



From fragility to resilience: enabling vulnerable people to cope with shocks

Lessons learned and perspectives from the side of development cooperation

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Some international guidance on resilience...

- The ***sustainable development goals (SDGs)*** provide the most prominent orientation for ADC, e.g.
 - **Target 1.5.** ...build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.
- The ***EU approach to resilience***: Learning from food security crisis
 - **Focus on three key components** – anticipating crisis by assessing risks (with focus on vulnerable groups), focusing on prevention and preparedness, enhancing crisis response...
- FAO applies resilience specifically to food security – emphasizing stability
 - **Implicitly considers ex-ante and ex-post actions** – reducing risks of households (i.e. reducing vulnerability) and assisting them to cope after crisis

Vulnerability - Resilience

These “concepts” are strongly linked:

- ***Vulnerability*** can be defined as the ***diminished capacity*** of an individual or group to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of natural or man-made hazards.
- Development thinking has to be informed by an ***understanding*** of
 - ***how*** people fall into crisis
 - ***who*** is vulnerable
 - ***when, where*** and ***why***...
- ***Resilience*** is the ***ability*** of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks.

Working in fragile regions...

- Most development cooperation takes place in regions facing “***protracted or recurrent crisis***”, e.g. Horn of Africa and Sahel region
 - vulnerability is linked to (semi)arid lands, (agro)pastoral systems...
 - recurrent droughts leading to famines...
 - marginalization of specific groups, displacement of people...
 - local conflicts based on unequal access and share of resources (e.g. land)
- ⇒ competition for scarce resources and vulnerability is increasing!
- ***Improve linkages*** between short-term (reducing impact on vulnerable groups) and long-term interventions (addressing structural causes of vulnerability)
- ***Enhancing resilience at household and community level*** – requires a systemic approach...

Key components of resilience...

- ***High level of diversity***, including ecological diversity, diversity of risk management and livelihood strategies...
- ***Capacity to learn*** – developing new solutions, new coping strategies based on local knowledge...
- ***Effective (local) governance, institutions and control mechanism*** – governments need to be in touch with local realities and need of the people...
- ***Preparedness planning and readiness*** – anticipation of shocks / crises and capability to manage change processes...
- ***Equity and inclusion*** – in terms of participation in decision-making, access and benefits...
- ***Shared social values and ethics*** – allow agreement and distribution of resources during crisis

Challenges and open questions...

- ***In-depth problem / vulnerability analysis*** – limitations in time and resources...
- ***Targeting the poor and vulnerable*** – more demanding (less visible and articulated, more difficult to reach), existing biases and power relations...
- How to ***best strengthen resilience?*** – not sufficient evidence on good / successful approaches, on impacts...
- How to ***measure resilience?*** – analysing progress from different perspectives



Thank you for your attention!