this, in 2009, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) requested the Huairou Commission and its member network, GROOTS International, to build the CPP. The CPP provides space and opportunity to convene community leaders with partner institutions and a formal recognition from UNISDR that communities are key stakeholders. As such, they must directly represent their concerns in decision-making arenas to ensure that policies and programs effectively reflect community priorities and build on local capacities. The partnerships described in this document from Honduras, India, Kenya, Nepal, Philippines and Uganda have been fostered as part of an effort to build community platforms at local, national and sub-regional levels.

Huairou Commission

Huairou Commission is structured as a global membership coalition of women's networks, non-governmental and grassroots women's organizations in 54 countries. Driven by grassroots women's organizations from around the world, the members and partners of the Huairou Commission believe it is in the best interest of local communities and the global development field for grassroots women leaders to expand their participation and leadership in community development work on the issues that affect their daily lives. Huairou Commission members and partners believe grassroots women's participation in local to global decision-making is a reliable route to achieving gender equitable, pro-poor policies and investments.

GROOTS International

GROOTS International (Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood) is a flexible network linking leaders and groups in poor rural and urban areas in the South and the North. To nurture relationships of mutual support and solidarity among women engaged in advancing sustainable, resilient development, the network is open to grassroots groups and their partners who share a commitment to (i) strengthening women's participation in solving development problems; (ii) helping grassroots groups share and transfer successful development approaches; (iii) focusing global attention on the priorities, leadership, and capabilities of grassroots women; and (iv) increasing opportunities for local women's groups to network directly across national boundaries. GROOTS International is a member of the Huairou Commission and leads its thematic program on community resilience.

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Women leaders meet at the pond rehabilitated by women in partnership with the village development council, Kaski District, Nepal.

SYNTHESIS REPORT





**Paralegal
(Community Volunteer)**

**Paralegal
(Community Volunteer)**

Uganda community volunteers.

Photo: Katherine Shelley/Huairou Commission

INTRODUCTION

Why community-led partnerships matter

Recurring large-scale disasters coupled with smaller localized events and changing weather patterns call for strategies that effectively address local impacts of natural hazards and climate change. In recent years, policymakers and civil society organizations have noted that national legislation, policies and programs in place to advance disaster and climate resilience have not yielded results at local levels,¹ particularly for communities that already suffer from structural inequalities and marginalization. Experience has shown that governments need the collaboration of local communities who live and work in hazard prone areas to ensure that proposed solutions strengthen the resilience of rural and urban poor communities that are most adversely affected by natural hazards and a changing climate.

Yet many policymakers are unaware that community-driven initiatives are already underway addressing the needs of impoverished, marginalized communities in the face of disaster and climate change. These initiatives have built multi-stakeholder partnerships with local and national governments, universities, researchers and the private sector. When successful, the results invariably benefit all concerned. National and local governments are able to design and deliver effective programs that fulfill their commitments to marginalized populations, as community partnerships help ground government policies and practice in local realities. At the same time, communities driving local action benefit by gaining access to public resources, technical training, and decision-making processes to scale up and sustain their initiatives, equipping them to better withstand the potentially devastating effects of disasters. In addition, partnerships are transforming relationships between communities and other stakeholders, recognizing communities as active agents,

¹ Global Network of CSOs for DRR 'Views from the Frontlines' 2009 and 2011 [www. http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org/views-from-the-frontline/voices-from-the-frontline-2011.html](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org/views-from-the-frontline/voices-from-the-frontline-2011.html)

citizens, constituents, and stakeholders who have knowledge, experience, and capacities to contribute to problem-solving. Most importantly these partnerships are precedent-setting, demonstrating that reducing the impacts of disasters and climate change requires new kinds of collaborative strategies in which communities must play a central role.

Who are “communities”?

Throughout this study, the term “community” is used as shorthand for community-based organizations (CBOs). CBOs are organized by people who live and work in impoverished rural and urban communities, usually with low, unstable incomes and who suffer food insecurity, inadequate housing infrastructure and basic services, and environmental degradation where they live. As a voice for these populations, CBOs tend to represent the people most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that facilitate community driven partnerships tend to be professionalized civil society organizations. This document focuses instead on the contributions of CBOs in order to highlight the role of resident communities in advancing their own sustainable and resilient development.

The community-led partnerships discussed here present a broad spectrum of works-in-progress across eight countries, at national, sub-regional, and local levels. They include formal and informal negotiations, collaborations, and platform building, all of which are based on continuing engagement and learning.

Features of community-led partnerships for resilience

The community-led partnerships discussed here come from a diversity of contexts and represent different capacities, scale, and stages in their evolution. Nonetheless, there are certain common features that characterize the essential value of integrating community partnerships into the development process.

What communities offer partners

Community-based organizations have different approaches, capacities, and resources than other stakeholders in a development partnership. Because CBOs are often based in poor, marginalized urban and rural settlements, they are without the financial resources or political authority of local and national governments and many NGOs. To negotiate partnerships, CBOs leverage their strength in their informed and mobilized constituency with grounded experience and practical knowledge. In this, CBOs are an indispensable partner for advancing effective development under the threat of natural hazards and climate change.

Communities have organized, informed, experienced constituencies

CBOs represent groups of people such as farmers, indigenous people, urban poor in informal settlements, local disaster management committees, community health workers, and other constituencies with a strong commitment to addressing development challenges facing their communities. Organizations featured in this report include community-led partnerships or the facilitating organizations in eight countries and across a variety of sectors. They include: (i) six farmers' cooperatives who lead the Adapta Sertao project, seeking to optimize small farm productivity in 14 municipalities in northeastern Brazil; (ii) WAGUCHA's risk mapping, livelihoods and food security initiatives for afro-indigenous communities in 16 towns in Honduras; (iii) Sakhi Women's Federation partnering with 25 women's federations (100,000 members) to combat drought and ensure food security

in Maharashtra, India; (iv) the Yakkum Emergency Unit's mangrove rehabilitation efforts in Padang, Indonesia is part of a wider network of more than 200 communities; (v) the Shibuye Community Health Workers network demanding greater accountability from governance systems to protect property rights, health and food security in Kenya; (vi) the 3,700 member Kirtipur Women's Network which is one of seven organizations comprising a national women's network for resilience building in Nepal; (vii) DAMPA's water cooperatives delivering low cost, potable water to more than 1,000 urban poor households, members of a 235-strong CBO network in the Philippines; and, (viii) an alliance of six CBOs engaging more than 600 women in their food security initiative in Uganda.

Capturing accumulated community knowledge and experience and applying it to solutions addressing local concerns requires community leadership, learning and action. Ad-hoc groups of individuals who come together for short-term projects do not have the capacity and scale needed for sustained collective action, learning, negotiating and partnership building. It is also important to recognize that the resilience-building initiatives discussed in this report are located within larger vibrant community networks representing a web of information and learning systems through which knowledge and practices are transferred and scaled up.

The community-led partnerships presented here have invested in researching, mapping and analyzing problems to identify priorities and develop solutions. The studies show that community-owned and -generated knowledge can be used effectively to catalyze new practices and leverage partner support (See Boxes 1 and 2). Key to this process is that knowledge gained through community-conducted research builds localized expertise. Moreover, information and analysis generated through community-based research can spread to other CBOs through peer exchanges.

Box 1. Community-led research catalyzing food security initiatives in Uganda

Drought, increasing food prices and privatization of public land have reduced the ability of poor communities to feed their families. In 2010, Slum Women's Initiatives for Development (SWID) trained a team of 40 community researchers to survey 400 households in eight parishes and found that two thirds of the households surveyed grew food to supplement food they purchased. Households' ability to continue cultivating their food was rapidly changing as a result of environmental destruction and evictions, as the public lands where communities were growing food were increasingly being privatized. Often food shortages meant that women were eating only one meal a day. The findings from the survey became the basis of SWID's food security strategy in Uganda's Buwenge Sub-County.



*Joyce Rosemary Nangobi of SWID stands in front of demonstration gardens.
Photo: Katherine Shelley/Huairou Commission*

Box 2. Mapping risks and engaging partners in Honduras

In 2008, the grassroots CBO, WAGUCHA, learned community-led risk mapping in a four-country peer learning exchange among Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Jamaica. Within a year, women leaders of WAGUCHA had trained sixty afro-indigenous Garifuna leaders on community risk mapping. WAGUCHA's grassroots women found that collective analysis and prioritization of risks provided a strategic entry point to engage local governments and began using their findings as the basis for dialogue. In Guadalupe Municipality, the women took their mapping results and convinced local authorities to construct a footbridge to ensure that people could travel safely across a creek during floods.

Communities have field-tested practices and solutions

When communities enter into collaborations, they tend to seek institutional partners to help strengthen, refine and scale-up their proven practical solutions. This matters because it means communities are proactive and continually field-testing responses to their problems rather than waiting for solutions to come from external actors. In Brazil, for example, farmers' cooperatives facilitated by the Human Development Network (*Rede de Desenvolvimento Humano*, REDEH) had already tested drip irrigation as a means for increasing small farmer productivity when they began to partner with government agencies and other stakeholders to consolidate and scale-up their approach (Box 3).

Box 3. Scaling up small farmer strategies in Brazil

In 2003, the Brazilian NGO, Human Development Network (*Rede de Desenvolvimento Humano*, REDEH) initiated the Adapta Sertão pilot project to stabilize farm productivity at five sites in the Valente Municipality. The project tested solar powered water pumps and drip irrigation as water-saving alternatives to flood irrigation. Though solar-powered pumps proved to be uneconomic, a shift to drip irrigation increased farm productivity while lowering costs. In 2006, REDEH expanded the pilot to five sites in the adjacent Pintadas Municipality where family farmers had long partnered with local government to improve farmers' living conditions. In the following years, the project grew to 40 sites, building a robust evidence base for drip irrigation and exploring mechanisms to replicate the technology. Farmers' cooperatives also set up retail stores, disseminating the new adaptive farming techniques and promoting farm produce in their communities.

Similarly in Indonesia, the local disaster management committee facilitated by the Yakkum Emergency Unit (YEU) mobilized communities to demonstrate a successful community-led approach to rehabilitating mangroves. This subsequently became the basis for a multi-stakeholder partnership between the community and the local village government (Box 4).

Box 4. Community-led mangrove rehabilitation in Indonesia

On Indonesia's West Sumatra coast, cutting mangrove trees for fuel has eroded the natural barriers protecting coastal ecosystems and communities from erosion, flooding, typhoons, and other hazards of climate change. The Village Disaster Task Force conducted a vulnerability and capacity mapping process in Sungai Pisang village in rural Padang municipality, identifying mangrove forest rehabilitation as a priority. In response, the Disaster Task Force partnered with the Yakkum Emergency Unit (YEU), the government and local mangrove experts to involve the community in education, trainings, planning, planting, nurturing and monitoring the mangroves. Together they established a nursery of 12,000 seedlings, planting 7,000, and the rest, served as a seed vendor for the municipality-wide mangrove rehabilitation programs that have followed Sungai Pisang's example. The success of their decentralized planning process—in marked contrast to the government's cash-for-work program—has set a precedent for other villages, districts, and regions in Padang to follow.

In India, grassroots women's initiatives partnered with the government's agricultural training centers and the Agricultural University testing adaptive farming techniques and successfully increasing farm productivity, incomes and food security (Box 5).

Box 5. Adaptive farming and community-research partnerships in India

In drought-affected areas of Maharashtra, women's agricultural groups have long been interested in low-input, adaptive farming techniques to ensure local food security. In 2011, the Sakhi Women's Federation mobilized 3,000 women farmers from 100 villages across three districts in Maharashtra to form Krishi Mahila Mandals, an organization of women's agricultural groups - Krishi Mahila Mandals. They mapped disaster risks and vulnerabilities in 30 villages across the three districts, prioritizing the need to revive sustainable, low-cost agricultural practices. With support from the SSP, women introduced multiple cropping techniques with water-efficient plant varieties, germinated from local seeds, growing food primarily for household consumption and selling the surplus. At the same time, the Federation leaders approached the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) agricultural research and training centers, convincing officials of the importance of recognizing women, previously perceived as farm labor, as farmers in their own right. Impressed by the women's adaptive initiatives, the KVKs trained women farmers on soil testing, water testing, seed preservation, use of drought-resistant seeds and land mulching. Women from 100 households began germinating their own seeds and sowed these on more than 200 acres of farmland.

Communities have holistic, multi-dimensional approaches to resilient development

Community-driven development practices often emerge from efforts to overcome crises, inherently embedding elements of resilience and vulnerability reduction. This has important implications for successful community strategies for disaster risk reduction. First, organized communities enter into partnership collaborations already armed with development knowledge, skills, and practices that have emerged in the context of their everyday struggles for survival. Second, community risk reduction practices are inextricably intertwined with poverty reduction and local development priorities. Impoverished communities facing disaster and climate risks often bundle themes and issues that address the interlinked elements of disaster risks, vulnerability, poverty and development failures that they experience. And third, because communities continually deal with multiple, inter-connected risks and associated vulnerabilities, they tend to prioritize risk reduction strategies that have multiple benefits.

Several of the case studies illustrate resilience strategies addressing multiple priorities and meeting multiple objectives. In Indonesia, the Village Disaster Management Committee of Sungai Pisang in Padang identified two priorities—mangrove rehabilitation, which was key to community livelihoods as well as creating a buffer against typhoons and tidal waves, and repairing the main access road to facilitate mobility and access and enable emergency evacuation. In the Sundar Pokhari, Kaski district, Nepal, grassroots women prioritized access to water to reduce the time demands to collect it and minimize health risks during times of water scarcity (Box 6). In Kenya, the Shibuye Community Health Workers' strategies to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic helped women safeguard their land assets and increase their food security (Box 7).

Box 6. Access to water saves time, reduces risks, increases local food security in Nepal

In Kaski District in the mountains of Nepal, where rising temperatures and droughts are drying up local ponds, the grassroots women's group of the Sundar Pokhari community in Sarangkot conducted a risk and vulnerability mapping exercise, identifying access to water as a major concern. For women, water scarcity means that they must travel further to collect water and that community health and hygiene suffer, as does food production. The situation is further exacerbated by poor road access in the hilly terrain where Sarangkot is located. The women's group approached the Village Development Committee advocating rehabilitation of a nearby pond. Noting that the restoration of a pond can reduce soil erosion and surface run-off, thus reducing risks of landslides, the Village Development Committee granted the community NRS 100,000 and assigned technical personnel to advise women on pond rehabilitation and maintenance.

Box 7. Health security through land security and sustainable agriculture in Kenya

As caregivers of people affected by HIV/AIDS, members of Shibuye Community Health Workers (SCHW) learned that widows and orphans who lost family members to HIV/AIDS were often illegally evicted from their lands. In communities that are primarily agriculture based, land security is critical for basic survival. Increasingly, climate extremes are also threatening crops and women's ability to provide regular, nutritious meals for their family. Thus, SCHW facilitated an integrated approach to help realize both land and food security. They convened village-level, multi-stakeholder platforms to protect women's property rights and enabled community-government partnerships for adaptive techniques for sustainable agriculture .

Communities make government programs responsive and accountable to resilience priorities of the poor

Each of the case studies presented here illustrates ways in which grassroots-government engagement has resulted in the effective delivery or use of government programs or services, reducing the everyday stresses that are heightened by disaster events. In particular, these partnerships demonstrate how local level development and disaster management policies can be effectively implemented. While governments are mandated to address the needs of the poor, they are often unclear how to accomplish this. For instance, CEPREDENAC (Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America) and AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) officials publicly stated² that they were mandated to develop programs targeting indigenous communities and women, and were seeking grassroots partnerships to learn how to devise locally effective, gender-sensitive implementation strategies, and who could bring the localized knowledge, experience, and relationships to the table.

In addition, community partnerships help bring small-scale stakeholders within reach of large-scale institutional support. In the Brazilian case study, for example, collaboration with the Adapta Sertão initiative enabled Embrapa and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to reach smallholder farmers in low-income and climate-vulnerable communities in the Sertão. Institutional collaboration also provides opportunities for large institutions to learn how to support small scale stakeholders, in this case to enhance agricultural productivity in the face of climate change.

By putting government programs to work for them, communities are contributing to more effective risk governance in two ways. First, communities are bringing their resilience-

² ProVention Consortium Sponsored conference on 'The Role and Power of Grassroots and Indigenous Women in Managing Disaster Risk' in Antigua, Guatemala 2008.

building priorities into development programs, demonstrating to governments how public development programs and decentralized decision-making can be effective in disaster risk reduction. Second, through their ongoing engagement, negotiation and collaboration with government, communities can bolster the responsiveness and accountability of public policies and programs to local communities. Two examples can be found in the Slum Women’s Initiative for Development’s government partnerships in Uganda (Box 8).

Box 8. SWID-government partnerships: matching priorities and ensuring commitments in Uganda

Aligning delivery and planning of agricultural extension services

As part of their community food security initiative, the Slum Women’s Initiative for Development negotiated with the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) for extension services and livelihood support. SWID invited NAADS’ Community Development Officers to farmers’ meetings where officers explained new farming techniques and crop varieties that could enhance local productivity. SWID members found, however, that NAADS’s technical assistance was scaled to commercial agriculture rather than small-scale farms, and did not match farmers’ resilience priorities or capacity. To align government extension support with community needs, NAADS involved SWID members in regular village planning meetings where grassroots women presented strategies to improve the targeting of NAADS resources and more effective delivery of appropriate government extension programs.

UNISDR’s Resilient cities campaign aligns with community urban priorities

When Jinja Municipality signed on to the UNISDR’s Resilient Cities Campaign, SWID saw the opportunity to amplify grassroots concerns in municipal planning, offering to collaborate to reduce risks in informal, impoverished settlements. SWID gathered local leaders, grassroots women, CBOs and other stakeholders in meetings with the municipality, highlighting community efforts and priorities. As a result, Jinja Municipality signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SWID for formal collaboration, paving the way for Jinja to realize commitments in the Resilient Cities’ Campaign’s 10-point checklist while meeting community resilience needs for waste management capacity, infrastructure improvements, improved lighting and health care facilities, and other priorities.

The case study from SSP, India shows how women farmers utilized the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme through persistent efforts at accountability and transparency (Box 9), while DAMPA, in the Philippines, monitored delivery of social protection and Post-Haiyan relief aid (Box 10). In Nepal, communities supported by Lumanti recently introduced an initiative to monitor and reduce corruption in the delivery of water and sanitation services, with the effect of improved services and water quality (Box 11).

Box 9. Transparency and accountability in government social protection programs

Soon after mapping their water sources and harvesting structures, women from Washim and Osmabanabad districts in Maharashtra, India applied to the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) for socio-economic support services. NREGS guarantees 100 days of employment annually to households living below the poverty line to build or repair local infrastructure, including water harvesting structures. Knowing, however, that politically influential community members tend to receive preferential allocation by the Village Councils, the women regularly followed up with district and sub-district officials to ensure that their applications were received and registered. With NREGS support and the communities' diligence, over 300 wells have been recharged in the three districts of Osmanabad, Nanded and Washim, with water levels up in more than 40 villages.

Box 10. Community oversight to guarantee typhoon relief supplies and services

In 2012, DAMPA signed an MOU with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), identifying beneficiaries and monitoring delivery of the Philippines conditional cash transfer program, Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Programs³. As a result, DAMPA has been able to provide benefits for 1,500 families previously left out of the program. Following Typhoon Haiyan In 2013, DSWD again signed an agreement with DAMPA, this time to monitor the delivery of relief in twenty barangays in Tanauan, Leyte. By tracking relief supplies at municipal halls where they first arrived, then the barangay offices and finally assessing what reached the communities, DAMPA found that relief supplies were being stolen and substituted by local officials. Photographs by youth volunteers provided evidence that they could report directly to DSWD headquarters in Manila. Community groups also monitored basic services such as adequate number of toilets, clean water, food and medical services and ensuring that these were accessible to those who most needed them.

³ See Gupta, S. and Purushottaman 'What Communities Want: Putting Community Priorities on the Agenda for 2015' Huairou Commission, 2013.

Box 11. Community-based monitoring of water and sanitation services

In a grassroots women-led anti-corruption initiative in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley, the Lumanti Support Group for Shelter is working with grassroots women to test a social accountability strategy on Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). Community focus groups in Thankot village identified obstacles to accessing water and sanitation (e.g., lack of potable water, unequal service distribution, drainage and waste management problems, and bribery). Ward-level committees analyzed public budgets and services, and learned how to administer the WASH Report Card. Members mapped service providers and held community conversations linking delivery of water and sanitation to good governance and transparency. The information gathered was used in dialogue with the Thankot VDC Secretary and the official Water Supply Committee. As a result of these collaborations, garbage collection and the quality of drinking water noticeably improved and incidence of water borne diseases fell. The VDC appointed a community monitoring committee to reduce corruption, began publicly displaying government budgets and public programs, and is consulting grassroots women on local planning. The local government has also agreed to work with local communities to develop joint plans for improving access to water and sanitation, with four grassroots women engaged in the ward level budget planning.

Community-led partnerships foster innovation

Community-led partnerships demonstrate innovative ways in which actors can engage and create synergies advancing disaster and climate resilience. The examples shared in this document show that partnerships between communities and other actors foster precedent-setting innovations for institutional change.

Three kinds of innovation emerge from the community-led partnerships discussed in this report.

- New engagement and partnership mechanisms
- New learning, knowledge and actions
- New roles for grassroots organizations

New engagement and partnership mechanisms

One of the greatest challenges that communities face in forming stakeholder partnerships to advance resilience priorities is that there are few mechanisms that enable communities to negotiate on their own terms or formal processes for accessing governmental institutions. And while decentralization processes have created local planning mechanisms—such as “bottom-up budgeting” in the Philippines, *musrenbang* in Indonesia and *Gram Sabhas* in India—communities often lack the political support and experience to navigate and influence these decision-making processes.

With collective power and ingenuity, however, communities have been able to engage multiple stakeholders at different levels by creating unique platforms for dialogue, negotiation and collaboration. In convening the Inter-Agency Partnership⁴ in Honduras, for example, WAGUCHA created a unique platform for ministries to coordinate and communicate their approach to local community resilience priorities. This, in turn, created access for grassroots communities to decentralized resources for diversification of their

⁴ SAG, SEPLAN, COPECO

livelihoods (Box 12). Similarly, in Kenya, the grassroots women's organization, Shibuye Community Health Workers, created a multi-stakeholder platform to identify households where women or orphans were at risk of eviction, and then convened watch dog groups to protect women's property rights. These groups were comprised of community members, village elders, traditional chiefs, and governmental officials who together educated communities on land rights, succession and inheritance laws and then mediated between the disputing parties to prevent evictions and ensure that property rights are restored.

Box 12. Building an inter-agency collaborative platform

In 2010, building on their relationships with policy makers, WAGUCHA initiated the Inter-Agency Partnership for Community Resilience in Honduras. Since then, this multi-stakeholder partnership has linked grassroots priorities to national government agencies, giving local communities access to information, budgets, training and influencing planning processes to address community resilience priorities. National agency partners include the Ministry of Planning (*Secretaría de Planificación y Cooperación Externa, SEPLAN*), providing technical assistance and training on land-use planning issues, (ii) Permanent Commission for Contingencies in Honduras (*Comision Permanente de Contingencias de Honduras, COPECO*), providing preparedness and response training, and (iii) SAG, providing credit for livelihoods strengthening and diversification. WAGUCHA has used the Inter-Agency Partnership to link grassroots leaders across municipalities and connect them with decentralized programs and resources from the national ministries for livelihoods support, diversification and conservation of natural resources. For example, 300 youth from fishing communities were trained as eco-tourism guides. Plantations of non-timber products were promoted in the port city of La Ceiba, as were seed banks and a network of artisans in multiple municipalities and towns.

New knowledge, learning and practice

As new partnership and engagement mechanisms bring stakeholders together, their collaboration creates opportunities to generate and share knowledge that can increase the effectiveness of resilience strategies at the local, regional, and national levels. With a better understanding of the drivers of risk and shared access to adaptive or preventative response strategies, stakeholders at all levels are in a better position to take action for sustainable communities and against adverse effects of natural hazards.

Sometimes, reviving old knowledge can refresh ways of thinking about new problems, as in Kenya, where women of SCHW effectively used traditional adaptive farming techniques to withstand flood and drought. More often, however, stakeholders need new knowledge to inform their alternatives. In seven of the eight countries studied, for example, stakeholders conducted their own vulnerability and risk mapping initiatives, informing the basis for disaster management planning, budgeting, and implementation. Collaborative research

partnerships also capture new knowledge, as in Brazil where Adapta Sertão partnered with universities in California and Rio de Janeiro, analyzing farmers' cooperatives as the basis of a model for sustainability (Box 13). Technical assistance tends to enable top-down knowledge transfer, as in India where the KVK taught women farmers to use reservoir silt to boost farm soil fertility. But knowledge transfer can also be bottom-up, as grassroots women guided the Ugandan National Agricultural Advisory Services to improve their targeting and delivery of government resources.

Box 13. Building a robust evidence base and diversifying farm productivity

In 2011-2012, with the support of the Brazilian National Research Foundation, Adapta Sertão partnered with IR-PS program at the University of California San Diego and Centro Clima, Universidade Federal Rio de Janeiro, to collect and systematize data on drip irrigation, quantifying its impact on productivity, and developing five-year projections of its impact on the local agricultural value chain. The links with these university research programs provided scientific credibility to the model for sustainable agriculture emerging from the practices of farmers' cooperatives. At the same time, Adapta Sertão continued to test other adaptive strategies such as balancing animal feed, producing fodder from lower quality water and processing local drought resistant fruits, resulting in an expanding set of sustainable strategies to optimize farm productivity. During this period, research also showed that farmers preferred to invest in meat and dairy rather than fruits and vegetables as these commanded higher prices in the market.

The CBO case studies also illustrate shared learning through partnerships strategies, whether by trainings, awareness-raising campaigns, community-government forums, or disseminating knowledge from localized successes. In India, for instance, women's agricultural groups are steadily scaling-up climate resilient strategies through peer-to-peer trainings. From a four-day training of 20 women trainers, more than 1,200 farmers in 41 villages have been trained, with more than 2,000 women farmers across two states adopting similar climate resilience strategies. In Brazil, REDEH created multi-stakeholder forums for sharing climate change adaptation strategies (Box 14). And Adapta Sertão, with the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment, created a network of retail stores managed by farmers' cooperatives to disseminate adaptive farming tools and technologies to hundreds of farms. The stores serve as a distribution mechanism for new technologies in rural areas where it has been difficult for small farmers to access technology innovations previously available only in cities.

Box 14. Multi-stakeholder forums for shared strategies and problem solving

Embrapa, the Brazilian Corporation of Agricultural Research which has traditionally focused its research and development activities on agricultural technology for big farms, collaborated with Adapta Sertão to support the identification and testing of other possible climate change adaptation strategies. To support scaling up along with wider adaptation, REDEH has created regular learning forums for cooperative farmers, technical experts, and governmental partners such as Embrapa to regularly share practical implementation strategies, results, and resolve practical problems.

With this shared knowledge and lessons learned, communities are better equipped to translate their knowledge into practice, implementing and scaling-up effective resilience strategies. In Uganda, SWID's stakeholder dialogue helped women understand land titling procedures and facilitated a new process protecting property rights for hundreds of women (Box 15). And in Nepal, the Kirtipur Women's Network's local experience and public voice was key to winning municipal allocation of funds for a disaster risk-awareness campaign, emergency preparedness training for women, and technology trainings on safe construction, and for skilled and semi-skilled labor.

Box 15. Protecting women's property rights and increasing food security in Uganda

To facilitate grassroots women's ability to get land titles and prevent illegal evictions, SWID developed a multi-stakeholder partnership with the Uganda Land Alliance, Jinja District Land Board, Jinja Municipal Council, Jinja District and Area Land Committees. This local-to-local dialogue platform brought together all the relevant stakeholders, to whom grassroots women voiced their concerns over their property rights. At the same time, women learned about the formal land titling procedures as well as roles of different administrative bodies. Subsequently, SWID requested the Walukuba-Masese Division to bundle several land title applications for processing together, allowing women to approach the District Land Boards as groups rather than as individuals. The Division agreed and formally directed the Jinja District Land Board to process the SWID members' applications as a group. As a result the following day, 35 applications for titles were processed and 31 women received their titles. This practice serves to reduce corruption as it prevents officials from asking for bribes when a group is present. At the same time it reduces administrative processes and sets a precedent—in terms of procedures that can be followed for processing women's land titles in the future. Using this innovative process another 200 community members were in the process of preparing their land titling documents and 100 were expected to receive their titles within the year.

New roles for grassroots organizations

Grassroots women and their communities have long been marginalized from the decision-making processes of disaster risk management policy. The formal assignment of public roles to grassroots organizations serves as a powerful counterpoint to any perception of grassroots communities as passive, and represents institutional recognition of communities—particularly grassroots women—as active agents of their own security and resilience.

Grassroots' constituency voice and participation is evident throughout the cases presented here and beyond. In the Philippines, DAMPA was contracted by DSWD to take on beneficiary identification and monitoring to make sure that social protection programs and disaster relief reached poor households. In Honduras, grassroots women leaders from Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala were invited by the Municipality of San Juan de Flores to lead a two-day training session for 25 municipal officials on risk mapping. Their training has since evolved into a widely-accepted methodological template on community-government partnerships for resilience. And in India, what started out as training on adaptive farming initiatives for 20 grassroots women has reached more than 2,000 women across two states in India (Box 16). Given their applied knowledge, experience, and proactive approach to change in their communities, grassroots women leaders are increasingly taking public roles and partnerships as expert practitioners, advisors, and trainers. Their voice and expertise are essential for the development, dissemination, and implementation of community-based strategies for resilience.

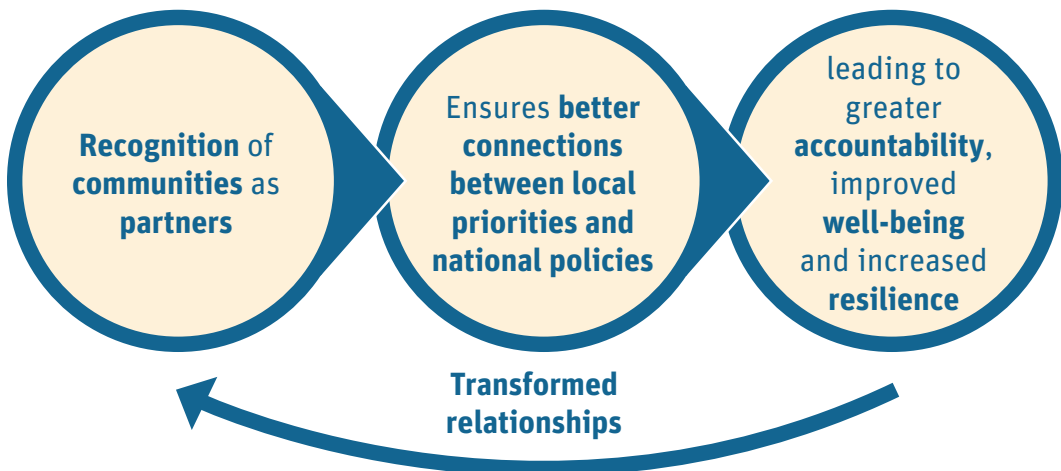
Box 16. Grassroots-led transfers, training and awareness-raising in India

Women's agricultural groups have been steadily scaling up climate resilient strategies, disseminating their experiences through mass awareness-raising efforts as well as transfer of specific practices to grassroots women within and outside of Maharashtra.

In March 2012, the NGO Swayam Shikshan Prayog facilitated a four-day training of trainers' workshop on low-cost sustainable farming practices for 20 grassroots women trainers. These 20 women have since trained 1,230 women farmers in 41 villages. At least 1,500 women farmers are now sowing local seeds for two crops each year. Peer learning exchanges organized in 2012 and 2013, led to awareness raising and practice transfers to women farmers in Bihar and Tamil Nadu, with more than 2,000 women adopting similar strategies across these two states.

Grassroots women are also being recognized as experts in adaptive farming and formally appointed as trainers by government agencies. The KVK agricultural research and training center in Osmanabad District appointed 10 women farmers as trainers, who have effectively transferred sustainable farming, organic, bio-composting and local seed preservation practices to neighboring villages. In 2014 Osmanabad and Washim District administrations requested grassroots women's federations to conduct awareness campaigns on drought management. From this, two hundred grassroots women leaders are currently organizing campaigns in 70 villages on water conservation, water efficient crops, recharging water sources, and drought resistant varieties.

PARTNERSHIP MODEL



Conclusions

Community-based collaborations underway in Brazil, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nepal, Philippines and Uganda evidence the creative approaches that grassroots organizations are advancing for resilient development. In connecting community initiatives and priorities to local and national government programs and policies, governments can be increasingly effective in the delivery and implementation of their programs and services, as well as more responsive and accountable to the needs of disaster-prone communities. Communities gain additional important benefits from these institutional partnerships. First, everyday living conditions can be greatly improved for community members, with higher incomes, increased productivity, food security, and access to resources and technology, as well as better public infrastructure and basic services. Any or all of these advances help to reduce the stresses that the poor or vulnerable experience on a daily basis. Second, improved well-being and greater stability equip communities to better withstand and combat the adverse effects of natural disasters, hazards and climate change. Third, the partnerships transform the relationships between local communities and other institutional actors, positioning grassroots communities as proactive, knowledgeable stakeholders taking a determining role in their own resilience and development. As illustrated throughout the case studies, local and national governments are increasingly inviting community representatives to decision-making positions, recognizing them as legitimate recipients of technical support, assigning to them public roles as trainers and monitors, enabling them to influence public policy and decision-making processes and resourcing them through institutional funds.

In 2015, as people work to forge new policy agreements that re-imagine the future of our planet, community-driven partnerships will play an increasingly critical role in the successful delivery of new policy frameworks to advance development that is pro-poor, gender-equitable and resilient.

The following recommendations are key to promoting community-led partnerships for building disaster and climate resilience in poor communities.

- Develop dialogue mechanisms and forums that enable communities to regularly engage other stakeholders, including the government and private sector.
- Allocate decentralized flexible resources for community-led risk analysis and prioritization, resilience agenda setting, demonstration of resilience practices, and scaling-up of effective community-led resilience practices.
- Create incentives for local, national and sub-national governments, policy institutions and researchers to partner with communities to advance resilient development.
- Formally assign public roles to communities, granting greater visibility for their demonstrated capacities and expertise in planning, training, implementing and monitoring disaster resilience.
- Scale up, institutionalize and formalize community-led practices and partnerships that demonstrate effective win-win solutions.

CASE STUDIES



Members of cooperatives selling their produce.

SUMMARY

Win-win partnerships for resilience in the Philippines



Non-potable well water that communities had access to, which led to the formation of the DAMPA Water Cooperative. (Photo: Suranjana Gupta)

Damayan ng Maralitang Pilipinong Api Inc. (DAMPA)

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Communities living in informal settlements with poor access to basic services face everyday health risks that are exacerbated during natural disasters. The DAMPA (*Damayan ng Maralitang Pilipinong Api*) network of community-based organizations has engaged multiple stakeholders at national and local levels to deliver water to informal settlements and monitor health services delivery. DAMPA's strong constituency base, its presence in Typhoon Haiyan-affected areas, and its track record with government led to partnerships with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to monitor the delivery of disaster relief assistance, and with the local government to ensure that typhoon-displaced communities are resettled.

Introduction

Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. In addition to risk of typhoons, floods, and earthquakes, the country is experiencing prolonged drought and the effects of El Niño events. Compounding these threats, rapid urbanization has led to a proliferation of unplanned settlements often situated in highly disaster-prone⁵ areas.

DAMPA is a network of 235 community-based women-led organizations (CBOs) representing rural and urban poor communities, operating in 10 provinces of the Philippines. The organization was formed in 1995 to mobilize communities against large-scale demolitions and evictions in Metro Manila. In the last two decades, DAMPA has achieved a range of accomplishments that span securing housing tenure for more than 1,000 urban poor families, negotiating livelihoods subsidies for 7,500 families relocated under the Flood Control Project⁶, upgrading sanitation in informal settlements, and running community pharmacies that provide the urban poor with access to low cost generic medicines.

Bringing potable water to informal settlements

In 2010, DAMPA facilitated a series of community mapping exercises with more than 500 community members in Manila, to identify vulnerabilities and risks faced by urban poor communities in the face of floods and increasingly hot summers. Water supply emerged as a priority. Poor access to water in PACOMNA community in Barangay 275 Binondo Tondo⁷ drove communities to buy water from private suppliers at exorbitant rates. The low water quality caused frequent water-borne infections, particularly among children, which inevitably worsened during floods. With prolonged summers and high temperatures residents also suffered from skin diseases caused by heat and poor hygiene, owing to water shortages. In addition to increasing women's caregiving burdens, women responsible for water collection would have to leave their homes and children unsupervised for long periods to wait for water suppliers to deliver water.

Much of Manila gets its water supply from MAYNILAD—a public-private partnership providing metered supply of potable water. Communities found that they could afford to pay for metered water, but not the high cost of water supply infrastructure. Following a

⁵ GFDRR Philippines Country Program Update, May 2014: <https://www.gfdr.org/sites/gfdr/files/region/PH.pdf>

⁶ For more information, see UNDP & GROOTS International (2011) 'Leading Resilient Development: Grassroots Women's Priorities, Practices and Innovations, New York.

⁷ Barangay 275 Binondo Tondo is one of 2 large main clusters of settlements that make up the Parola Compound Neighborhood Association (PACOMNA) community in Manila, one of the Philippines' largest informal settlements, with a population of about 60,000. *Barangay* generally refers to a neighborhood or district within a village or municipality.

series of dialogues with barangay officials, PACOMNA members in Barangay 275 Binondo learned about development budgets assigned to Members of Congress for development work in their constituencies. Together, community leaders and barangay officials approached Congresswomen Angping who agreed to allocate PHP 1.7 million (approximately US \$39,000) to pay MAYNILAD to install a water connection in Binondo. Community leaders from PACOMNA also negotiated with barangay officials for permission to lay the main water pipe that brings water to the entrance of their settlement. Once the water connection reached the settlement through four water points at the edge of the settlement, communities had to find a way to distribute the water inside their settlement. PACOMNA residents created a system where four hoses were attached to the main pipe, each of which would deliver water to the four blocks of households. They also organized four community water supply workers who earn a small income by ensuring that each block gets its share of water.

PACOMNA community members have also organized a community savings-based fund, originally to help them pay for private water tankers. Today the monthly water tariffs to MAYNILAD and the four community water supply workers are paid from this fund. As a result of this arrangement, which DAMPA calls their ‘water cooperative’, 550 households in Barangay, 275 have a dependable, supply of potable water that community leaders say has reduced household water costs by 60 percent and significantly reduced health problems during the rainy season and summer.

Scaling up the ‘water cooperative’ strategy

After seeing PACOMNA’s success with the water cooperative, a neighboring community, Samahang Pangkabuhayan Kababaihan Binondo in Manila, has used the same strategy to secure water supply for almost 300 households. The money saved after paying for the community water supply workers and water tariffs has been used to start a small shop, with a portion of the profits going back into the community savings funds.

In the city of Navotas, communities were also buying water from private suppliers at high costs. The Bicol Area Women’s Association has devised a different approach. They negotiated with MAYNILAD for 150 individual water connections and engaged the local government for permission to lay pipes in the densely populated settlements. In addition, women negotiated with a pipe manufacturer to buy pipes at a lower cost. DAMPA has plans to replicate these strategies to improve water supply in the Visayan island region where communities continue to buy water at a high cost.

Making health clinics accountable to the poor

To address the adverse health-related impacts of climate change, it is important that public healthcare systems function effectively to deliver services, particularly to the poor. Through

a recent grassroots, women-led anti-corruption initiative⁸, DAMPA has begun monitoring government health center service delivery and budgets.

Community health workers visited five barangay health clinics in Manila⁹ to identify priority community concerns. Problems communities encountered included: clinics charging for medicines and services that are supposed to be free; unavailability of essential medicines, such as for tuberculosis; demands for bribes and discrimination against poor people. Many poor families also had not received their Philhealth cards, which entitles them to subsidized health services. DAMPA's formidable constituency base, and strong working relationships with barangay officials and national and provincial government helped them gain access to barangay councilors to discuss their concerns. Barangay councilors supported community leaders to municipalities to find out about health clinic budgets and the services.

In each barangay, DAMPA-affiliated grassroots women leaders and community health workers visited the municipal health office to find out about the budgets allocated to clinics as well the medical supplies and services clinics are supposed to provide. Communities reported corrupt clinic activities to barangay officials who are part of local health committees, pressing them to monitor the clinics and address the hoarding and sale of medical supplies meant for poor families. Barangay officials were compelled to monitor the clinics more closely and be more accountable to local communities, as a result of which medicines are now available in these clinics.

Formal partnerships with national government

Since 2012, DAMPA has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to identify beneficiaries and monitor delivery of the Philippines conditional cash transfer program - Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Programs¹⁰. As a result, DAMPA has been able to add 1,500 previously-excluded families to the program's beneficiary list.

Since 2010, DAMPA has been organizing communities in 16 barangays to map their risks, federate, and start a dialogue with barangay officials to address their development needs, such as water and sanitation in Tanauan, one of the oldest towns in Leyte province. In 2013, after these communities were hit by Typhoon Haiyan, DAMPA's well-organized, active federation ensured itself a membership in the Technical Working Group, which in turn enabled DAMPA to secure permanent resettlement housing in Pago, San Roque for 380 families displaced from coastal areas within the 40 meter boundary.

⁸ This initiative is part of Huairou Commission's Transparency and Accountability Initiative supported by UNDP Governance Program's Transparency and Anti-Corruption Initiative.

⁹ Tanza Navotas, Bagong Silangan, East Fairview in Quezon City, Cabuyao, Laguna, Manila

¹⁰ See Gupta S and Purushottaman 'What Communities Want: Putting Community Priorities on the Agenda for 2015' Huairou Commission, 2013.

Owing to DAMPA's credibility with the national government, following Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, DSWD signed an agreement with DAMPA to formally monitor the delivery of relief in twenty barangays in Tanauan, Leyte. Teams of DAMPA leaders held discussions with groups of typhoon-affected men and women to identify their needs and conveyed these to the local governments. By tracking relief supplies at the Municipal Hall where they first arrived, through to the barangay offices, and what actually reached the communities, DAMPA community leaders found that relief supplies were being stolen and substituted by local officials. Youth volunteers took photographs of what they witnessed, providing DAMPA with evidence they reported directly to DSWD headquarters in Manila. In addition, community groups self-organized to monitor basic services such as adequate number of toilets, clean water, food and medical services, ensuring that these were accessible to those who most needed them.

Conclusion

DAMPA has negotiated with a range of different partners in different sectors to develop solutions that have upgraded living conditions in poor settlements. By negotiating with its Congressional representative, MAYNILAD and local barangay officials, the CBO network developed an innovative solution to the water problem in one informal settlement and later scaled-up to reach others. The network also works with local and national level officials to monitor corruption and improve health service delivery. DAMPA's credibility with the national DSWD has led to partnerships identifying beneficiaries for the Philippines conditional cash transfer program and later to monitoring and reducing corruption in disaster relief delivery after Typhoon Haiyan. Governmental partners benefit from these collaborations as well, by more effectively delivering infrastructure, services and social protection to populations whose poverty and lack of access to basic services and infrastructure leaves them otherwise vulnerable to inequities in development services and the ill-effects of natural hazards and climate change.

SUMMARY

Securing Land, Food And Infrastructure in Uganda



Member of SWID works on a demonstration garden. (Photo: Katherine Shelley/Huairou Commission)

Slum Women's Initiative for Development (SWID)

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Slum Women's Initiatives for Development (SWID) is an organization led by grassroots communities committed to building resilience and security in food, health infrastructure and land tenure for marginalized groups. SWID's initiatives bring together three strategies: First, SWID's food security initiative, women collectively negotiated with landowners and local governments to build demonstration gardens for women to learn about cultivating higher yield fruits and vegetables. Second, to reduce the impacts of urban flooding in Jinja municipality, women worked together to promote hygienic practices, improve household solid waste management and dispose of polythene bags to prevent drains from clogging and encouraging Jinja Municipality to deliver on its commitment to the UNISDR's Resilient Cities Campaign. As a result of the women's advocacy, local officials made infrastructure improvements in the informal settlements. Third, SWID's ongoing partnerships with local governments and land administration officials to secure land titles are key to reducing women's vulnerability to food and livelihoods insecurity.

Catalyzing food security initiatives

Drought, increasing food prices and privatization of public land have reduced the ability of poor communities to feed their families. In 2010, SWID trained a team of 40 community researchers (26 women and 14 men) to survey 400 households in eight parishes. They found that two thirds of the surveyed households grew food to supplement what they purchased. Their ability to continue growing food was rapidly changing, however, due to environmental destruction and evictions following privatization of public lands where communities were cultivating food. Resulting food shortages meant that some women were eating only one meal a day. The findings from the SWID survey became the basis of the community food security strategy.

Negotiating for land for demonstration gardens

At the heart of SWID's food security strategy are small demonstration gardens to grow different varieties of drought-resistant crops so women could grow food in their own backyards. To find vacant land for the demonstration plots, grassroots women collectively negotiated with landowners and local governments. SWID held a workshop with government officials in Buwenge Sub-county to advocate scaling-up food security initiatives, and in response, the sub-county's Community Development Officer allocated a plot of land to the group. With support from Huairou Commission's Community Resilience Fund, the Buwenge group created a fruit tree demonstration garden, teaching local women how they could grow their own fruit trees, manage tree spacing and apply organic manure. Several women have since begun to plant fruit trees not just to supplement their household food consumption but also as an enterprise to increase their incomes.

Similarly, in Budondo Sub-county, women successfully negotiated with officials to set aside two acres of land for their demonstration garden. In Kakira, women convinced the Town Council that demonstration plots would complement implementation of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) program, upgrading agricultural skills for scaling-up commercial agriculture. A resolution was passed here, too, to set aside a plot of land for a demonstration garden.

Influencing delivery and planning of agricultural extension services

Though NAADS programs and extension services focus primarily on large scale commercial farming, SWID negotiated access to the NAADS technical assistance program for grassroots-managed demonstration gardens. At farmers' meetings, NAADS Community Development Officers explained new farming techniques and crop varieties that could enhance productivity. SWID members found, however, that NAADS agricultural extension services and livelihood projects often did not match farmers' priorities. This prompted NAADS

to involve SWID members in regular village planning meetings where grassroots women presented strategies to improve the targeting of NAADS resources and more effective delivery of government extension programs.

Food security outcomes for communities

Since the food security initiative began, SWID's grassroots members have successfully negotiated land for four demonstration gardens, though one was demolished when the land was sold to a mining company. Starting with 150 women cultivating backyard food crops in Walukuba-Masese, the initiative has now grown to 600 women across communities in Kakira and Buwenge, Budondo and Mafubira. To date, these 600 households are able to have at least two full meals a day, and any surplus is sold to supplement women's incomes. Eighty five percent of the women involved in this initiative are able to grow all the food they need.

To sustain the initiative in the long term, women are encouraged to set aside part of their earnings from selling farm surplus to buy seeds. Women have learned how to dry and store maize and beans which can be consumed during food shortages or planted during the following season. Success of this initiative is also being replicated by other organizations in Uganda. Community-based organizations such as Kawempe Home-Based Care Alliance and Uganda Community-Based Association for Child Welfare from Kampala have visited SWID to learn and implement these practices at home.

Addressing urban flooding and waste management with Jinja Municipality

Flooding is a regular occurrence during heavy rains in the Jinja Municipality's informal settlements of Walukuba-Masese, Mpumudde, and Kakira. When floodwaters swell, they enter homes and gardens, destroy crops, block roads and disrupt livelihoods. SWID organized community-led risk mapping and analysis exercises, training 107 grassroots leaders and showing communities how urban flooding, poor waste management, inadequate public toilets, blocked drains, and health risks were all linked.

Subsequently, grassroots leaders from the three communities convened Local-to-Local dialogue meetings. In Kakira, the group met with local leaders and health officials to address sanitation problems. They raised community awareness about household hygiene, such as hand washing, boiling drinking water, and reducing draining system blockages by properly disposing of polythene bags.

Realizing commitments to UNISDR's Resilient Cities Campaign

When Jinja Municipality signed on to the UNISDR Resilient Cities Campaign in 2010, SWID saw an opportunity to amplify grassroots concerns. SWID signed a MOU with the municipality to reduce risks in informal, impoverished settlements. Using Local-to-Local dialogue, local leaders, grassroots women, CBOs and other stakeholders were brought on board. Communities highlighted their own efforts to promote hygienic practices, improve household solid waste management, and improve drainage. As a result, communities, the municipality, and SWID are paving the way towards realizing commitments in UN Resilient Cities Campaign's 10-point checklist.

SWID's grassroots community members have also advocated municipal governments to upgrade local infrastructure. Jinja Municipality has begun upgrading access roads and improving lighting and drainage systems, and has gazetted land and constructed a waste management facility. In Budondo, the main road was repaired as a result of community advocacy of local councilors. In Mpumudde, dialogue with local authorities led to commitments to upgrade settlements and public services. The local health center was renovated, rubbish bins were provided, and lights were installed along main roads.

Securing land titles for women

Since its inception, SWID has worked with communities in informal settlements, particularly women, to secure land and housing. Communities threatened by eviction are particularly vulnerable as they are unable to invest in housing improvements or control how land is used and these impact their abilities to withstand extreme weather events. Land and property are valuable assets that provide a cushion for households and communities in times of crisis. This is supported by Uganda's Constitution and Land Reform Legislation, granting every person the right to own property individually or in association with others. SWID's land mapping exercise, however, showed that low-income women were consistently being denied their property rights and have difficulty obtaining land titles that would lead to decent housing. Since 2004, SWID has been organizing women's savings groups and revolving funds to help women gain access to credit to pay for their land titles. To date, the revolving fund has assisted 120 women to purchase land.

To advocate for women's land rights, facilitate land titling and prevent evictions, SWID developed a multi-stakeholder partnership with the Uganda Land Alliance, Jinja District Land Board, Jinja Municipal Council, Jinja District and Area Land Committees. This local dialogue brought all the relevant stakeholders together on a common platform. Grassroots women voiced their concerns over their constitutional rights and learned about the formal procedures as well as roles of different administrative bodies concerning land titles. Subsequently, SWID formally requested the Walukuba-Masese Division to bundle several

land title applications and process them together, allowing women to approach the District Land Boards as groups rather than as individuals. The Division agreed and formally directed the Jinja District Land Board to process the SWID members' applications as a group. As a result, the following day, 35 applications for titles were processed and 31 women received their titles. This practice serves to reduce corruption as it prevents officials from asking for bribes when a group is present. At the same time it reduces administrative processes and sets a procedural precedent for women's land titling in the future. Using this innovative process, another 200 community members are preparing their land titling documents with 100 expected to receive their titles in 2014.

Conclusion

The partnerships initiated by the Slum Women's Initiative for Development in Jinja District each illustrate a holistic, multi-sectoral approach to resilience for women and their communities, recognizing linkages among land tenure, food security and settlement livability. SWID's resilience strategies are grounded in community-government partnerships and foster a number of innovative approaches for risk reduction. First, by negotiating land for public demonstration gardens and engaging extension training services, women increased their family food security and modified extension services to accommodate their needs and interests. Second, SWID's advocacy efforts built on the Jinja Municipality's existing commitment to the UN's Resilient Cities Campaign, paving the way for upgrading frequently-flooded settlements. And third, a broad, multi-stakeholder partnership convinced the District Land Board in Walukuba-Masese Division to create new land titling mechanisms for women, with the dual benefits of reducing their vulnerabilities and boosting governmental accountability and transparency.

SUMMARY

New platforms, new roles for Garifuna women in Honduras



Members of WAGUCHA participate in a beach cleaning in the community of Corozol, Atlántida.
(Photo: Tatiana Solís and Elizabeth David / Wagucho)

WAGUCHA-Plataforma Comunitaria Comité y Redes de Honduras

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WAGUCHA is a community-based organization of the afro-indigenous Garifuna people, a group historically unserved by public policies and services. It is led by Garifuna women who organized rescue, recovery and reconstruction in coastal towns after Hurricane Mitch in 1998, and leverages knowledge gained through community risk mapping to access local government resources and recognition. Reflecting this expertise, WAGUCHA's grassroots leaders have been invited to train local authorities on resilience building, supporting actions linked to the UN ISDR's Resilient Cities Campaign. WAGUCHA has also built an active multi-stakeholder platform linking national ministries to community priorities, creating a place at the table for communities to participate in government emergency response and early warning strategies, land-use planning processes and to access livelihoods support.

Introduction

Honduras is a country highly vulnerable to natural hazards. Severe storms, drought, hurricanes, landslides and earthquakes destroy infrastructure and housing, cause food and drinking water shortages, and damage crops and livestock. Following the devastation of Hurricane Mitch, Garifuna women from WAGUCHA organized relief and rescue operations, helping communities to relocate from high-risk areas and rebuild their lives. Garifuna women organized seed banks to protect indigenous plant species and, in turn, community food security, livelihoods, and natural resources. They also grafted fruit trees to prevent erosion of coastal areas and created the first ever Garifuna market place.

Mapping risks: an entry point to disaster risk management and engaging partners

In 2008, WAGUCHA learned community-led risk mapping in a four-country peer learning exchange and showcased their seed banks and other adaptive practices to peers from Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Jamaica. Within a year, women leaders from WAGUCHA had trained sixty Garifuna grassroots leaders on community risk mapping. They found that collective risk analysis and prioritization offered a strategic entry point for engaging local governments and used their findings as the basis for collaborative dialogue. In Guadalupe Municipality, for instance, grassroots advocacy based on risk mapping resulted in authorities' construction of a footbridge, ensuring safe pedestrian travel across flooded creeks.

Linking policy agencies to community priorities and implementation

For grassroots organizations working in remote areas, it is a challenge to gain the attention and support of the national government. However, WAGUCHA has taken part in a series of policy venues where grassroots leaders can engage their national government, intergovernmental agencies and bilateral donors. At these forums, women leaders met with policymakers such as the Permanent Commission for Contingencies in Honduras (COPECO) and the Central American Coordination Center for Prevention of Natural Disasters (CEPRENAC). On one such occasion¹¹, CEPREDENAC and AECID expressed their interest in learning from organizations working at the grassroots how to devise locally effective, gender-sensitive implementation strategies addressing the needs of indigenous communities. WAGUCHA's presence in such public policy forums, coupled with the public endorsement from policy champions, has bolstered WAGUCHA's credibility and access to representatives of Honduran governmental agencies.

¹¹ ProVention Consortium sponsored workshop on 'the Role and Power of Grassroots and Indigenous Women in Managing Disaster Risk, Antigua, Guatemala 2008.

Building an inter-agency collaborative platform

Systematically building on their relationships with policy makers, in 2010, WAGUCHA initiated the Inter-Agency Partnership for Community Resilience in Honduras. Since then, this multi-stakeholder partnership has linked grassroots priorities to national government agencies, giving local community access to information, budgets, and training, and influencing planning processes to address community resilience priorities. National agency partners include (i) the Ministry of Planning (*Secretaría de Planificación y Cooperación Externa*, SEPLAN), providing technical assistance and training on land-use planning issues; (ii) Permanent Commission for Contingencies in Honduras (*Comisión Permanente de Contingencias de Honduras*, COPECO), providing preparedness and response training; and (iii) the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG), providing credit to strengthen and diversify community livelihoods. Through the Partnership, WAGUCHA has helped link grassroots leaders across Atlántida, Colón, Francisco Morazán, and Choluteca municipalities, connecting them with decentralized programs and resources from the national ministries. This has included eco-tourism training for 300 youth from fishing communities, promoting non-timber product plantations, supporting seed banks to preserve local plant and tree species, and a multi-city network of local artisans.

New roles for grassroots women

Through their partnership with SEPLAN, grassroots leaders from WAGUCHA, Nicaragua and Guatemala, were invited by the Municipality of San Juan de Flores, Cantarranas to lead a two-day training session for 25 municipal officials. The training demonstrated how practical strategies could emerge from community-led risk analysis and mapping, and emphasized how decentralized budgets and other mechanisms could support community-driven initiatives to improve housing, access agricultural inputs and credit, and upgrade settlements.

Following this training, there was similar demand from municipalities in Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua. The curriculum has since evolved, focusing on strategies linking grassroots organizations to local government to advance local resilience, and has come to be known as the “Cantarranas Methodology”.¹² The Union of Women’s Cooperatives of Las Brumas in Nicaragua and Fundación Guatemala have since joined the Inter-Agency Partnership to organize grassroots-led trainings for 10 municipalities in Central America. National government agencies from these three countries subsequently endorsed the process and signed an agreement with the three organizations to continue applying this approach. Municipalities are keen to use this approach to advance implementation of their commitments to UNISDR’s Resilient Cities Campaign.

In August of 2013, WAGUCHA and its allies in the Central American region convened a meeting of mayors and leaders of three municipalities in Central America, including Cantarranas in Honduras, Livingston in Guatemala, and Wiwili in Nicaragua. This dialogue

¹² Fundación Guatemala is a facilitating NGO working with a network of grassroots and indigenous women’s groups engaged in resilience.

and exchange of strategies led to an agreement among the municipalities to collaborate with communities and grassroots women's groups on trainings, formulating action plans for resilience building

These trainings explicitly focus on local resilience building strategies, with the embedded acknowledgement that grassroots communities are not passive victims of disasters. They are knowledgeable practitioners, prepared to share their expertise to achieve the shared goal of advancing resilient development. Grassroots communities, with the support of their allies in COPECO, SAG and SEPLAN are monitoring this agreement to ensure that the resilience methodology retains a central role for local communities.

Formal partnerships with COPECO and SEPLAN

In 2014, COPECO signed an MOU formalizing its partnership with WAGUCHA. According to the agreement, COPECO will provide technical training and assistance to WAGUCHA to supplement information generated by community risk and vulnerability maps. This might include satellite maps and the use of GPS to improve communities' understanding of risks and help identify nearby evacuation shelters in the event of emergencies. COPECO will also provide emergency preparedness and response training for more than 3,000 community volunteers (2,400 of whom are women). In two regions, COPECO is also training and certifying WAGUCHA's volunteer networks for emergency preparedness and response. As COPECO usually works at the local level through committees of local officials, this agreement breaks new ground, recognizing the value of engaging local community networks in emergency preparedness and response planning. Similarly SEPLAN is providing spatial planning inputs to WAGUCHA's risk mapping and resilience planning processes. While WAGUCHA identifies and accesses land for developing livelihoods (e.g., Moringa plantations) based on SAG inputs and support, SEPLAN ensures that this project does not increase disaster risks and complies with land use plans.

Conclusion

WAGUCHA's formal agreements and collaborative arrangements with national governmental agencies demonstrate its recognized role as a key stakeholder with expertise in building disaster resilience. Its convening of the Inter-Agency Partnership is a unique and valuable accomplishment, getting ministries to coordinate and communicate their approach to local community resilience priorities. This, in turn, enables grassroots communities' access to decentralized resources to diversify their livelihoods.

These government-community partnerships catalyze new ways of operating. COPECO's certification of community volunteers indicates a shift from working solely through government agencies to broader partnerships that incorporate community leadership. Local governments are seeking out grassroots leader-led trainings and establishing partnership agreements with grassroots women to formulate action plans. These new approaches indicate that local and national governments are increasingly seeing grassroots leaders as expert practitioners whose collaboration is essential for developing more effective, robust climate and disaster resilience strategies.

SUMMARY

Scaling up strategies to combat drought in Maharashtra



During a visit to Bihar by Maharashtra and Tamilnadu women. (Photo: Swayam Shikshan Prayog)

Swayam Shikshan Prayog

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In drought-affected districts of the western Indian state of Maharashtra, women's agricultural groups have been eager to learn more about low input, adaptive farming to ensure food security. These women's groups have persuaded government institutions—Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK)¹³ and the Agricultural University—to recognize women as farmers. This recognition entitles women to training and technical assistance to promote low-input, sustainable agriculture, which they previously were unable to access. To apply adaptive farming techniques, women have negotiated for small plots of land to demonstrate adaptive farming techniques, which have increased farm productivity, incomes and food security in the face of recurring drought. The women's agricultural groups have also worked closely with elected village councils and district officials to rehabilitate or construct local water harvesting structures on their land through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

¹³ KVKs are a network of over 600 agricultural training and research centers under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. KVK provides vocational training to practicing farmers, students, and field level extension functionaries.

Introduction

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), meaning Self Education for Empowerment, is a learning and development organization that empowers grassroots women to access social and economic opportunities by providing technical support, promoting women's entrepreneurship and facilitating institutional partnerships. This movement of women's self-help groups dates back to the reconstruction process following the 1993 earthquake in Maharashtra, after which SSP mobilized grassroots women's groups to take public leadership roles in the government-led, self-help housing repair and strengthening program. This catalyzed the participation of large numbers of women who then began to collectively address their long-term development concerns. Today, SSP partners with 25 grassroots women's federations comprising more than 100,000 members across seven states, working on development concerns including improving access to health care, upgrading water and sanitation, and scaling up women's enterprise.

Mobilizing women farmers, mapping risks and promoting adaptive farming

Four consecutive years of drought across the arid Marathwada and Vidharba regions of Maharashtra compelled communities to search for solutions to acute water shortages, falling agricultural productivity and food insecurity. The widespread cultivation of sugarcane as a cash crop in the region has lowered the water table, and the high use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has depleted the soil.

Sakhi Women's Federation is a coalition of self-help groups, facilitated by NGO partner SSP. In 2011, the Federation responded to drought conditions by mobilizing 3,000 women farmers in 100 villages across the three districts of Osmanabad, Nanded and Washim in Maharashtra, forming Krishi Mahila Mandals – women's agricultural groups. After mapping disaster risks and vulnerabilities in 30 villages across three districts, the groups prioritized the need to revive sustainable, low cost agriculture practices, improve infrastructure, water availability, nutrition and health and strengthen livelihoods. SSP then supported women farmers through Huairou Commission's Community Resilience Fund¹⁴, financing grassroots women to address these concerns. The Sakhi Women's Federation managed this fund, using it as a revolving fund to promote low-input based agriculture, multiple cropping with water-efficient plant varieties and germination of local seeds. Women mainly grew vegetables and pulses for household consumption and sold the surplus. The low input techniques reduced overall cultivation costs and reduced the need to buy hybrid seeds.

¹⁴ The Community Resilience Fund is a flexible financial mechanism capitalized by the Huairou Commission through donor grants that channels money to grassroots women's organizations, enabling them to prioritize resilience building actions, take action and engage partners to sustain and scale up community resilience efforts.

Partnering with agriculture research and training centers

At the same time, grassroots women's federation leaders approached the KVK officials, to convince them of the importance of recognizing women, previously perceived as farm labor, as farmers in their own right. Impressed by women's accounts of adaptive farming initiatives, agricultural scientists visited their villages. On witnessing women's adaptive farming initiatives, KVKs agreed to train women farmers on soil testing, water testing, seed preservation, use of drought resistant seeds and land mulching. Once they were trained, women from 100 households began germinating their own local seeds, which were used to cultivate more than 200 acres of land. This resulted in substantial savings as seed prices had increased threefold over the past few years.

Negotiating for land to implement adaptive farming

Women negotiated with their families to set aside small half-acre plots of land to test their new organic farming practices such as bio-composting, vermi-composting and seed preservation. They adopted mixed cropping to simultaneously increase their yields, restore soil fertility, and optimize water utilization. With this, combined with organic and collective farming methods, the women farmers increased productivity over the next two years. Women also secured drip irrigation equipment and other equipment at subsidized rates from the government, thus further reducing water consumption. Women were able to reduce cultivation costs by 30 percent. Additional training in sales and marketing strategies from Sakhi Social Enterprise Network¹⁵ allowed women farmers to sell their surplus produce, raising their incomes by 25 percent. Encouraged by the positive results, women asked their families for more land and requested more training from KVK and other institutions. More landless women also began to collectively lease land and expanded their organic farming practices. Several men joined this effort, reducing sugarcane cultivation, which helped to increase ground water levels in these villages.

Accessing the government's Social Protection program to build local infrastructure

Soon after the adaptive farming initiative began, women from Washim and Osmanabad districts mobilized their communities to map their land holdings to identify water sources and water harvesting structures during a severe drought. They held dialogues with district officials to explore solutions. Upon learning how the National Rural Employment Guarantee

¹⁵ The Sakhi Social Enterprise Network was established by SSP to seed entrepreneurship among underserved segments of society, through awareness, training and skill building programs. Currently operational in 5 districts of Maharashtra, SSEN trains women in setting up micro-business and provides viable job skills to low-income youth and women.

Scheme (NREGS)¹⁶ could be utilized to build or repair water harvesting structures, they applied to village councils to participate in this program. Women regularly followed up with district and sub-district officials to ensure that their applications were received and registered. This was part of reducing corruption as women realized that village councils would try to promote projects proposed by politically influential community members.

Through NREGS, over 300 water bodies have been recharged in the Osmanabad, Nanded and Washim districts. Water levels in various water bodies have increased by an average of two meters in more than 40 villages as a result of these efforts. In addition to improving local infrastructure to mitigate effects of severe drought, 450 women farmers de-silted reservoirs and used the extracted silt to increase soil fertility in their farms, an innovative technique they learned from KVK. More than 750 acres of land have been enriched in this way. Since then, at least seven of the women's groups have accessed various government programs, gaining agricultural loans and equipment. And with free saplings from the Forestry Department, women have planted 7,000 trees to reduce soil erosion.

Grassroots-led transfers, training and awareness-raising

Women's agricultural groups have been steadily scaling up climate resilience strategies, disseminating their experience through awareness-raising and transferring specific practices to grassroots women in and outside of Maharashtra. In November 2011, farming practices introduced by women in 10 villages were adopted in another 30 villages. In March 2012, SSP facilitated a four-day training workshop on low cost sustainable farming practices for 20 grassroots women trainers. These 20 trainers have since trained 1,230 women farmers in 41 villages. At least 1,500 women farmers are now sowing local seeds for two crops each year. Peer learning exchanges organized in 2012 and 2013 led to awareness raising and practice transfers to women farmers in Bihar and Tamil Nadu. From this, more than 2,000 women across these two states have adopted similar strategies.

Grassroots women are increasingly recognized as experts in adaptive farming and are being formally appointed as trainers by government agencies. The KVK in Osmanabad District appointed 10 women farmers as trainers, who have effectively transferred sustainable farming, organic, bio-composting and local seed preservation practices to neighboring villages. In 2014, Osmanabad and Washim District administrations requested grassroots women's federations to conduct awareness campaigns on drought management as a result of which two hundred grassroots women leaders are currently organizing campaigns in 70 villages on water conservation, water efficient crops, and recharging water sources.

Despite these successes, women continue to face difficulties accessing bank credit as they do not own collateral such as land. While governments see the value of grassroots

¹⁶ This program guarantees 100 days of employment annually, to each household living below the poverty line to create or repair local infrastructure, which includes water-harvesting structures.

women promoting sustainable, low input adaptive farming practices that address both food and incomes, there are no formal incentives that promote organic, sustainable climate resilient agricultural practices.

Conclusion

By demonstrating their commitment and creativity, women's vegetable farming groups have shifted the perception that they are merely labor on family farms. Agricultural Universities and KVKs that tend to work primarily with male farmers were convinced to provide training and technical assistance to women's farming groups, who are using their new skills and knowledge to secure food and incomes in drought hit communities. In engaging both village councils and district officials to access the NREGS to rehabilitate water sources, grassroots women are also playing a vital role in increasing transparency and accountability, ensuring effective delivery and optimal utilization of this social protection program. Grassroots women's initiative and leadership has compelled government agencies to recognize these women as knowledgeable farmers who are not only practicing sustainable agriculture, but also have the capacity to train and disseminate strategies that are crucial to the survival of drought-hit communities.

For further information:

1. Yonder, A, and S. Akcar, and P. Gopalan. 2005. *Women's Participation in Disaster Relief and Recovery*. New York SEEDS/Population Council, 2005.
2. Swayam Shikshan Prayog. 2013. "Building Women's Leadership and Fostering Collaborations for Community Disaster Resilience: Process Innovations and Case Studies from India." World Bank GFDRR report on Community Resilience. <http://www.disasterwatch.net/resources/WB-SSP-resilience-report2013.pdf>

SUMMARY

Sustainable livelihoods for small farmers in Brazil's Sertão



Members of cooperatives selling their produce. (Photo: Jorge Henrique)

Adapta Sertão

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Reduced rainfall and rising temperatures in the poorest regions of semi-arid, northeast Brazil are reducing agricultural productivity and incomes on family farms. The Adapta Sertão Project facilitated by the Human Development Network (*Rede Desenvolvimento Humano*, REDEH) has fostered a series of partnerships between six farmers' cooperatives and public, private, and donor institutions. These collaborations include municipalities, technical experts, universities, government, donors and a multilateral financial institution to develop, field test and consolidate a multi-dimensional adaptive farming strategy for small family owned farms. This basket of strategies has increased small farm productivity in more than 100 farms across 14 municipalities. The agroforestry production system *Modulo Agroclimatico Inteligente e Sustentavel* (MAIS), optimizes small farm production without overexploiting the natural resource base. By promoting a combination of animal rearing, agro-forestry, sustainable agriculture and irrigation technologies and the regeneration of *caatinga* (natural fodder), MAIS programs help farmers to stabilize incomes and productivity despite prolonged periods of drought.

Introduction

Adapta Sertão operates as a coalition of six farmers' cooperatives active in 14 municipalities¹ at the basin of Rio Jacuípe in Bahia. The semi-arid region in the northeastern state of Bahia is the poorest region in Brazil. Over-grazing has destroyed extensive pastoral lands and fluctuations in the availability of fodder mean that milk yields are low. Unpredictable rainfall destroys 70 to 90 percent of crops, while dry periods are lengthening and intensifying each year. The Government's response to this problem has been to build a network of processing units to add value to farm produce. But falling farm yields, irregular technical support, poor management, limited access to credit and markets have meant that the processing units have had limited impact on stabilizing agricultural productivity and farmers' incomes.

Experimenting with solutions to increase small farm productivity

Rede Desenvolvimento Humano was founded in 1990 to coordinate the Women's Action Agenda 21. It focuses on sustainable development, non-discriminatory education, and health and sexual reproductive rights. In 2003, REDEH initiated Adapta Sertão as a small pilot project to stabilize farm productivity in five sites in Valente Municipality. The project tested solar powered water pumps and drip irrigation to address water scarcity. By the following year, it was apparent that the costs of solar powered pumps made them uneconomic. However, a shift from flood irrigation to drip irrigation showed promising results, increasing productivity while lowering costs.

Scaling up strategies that work

In 2006, REDEH expanded the Adapta Sertão pilot to five sites in the adjacent Municipality of Pintadas, where local farmers and government had partnered for over ten years to improve farming families' living conditions. In the following years, with the support of the German Environmental Agency, REDEH expanded the pilot project to 40 sites, building a robust evidence base for drip irrigation and exploring mechanisms to replicate the technology. Farmers' cooperatives also set up retail stores to disseminate the new adaptive farming techniques and promote farm produce.

Building a robust evidence base and diversifying farm productivity

In 2011-12, with the support from the Brazilian National Research Foundation and funding from the Climate and Development Knowledge Network, Adapta Sertão partnered with the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies at the University of California San Diego and Centro Clima da Universidade Federal Rio de Janeiro¹⁷. The collaboration formed

¹⁷ Center for Integrated Studies on Environment and Climate Change, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

to collect and systematize drip irrigation data, quantifying its productivity impacts, and developing five-year projections of its impact on the local agricultural value chain. The links with these university research programs gave scientific credibility to this new model for sustainable agriculture emerging from the practices of farmers' cooperatives. At the same time, Adapta Sertão continued to test other adaptive strategies, such as balancing animal feed, producing fodder from lower quality water and processing local drought-resistant fruits, creating an expanding set of sustainable strategies to optimize farm productivity. Among other findings, research showed that farmers preferred investing in meat and dairy production, as this commanded higher prices than fruits and vegetables in the market.

To support scaling up and wider adaption of climate change adaptation strategies, REDEH has created regular forums for cooperative farmers and technical experts to share implementation strategies and results for practical problem solving. In one instance, Adapta Sertão is collaborating with Embrapa, the Brazilian Corporation of Agricultural Research, using their expertise in big farm agricultural technology to identify and test adaptation strategies for smaller scale, cooperative farms.

Consolidating and disseminating an integrated strategy and leveraging new partnerships

Given a growing set of proven strategies for sustainable production, support from the Climate Fund of the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment enabled Adapta Sertão to consolidate the different approaches into a Smart and Sustainable Agro-Climatic Model (*Modulo Agroclimatico Inteligente e Sustentavel*, MAIS) of adaptive farming. The partnership focused on promoting, testing and monitoring these practices, and how to balance the various components of MAIS - including milk and meat production as well as cultivation of fruit trees - across 100 farms. It also disseminated adaptive farming tools and technologies to hundreds more farmers, creating a network of retail stores managed by farmers' cooperatives. This rural retail network represents yet another innovation, providing a distribution mechanism for new technologies in rural areas where small farmers could not otherwise access technological innovations previously available only in cities. By 2017, REDEH plans to have MAIS operational in more than 700 farms.

Building on these initiatives, Adapta Sertão is also partnering with the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF). MIF's PROADAPT Program aims to improve the reliability of produce supply from small farmers to distribution channels¹⁸. The MIF partnership is also testing a pilot fund called AGRADAPT which works with Adapta Sertão's credit cooperative to build financial management capacity and provide credit, enabling farmers to buy tools and technologies to implement MAIS.

¹⁸ <http://www.fomin.org/en-us/HOME/News/Press-Releases/ArtMID/3819/ArticleID/1198/Farmers-reduce-climate-risks-in-impovertished-region-of-Brazil->

Smart and sustainable agro-climatic model (*Modulo Agroclimatico Inteligente e Sustentavel*) MAIS

The MAIS model starts by understanding the maximum number of animals that a farm can support to avoid over exploitation of the local resources and over-grazing. The local biome (*caatinga*) which is used for fodder needs to be restored in at least 20 percent of the area. The remaining portion of the farm is developed using agroforestry and agro-ecological principles. Subsequently, specialized technicians use specific MAIS principles and technologies to optimize the use of the local resources (water, land, vegetation, etc.). A sustainable farm management and organization plan is then developed with the farmer. Once the farmer agrees with the proposed project, the technician helps the farmer submit a micro-credit application to the local credit cooperative. When the credit is approved, the MAIS system is implemented through a staged process, nurtured over 3 to 5 years to show the full results. The result is a gradual change towards more sustainable agro-climatic practices in which yields are stabilized and fluctuations minimized even during more severe droughts lasting up to three years.

Conclusion

The innovation and the value of Adapta Sertão's work is internationally recognized, winning global awards such as the 2008 SEED Award and the 2014 Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Awards. The MAIS model has emerged as an innovative, climate-smart set of technologies, owned and developed by small holding farmers with the support of partner institutions. Through their partnerships, the farmers' cooperatives of Adapta Sertão have not only gained access to new tools, knowledge, technologies and credit previously unavailable to them, but also created a robust evidence base demonstrating MAIS as a viable, scalable model for adaptive farming. Out-migration has been significantly reduced. Partnerships with institutions such as Embrapa and IDB show that, despite their mandate to advance the development of low income and poor communities that are most vulnerable to the ill-effects of climate change, such as farmers in the Sertão, these institutions did not know how to reach and work with this constituency. Their partnership with the Adapta Sertão initiative enables them to reach smallholder farmers and learn how to enhance their productivity and security in the face of climate change.

SUMMARY

Rehabilitating eco-systems and decentralized decision making in Padang, Indonesia



Student of Secondary School 37 Teluk Kabung Selatan and the communities took the seedlings from the seeding area.

YAKKUM Emergency Unit

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Destruction of the mangrove forests on the Western Sumatra coast has eroded the natural barriers protecting coastal eco-systems and communities from storm surges and tsunamis. By demonstrating the effectiveness of a community-owned and managed mangrove rehabilitation process, the community disaster management task force of Sungai Pisang village in rural Padang influenced government agencies to change their rehabilitation strategy. This established the community's credibility, opening opportunities for dialogue with local government and enabling the community Task Force to effectively use decentralized planning mechanisms to rehabilitate a main access road. Encouraged by their success, the community is working to persuade the local government to include community analysis of vulnerabilities and priorities for action into the annual local plan and budget.

Introduction

YAKKUM Emergency Unit (YEU) was formed in 2001 as an NGO to organize effective community response to natural disasters in Indonesia. In addition to its work on large scale relief and recovery projects after major disasters, YEU now has more than a decade of experience with large scale disaster risk and recovery, including after the Aceh Nias Earthquake and Tsunami (2004), Java Earthquake (2006), Java Floods (2007), Mentawai Tsunami (2010), Manokwari Floods (2010), and the Mount Merapi eruption (2010). YEU has also been integrating disaster risk management into post-disaster recovery and reconstruction, helping communities develop and implement disaster management plans and facilitate community-government partnership initiatives in Aceh, Nias, Mentawai, Central-Java, Flores, Moluccas, Sumatra and West Papua. YEU also supports JARI, a countrywide network of more than 200 community-based organizations which focus on disaster management.

The community initiative and partnership discussed here is part of YAKKUM Emergency Unit's "Sustainable Disaster Risk Reduction and Mangrove Resource Management in West Sumatra Indonesia" Program, promoting coastal resource management to ensure disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation are integrated into governmental development programs at the district and village levels.

Sungai Pisang village, located in Bungus sub-district of Padang municipality in West Sumatra, faces the Indian Ocean. Community livelihoods depend primarily on fishing, farming, cattle rearing and trading. Cutting trees for fuel has destroyed the dense mangrove forest and the coastal ecology, resulting in depleted marine life, seawater intrusion and coastal erosion. Storms and floods have left village farms and homes severely damaged, forcing many families to relocate.

Identifying local priorities through vulnerability mapping

Through a community vulnerability and capacity mapping process facilitated by YEU in 2012, the Sungai Pisang Village Disaster Task Force identified growing threats to the security of local communities and resident livelihoods. These threats included increasing coastal erosion, more frequent typhoons, floods, whirlwinds, landslides and tidal waves, and environmental degradation caused by pollution, illegal logging and sand mining. The Village Disaster Task Force identified several priorities for actions, including mangrove reforestation, rehabilitation of the main access road, increasing access to clean water, improving access to public toilets, and waste management.

Facilitating a community-led approach to mangrove rehabilitation

The government's cash for work program failed to rehabilitate the mangroves and left the community discouraged and demoralized. YEU mobilized the community to try a new

approach, first identifying local mangrove experts in the community. With the Village Disaster Task Force, they conducted a survey to identify three different mangrove species, locations where soil was suitable for planting and techniques to ensure survival of the seedlings. The community experts and YEU organized trainings highlighting the economic and ecological benefits of mangroves, how to select and germinate seeds and manage mangrove nurseries. The Village Disaster Task Force organized a sub-group of 20 women to monitor the growth and survival of the seedlings. This process was very different from the government-led cash-for-work program, involving the community at different stages of planning, planting, nurturing and monitoring the mangroves, whereas the government program simply paid select individuals for planting mangrove seeds.

By November 2013, the initiative had a nursery of 12,000 mangrove seedlings. After five months, 7,000 of these seedlings were planted with broad community participation from members of Teluk Kabung Selatan sub-district, Fishery and Marine Office of Padang, students of Andalas University Padang, students of Junior School 37, the village mangrove group, and other local community members. Another 5,000 mangrove seedlings were kept in reserve.

Sungai Pisang is the first village in Padang to initiate a community-owned and managed mangrove rehabilitation program, setting a precedent for other villages and regions in the municipality. As a result of the village's successful incubation of local mangrove nurseries and its advocacy with municipal and provincial Fishery and Marine Departments, it will serve as a seed vendor for municipality-wide mangrove rehabilitation programs. This contributes to village economy as well as long term eco-system protection, as the local mangrove seedlings have a better chance of survival than those purchased from Bali, of which only 40% tend to survive.

As a result of this initiative, the Municipal Fishery and Marine Department, together with the village disaster task force, will collaborate to monitor development of the mangroves. There is a demand from other organizations to buy mangrove seedlings. The community will also receive government technical assistance on coral reef and forest conservation.

Using decentralized planning mechanisms to address community priorities

Collaboration on mangrove rehabilitation created opportunities for the community and local government to build a strong relationship and on-going dialogue. After officials saw the newly planted mangroves and held a public meeting, both communities and local governments realized the mutual benefits of dialogue and collaboration. Communities realized that local government could provide valuable information about government programs, resources and technical assistance to advance local development and disaster risk reduction priorities. Local officials, in turn, began to see the value of community knowledge and ownership, which was missing in the government's individual focused, cash-for-work approach to the mangrove rehabilitation.

Bringing community resilience priorities into local plans

Despite recognition of community ownership as crucial to sustained success, the government's transition away from a top-down approach has been slow. One effort to counter this is use of the decentralized participatory planning mechanism known as *musrenbang*, established by the Indonesian government in 2004. It is an annual consultative process at village, sub-village and district levels providing an opportunity for communities to articulate their needs and participate in local planning and agenda setting. For this process to be truly bottom-up, however, local communities must be well-organized, have the experience and confidence to represent their interests and priorities, and have strong credibility with the local government to influence local plans and budgets.

With the credibility well-established by its successful mangrove rehabilitation project, the Sungai Pisang Village Disaster Task Force effectively utilized *musrenbang* to improve an access road that is badly damaged and had been identified as a priority in the community risk mapping process. This road is key to safely evacuating communities in the event of emergencies and providing regular access to services and markets. The village local government accepted this as a priority and passed on the request for resources to the sub-district *musrenbang*, which endorsed the request. Consequently, the municipality has agreed to rehabilitate the road.

Through the *musrenbang*, the Village Disaster Task Force is also urging the local government to integrate the vulnerability and capacity mapping and community DRR plans into the government development plan. This would help to ensure that disaster risks and vulnerabilities are recorded and addressed in local development plans.

Conclusion

The success of the mangrove rehabilitation project in Sungai Pisang Village demonstrates the strengths of community-led programs and their potential for effective and efficient use of government resources. The village-government partnership rejuvenated an eco-system vital to community resilience and set a strong precedent for changing the government's top-down approach to rehabilitating mangroves. The community realized additional benefits in learning about the *musrenbang* decentralized planning process, enabling the village to fund a major road rehabilitation, improving everyday mobility and facilitating evacuation during emergencies.

COMPARING THE TWO APPROACHES TO MANGROVE REHABILITATION IN TELUK KABUNG SELATAN (SUNGAI PISANG)

Top-Down Approach	Community Approach
Short term benefits to individuals paid in cash for mangrove planting.	<p>Long term benefits to communities as the survival and growth of mangroves enhance community resilience. Benefits extend to demonstrating the importance of community organizing, community ownership and community-led collaboration with other stakeholders in effective natural resource management and resilience building.</p> <p>Benefits included improving relations with government to make the <i>musrenbang</i> (decentralized multi-stakeholder consultation mechanism for village planning) more effective, enabling communities to bring other disaster risk management priorities into the plan.</p>
Community role in planting seeds for pay.	Community role in surveying, planning, collecting seeds, keeping nurseries, transplanting and monitoring.
Location for mangrove planting decided by external organization	Local community mangrove experts and members identify land, types of mangrove and the seed varieties required for rehabilitation of mangroves.
No post-planting monitoring or maintenance activities to protect mangroves, left plants at risk from cows grazing the leaves and destruction by boat traffic.	20 people from the village disaster management task force of Sungai Pisang formed a monitoring team to check the plants weekly, replace dead ones and made agreements with fishermen to restrict boat traffic so as not to harm the mangrove plants.

SUMMARY

Protecting assets, health and food in Kenya



School tree planting program. (Photo: Shibuye Community Health Workers)

Shibuye Community Health Workers

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Shibuye Community Health Workers (SCHW) was first organized to address the needs of families affected by HIV/AIDS and to ensure the effective delivery of healthcare resources and services to poor communities. Being located in a predominantly agricultural region, however, women felt the need to address food, nutrition and livelihoods for the communities in general, and for the HIV/AIDS-affected families in particular. In response, SCHW experimented with organic farming techniques and offered practical solutions to government programs that usually serve large-scale cash crop farms. In addition, realizing that AIDs widows were often being evicted from their land, SCHW set up local village level multi-stakeholder platforms to protect vulnerable women's control over their land—the asset most crucial to their ability to withstand shocks. Today they are also in dialogue with the Ministry of Agriculture on questions of land tenure and agriculture, and engaging multiple national ministries to influence the county budget to reflect women's resilience priorities.

Introduction

Shibuye Community Health Workers is a grassroots women's organization founded in 1999 by a group of home-based caregivers in response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in their communities. Their goal is improve women's health and promote their access to health service. SCHW has more than 2000 members who are community health workers organized as self-help groups in 14 locations across Kakamega County. These grassroots groups are linked to similar groups across the country through a federation of grassroots organizations facilitated by GROOTS Kenya.

Making health systems accountable to grassroots women

A responsive and effective healthcare system is vital for poor communities, especially so when faced with epidemics or pandemics. Despite sizeable national and international resources earmarked for HIV/AIDS, however, necessary resources and services were not reaching the poor and vulnerable living in Kakamega County. In 2004-2005, SCHW began inviting provincial administrators, district officers and local chiefs to a dialogue forum where grassroots women conveyed the ineffectiveness and the lack of transparency of the Constituency AIDS Control Committees (CACCs). CACCs are the decentralized structures of the National AIDS Control Council (NACC) responsible for implementing and funding community driven responses to HIV/AIDS. The women, having impressed the government officials with their understanding of the NACC's Strategic Plan, offered to assess the CACC's structure for community level health services and to track local budgets allocated for the pandemic. Through subsequent face-to-face dialogue, SCHW brokered a partnership with the Shinyalu Division of CACC instrumental in getting funds to local communities. Grassroots women continue to provide feedback to officials to improve health service delivery to the poor and ensure that health clinics are properly stocked and staffed.

Building multi-stakeholder platforms to protect property rights

Land represents a major asset that enables households to withstand shocks including those resulting from disasters and climate change. In communities that are primarily agricultural, securing land is critical for basic survival. As caregivers of people affected by HIV/AIDS, SCHW members learned that widows and orphans who lost family members to HIV/AIDS were often illegally evicted from their lands. SCHW members collaborated with the GROOTS Kenya CBO network to form watchdog groups advocating for women's land rights and protecting the property rights of women and children with family members suffering from HIV/AIDS.

To organize the watchdog groups, grassroots women first investigate and map communities to identify households where women or orphans are facing eviction or threats

of eviction. These cases are presented to village elders, traditional chiefs and government officials to gain their support. The leaders and decision makers are then convened to play the watchdog role and resolve disputes. Each group is comprised of about 20 leaders, including tribal chiefs, government representatives, and women and orphans who have benefited from such interventions. The groups begin by educating communities on land rights, succession and inheritance laws and then mediate between the disputing parties to prevent evictions and ensure that property rights are restored. This initiative is part of a nation-wide initiative that has been scaled-up by GROOTS Kenya¹⁹.

Increasing food security through adaptive farming and advocacy

Safeguarding land and property is a step towards securing livelihoods, but it is not sufficient to secure health. As health workers and caregivers, the women of SCHW also know that antiretroviral drug therapy protocols require HIV/AIDS patients to eat regular, nutritious meals. When mapping their vulnerabilities and risks grassroots women realized their crops were increasingly affected by longer periods of drought and more frequent flooding. Thus women decided to promote sustainable organic farming to combat the adverse effects of increasing weather extremes. Learning from traditional farming practices of the elderly, women farmers undertook local seed preservation, soil conservation and food storage. Women also started to set aside demonstration plots on their lands to experiment with new adaptive farming techniques and train women in adaptive farming of food crops.

Grassroots-led dialogues with decision makers to leverage support

To gain the support of government agricultural programs, SCHW documented the findings from the community risk mapping exercises and shared them with government officials at a Local-to-Local dialogue meeting. This forum was the first opportunity for grassroots women to formally meet with ministry officials overseeing poverty reduction, agriculture, and the environment, and to their contributions and concerns around food security. Impressed by the work and accomplishments of women farmers, the Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Development agreed to link women's collective farming groups to its credit fund—the Women's Enterprise Fund. The Ministry of Agriculture agreed to provide technical support and training to women farmers. And three grassroots women were invited to join local agricultural committees; one was subsequently elected to join the poverty eradication committee. These were major accomplishments for SCHW as government agricultural

¹⁹ Gopalan, Prema, et al. "From Beneficiaries to Stakeholders: Grassroots Women's Groups Drive the Demand for Good Governance through Pro-Poor Development," Draft Discussion Paper for DFGG Learning Summit, World Bank (June 2-3, 2008). <http://huairou.org/sites/default/files/From%20Beneficiaries%20to%20Stakeholders.pdf>

programs and extension officers usually target men engaged in large-scale, cash crop farming, overlooking women who tend to do small scale, subsistence farming.

Increasing women's access to agricultural extension services

In May 2014 SCHW organized a dialogue and learning exchange between grassroots women and agricultural extension officers to discuss gaps in agricultural and land rights policies. SCHW formed farmers' groups and used demonstration plots to convene group training and technology sessions with government agricultural extension officers. Women then applied what they learned in their farms or backyards. Extension officers now regularly hold trainings at these plots at the request of women's groups. In addition, extension officers are disseminating new information and providing technical assistance to a larger number of farmers in more economical and efficient ways. Recognizing their creativity and contribution to food security, women farmers were supported by the Kenyan Government to participate in government organized agriculture exhibitions. This led USAID to contribute to farm inputs, including poultry, banana tissue culture, and a greenhouse for 100 households.

Together with the Kakamega Forest Conservation Association, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, the Kenya Forest Services, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, SCHW has influenced the 2014-2015 county budget to ensure that it reflects grassroots resilience priorities and responds to the needs of the communities living in disaster prone areas.

Despite their success in improving farms through adaptive farming techniques, grassroots women continue to be confronted with broader structural issues. As organic farming does not lead to high yields in the short term, the Ministry of Agriculture continues to promote heavy use of chemical fertilizer through subsidies, which the women farmers groups are trying to resist using.

Conclusion

SCHW's health care perspective informs their approaches to community-based resilience building. Their multi-dimensional approach with a diversity of local and national partners brings resources, knowledge, and expertise to bear, improving the everyday living conditions of poor communities while strengthening community capacity to deal with the shocks and stresses of disasters and climate change. Further, the community-government collaborations improve the accountability and transparency of government health systems and technical extension services, while also convening local platforms that enable vulnerable women and children to retain their land.

SUMMARY

Women and local government collaborate to build resilience in Nepal



Lumanti Support Group for Shelter in Katmandu.

Lumanti Support Group for Shelter

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Nepal is among the twenty countries in the world at the highest risk of disaster from floods, landslides and earthquakes. The Lumanti Support Group for Shelter in Kathmandu works with grassroots women’s organizations’ to upgrade settlement infrastructure to reduce these risks, facilitate their participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue, and collaborate with national and local governments. The resulting credibility for women’s organizations has earned them public roles in emergency preparedness, disaster risk awareness-raising, and seats on disaster management committees allocating resources for disaster risk reduction. Community-based monitoring by grassroots women’s CBOs has also increased government transparency and accountability in the delivery of water and sanitation services, reducing corruption and improving performance.

Introduction

The Lumanti Support Group for Shelter mobilizes impoverished communities in Nepal to organize and negotiate secure housing and basic services, promoting community-led upgrades of settlement infrastructure, improved access to water and sanitation, and community-based financing mechanisms. Lumanti has facilitated several grassroots women-led strategies for resilience and facilitated partnerships that have linked women's efforts to decentralized resources.

In 2009, Lumanti and members of the Cooperative Women's Federation joined in an effort to increase their awareness of disaster risk management policies. They initiated a dialogue with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), calling a multi-stakeholder workshop where national and municipal government officials, NGOs, and community leaders came together to share perspectives. As the MHA emphasized the urgent need to translate the National Disaster Management Strategy into local, concrete actions, the dialogue workshop catalyzed on-going dialogue among the Lumanti Group, its grassroots allies and local governments.

Traditionally, grassroots women's development work and leadership have tended to go unrecognized by governmental bodies. But in 2012, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development's "Local Disaster Risk Management Planning Guidelines" specifically recognized the value of engaging multiple stakeholders in disaster risk management planning. The guidelines direct local governments to form Disaster Management Committees at district, municipal, Village Development Committee (VDC), and ward levels, and to include four representatives from the Red Cross, NGOs, or community organizations. This created a place at the table for local communities and women's grassroots constituencies in local agenda-setting bodies. Increasingly, women's organizations have taken on public roles, raising their profile and resulting in membership on the local disaster management committees.

Community-government partnerships to improve access to water

In Kaski District in the mountains of Nepal, increasing average temperatures and drought are drying up local ponds. For women there, water scarcity means that they travel longer distances to collect water. As a result, community health and hygiene suffer, as does food production. The situation is further exacerbated by poor road access in their hilly terrain.

The grassroots women's group of Sundar Pokhari in Sarangkot village conducted a risk and vulnerability mapping exercise, identifying water scarcity as a major concern²⁰ and

²⁰ The community's vulnerability mapping exercise was funded by the Huairou Commission's Community Resilience Fund.

advocating the Village Development Committee to rehabilitate a nearby pond. Impressed by the women's initiative and mobilization of community funds, labor, and construction materials, the Committee granted the community NRS 100,000 (approximately US\$1000), assigned technical personnel to advise the women's group on pond rehabilitation and maintenance²¹, and provided additional support when an interruption in funding stalled pond rehabilitation. Women's access to water has improved significantly since completion of the works, reducing their time spent collecting water for domestic use and enabling women to maintain kitchen gardens for growing food. Based on their successful collaboration, the Sarangkot VDC invited the women's group to join the District Disaster Management Committee.

The Sundar Pokhari partnership model has been similarly successful in other communities. In Thankot village, grassroots women are part of the Disaster Management Committee, with NRS 50,000 (approximately US\$500) granted by the VDC for disaster risk management activities. And in Butwal Municipality, grassroots women's groups have successfully advocated for local government support for the construction of a disaster management center.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships for earthquake safety in Kirtipur Municipality

Multi-stakeholder partnerships have also granted grassroots women a central role in earthquake safety efforts. A partnership in Kirtipur Municipality, supported by Oxfam-Great Britain, brings together Tribhuvan University, the Lumanti Support Group for Shelter, the Kirtipur Municipality and Kirtipur Women's Network. Tribhuvan University provided land for earthquake evacuation centers at 83 locations identified by the government. Kirtipur community leaders worked with volunteers and municipalities to drill bore wells to ensure a clean, safe water supply and to store materials required to rapidly construct emergency toilets. In Kirtipur, 134 community members from seven wards were trained in the construction, operation and maintenance of emergency sanitation facilities. Over 1,200 volunteers from local communities have been trained in first-aid and search and rescue.

Women's empowerment forums were also convened to educate grassroots women on earthquake risk and emergency response plans. The Kirtipur Municipality quickly realized that they should tap local leadership and awareness-raising capacity, appointing local women from each of the seven wards to be trained on disaster risk awareness and to disseminate preparedness and evacuation plans in their respective wards. Fourteen additional grassroots facilitators have been trained to undertake awareness-raising roles focused on water and sanitation concerns during emergencies.

²¹ Bishnu Paudel, Chair, Sarangkot, during an interview with Priya Pillai, from Best Practices Foundation in January 2013 as part of the Huairou Commission's action research project, "What Communities Want: Putting Community Resilience Priorities on the Agenda for 2015."

In addition, the Kirtipur Women’s Network has been offered a place on the DMC. Members of this DMC have pressed the municipality to use disaster management funds not only for relief but also for risk reduction and preparedness. Following dialogue and consultation with the DMC, the municipality allocated funds to run a disaster risk-awareness campaign, emergency preparedness training for women, and technical trainings on safe construction for skilled and semi-skilled labor such as engineers and masons. Community leaders and local government agreed to prioritize rehabilitating the traditional water tanks in Kirtipur to address water supply concerns and ensure water availability to fight fires. Moreover, the official plan document for the municipality now includes its intention to engage multiple stakeholders in its development planning processes.

Community-based monitoring of water and sanitation services

Poor water and sanitation services are an everyday problem for women and families, leading to health risks especially when exacerbated by heavy rains and flooding. In an anti-corruption initiative supported by UNDP in 2013²², the Lumanti Support Group for Shelter worked with grassroots women to test a social accountability strategy on Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) including a WASH Report Card measuring performance. Building on Citizen’s Forums in four municipalities, the Lumanti Group focused on supporting women’s leadership in Thankot VDC in the Kathmandu Valley.

Community focus group discussions in Thankot identified key obstacles to accessing water and sanitation – lack of drinking water, unequal distribution of water services, drainage and waste management problems, and corruption. Nine ward-level local committees mobilized around the issue and learned to analyze public budgets and water and sanitation services, in order to administer the WASH Report Card. More than 240 women and men participated in mapping WASH-related service providers and institutions, collecting data in nine wards and holding community conversations linking delivery of water and sanitation to good governance and transparency.

The new information served as the basis for community dialogue with the Thankot VDC Secretary and the Water Supply Committee. As a result, communities are seeing noticeable improvements in garbage collection and the quality of drinking water, and a reduction in the incidence of water borne diseases. The VDC has also made it policy to formally appoint a five-member community monitoring committee to reduce corruption and increase transparency, publicly displaying government budgets and public programs and consulting grassroots women on local planning. The local government has agreed to work with local communities to develop joint plans for improving access to water and sanitation and a

²² This is part of the Transparency and Accountability Initiative of the Huairou Commission supported by UNDP.

district-wide program to address open defecation, and at present, four grassroots women are engaged in the ward level budget planning.

Conclusion

In Nepal, grassroots women's organizations are taking steps to identify priorities for reducing disaster impacts as well as improving people's everyday lives. Their proactive approach and leadership in awareness-raising and monitoring have been recognized and valued by government officials, reflecting the Federal Government's directive to include CBO representatives in local disaster management committees and budgets. Governments have formally appointed women to local decision-making bodies, joint planning processes, and public roles in promoting DRR, and budget allocations are increasingly informed by priorities set by women's groups. In addition, the social accountability process initiated by local communities is already showing results as local governments deliver services more effectively and include grassroots women in their planning and budgeting. The benefits of these partnerships are mutual and far reaching. Governments can ensure that their programs, plans, policies and services reach the communities most affected by disasters and climate change. Grassroots women's groups advance development priorities and practices that protect them from adverse impacts of disasters and position them as real partners in advancing climate and disaster resilience.



ABOUT GFDRR The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) helps high-risk, low-income developing countries better understand and reduce their vulnerabilities to natural hazards, and adapt to climate change. Working with over 300 partners—mostly local government agencies, civil society, and technical organizations—GFDRR provides grant financing, on-the-ground technical assistance to mainstream disaster mitigation policies into country-level strategies, and a range of training and knowledge sharing activities. GFDRR is managed by the World Bank and funded by 25 donor partners.

GFDRR's Inclusive Community Resilience program facilitates and fosters community-led disaster and climate risk management for more resilient societies and reduced losses. The program aims to strengthen community level resilience at a large scale by leveraging country investment programs that put resources directly in the hands of poor households and communities; supports civil society and citizen engagement in disaster and climate risk management efforts for greater accountability and impact; and supports innovations, knowledge and learning to promote the voice of vulnerable communities in national and global policy dialogue and disaster risk management.



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