



# Lessons on disaster resilience programming in Pakistan

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## Question

- *What lessons have been learned on resilience programming in Pakistan?*
- *What has worked best, and are there take-aways in terms of strategic framework and approach, sectoral focus, target populations, and operating models?*

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# 1. Summary

This rapid literature review finds that lessons drawn from disaster resilience programmes in Pakistan are focused on the best ways to co-ordinate between different resilience work in different sectors. This can be difficult because of the number of NGOs with different sectoral expertise, short time frames for intervention, and the differing capacities of levels of Pakistani government. More generally, although the benefits of linking disaster risk reduction (DRR) to climate change adaptation (CCA) and development work are advocated in many policies, the fact that they are often undertaken by different actors limits synergies. The report also finds that most DRR work is focused on reducing risk from hazards rather than social vulnerabilities.

Pakistan is vulnerable to climate change and a range of natural disasters. Following the earthquake in 2005 and floods in 2010, the Pakistani government and international donors have sought to increase the country's resilience to natural hazards.

This literature review focuses on disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts, as these constitute a significant portion of the resilience work in Pakistan. It first defines resilience, DRR and the related concept of CCA, as these all aim to improve resilience. It then surveys lessons learned in implementing resilience and DRR programmes in Pakistan. It focuses on lessons relating to sectoral focus, target populations, as well as strategic framework and operating models. It is mainly based on evaluations written by NGOs, UN bodies and international financial institutions. NGO reports are typically focused on specific programmes, although some point to broader features of the landscape for resilience programming in Pakistan. Academic papers charting the trends and issues in resilience programming have also been consulted.

It is widely agreed that multiple sectors need to be addressed to foster resilience effectively. Covid-19 has emphasised the importance of considering different types of shocks together, but also highlighted the difficulties of co-ordinating between organisations with different sectoral expertise. Addressing the whole range of sectors such as health, livelihoods, nutrition, financial instruments, WASH,<sup>1</sup> shelter and other sectors cannot be achieved by any one non-governmental organisation (NGO) or government department. Co-ordination is therefore required to ensure that resilience to a range of shocks is built, and to prevent duplication or gaps in implementation. Many analyses focus on the role of the government, international bodies, or NGO forums in setting standards, gathering data, and co-ordinating and overseeing DRR work. Lessons related to the co-ordination of responses include:

- The need to ensure clarity between roles of different government bodies and avoid overlapping Differences in capacities and goals between national and local government.
- The need to build capacity in Pakistan's local government, which is often responsible for implementing DRR but lacks funds and know-how.
- The potential benefits of government bodies in providing oversight and co-ordination between different NGOs and levels of government.
- Co-ordination forums can help NGOs to share best practice and avoid duplication or gaps.

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<sup>1</sup> Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

The literature also discusses literature related to the positioning of and links between different strands of resilience programming. Findings include:

- there is consensus in the literature for linking DRR with climate change adaptation (CCA) because of the overlap between the two. However, there are also some potential downsides to linking the two, including a potential focus on natural hazards over social vulnerability, and a lack of attention to disaster issues not linked to climate change.
- Longer-term resilience work should also consider economic factors that can affect resilience, such as the development of value chains or new technologies such as mobile phones.
- However, the literature notes that responses from the national government and NGOs have tended to focus on shorter-term post-disaster work more than preventative work or long-term strategies.
- Links between DRR and CCA and development are limited, despite widespread promotion of their benefits, notably improved coherence between programmes and better use of resources.

Some reports also point to trends in how resilience is understood and acted on in programmes.

- DRR can take the form of, on the one hand, improving physical and organisational structures to better withstand shocks, as well as avoiding hazards, and on the other, addressing social factors that make some groups more vulnerable. However, resilience programming in Pakistan largely focuses on the first kind of DRR.
- While it is widely recognised that DRR programmes working at the community level need to consider issues of power and exclusion, there are sometimes barriers to including groups such as women in conservative areas of Pakistan, and NGOs do not always conduct the necessary analysis. Some gender policy developed by government bodies is superficial.

## 2. Background

### Definitions

Resilience is defined as 'the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management'.<sup>2</sup> In disaster risk reduction (DRR), resilience can take the form of reducing exposure to hazards. It can also focus on addressing the social, economic and political factors that make some groups in a population more vulnerable to hazards.

The United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) defines disaster risk reduction (DRR) as actions 'preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.preventionweb.net/disaster-risk/concepts/resilience/>

development'.<sup>3</sup> DRR work can include: adaptations to buildings and building standards, changes to crops, training for communities and civil servants, financial instruments and organisations such as insurance or loan societies, and spreading best practice in DRR and early warning systems, among others.

This Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) defines climate change adaptation (CCA) as: 'the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate change and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects' (quoted in OECD, 2020). The PRISE<sup>4</sup> research consortium defines the related concept of climate-resilient economic development as:

the full range of evolutions undertaken by the economy and by society towards sustainable development. This is characterised by a shift towards sectors that boost inclusive and adaptable growth, and a gain of productivity within sectors and that enables all aspects of the economic system (i.e. the means of producing, exchanging and distributing goods and services) to avoid, absorb and adapt to climate impacts. This increase in growth and productivity must be attained without putting extensive pressure on natural assets and without generating negative environmental spill overs that cannot be internalised. All in society must share the benefits of this growth and productivity and have access to opportunities (Jobbins et al., 2018, p. 6).

## Institutional arrangements

Pakistan is vulnerable to a range of hazards including floods, landslides, earthquakes, cyclones and extreme temperatures (Shah, 2013, p. 18).<sup>5</sup> Costs from disasters between 2010 and 2020 are estimated at around USD 18 billion (World Bank, 2020). A number of DRR plans and programmes have been put in place since the earthquake in 2005, which killed around 100,000 and floods in 2010, which left millions homeless.<sup>6</sup>

Pakistan has a disaster risk framework, which has been expanded since the 2000s. Pakistan established a national disaster management commission (NDMC) in 2006. A national disaster management authority (NDMA) was formed to implement policies. A national disaster risk policy was developed in 2013. A summary of government legislation and policies can be seen in Table 1.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster-risk-reduction>

<sup>4</sup> Pathways to resilience in semi-arid economies

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.preventionweb.net/countries/pak/data/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/kashmir-earthquake-october-8-2005-impacts-pakistan>;  
<https://www.dec.org.uk/articles/pakistan-floods-facts-and-figures>

Table 1. National disaster and climate risk reduction policies, plans and legislation in Pakistan

Implementation	Legislation/policy	Scope	Purpose
<b>Government Of Pakistan</b>	The Calamities Act (1958)	National	To guide the state's action during emergencies with a focus on response and relief
<b>Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA)</b>	ERRA Act 2011 (enforced as an ex-post facto law from July 1st, 2007)	National	To rehabilitate the affected regions and to establish an institutional framework for undertaking reconstruction and development work after the 2005 earthquake.
<b>National Disaster Management Authority</b>	National Disaster Management Act (2010)	National, Provincial, Districts	To lay down a comprehensive framework for DRM, covering all phases of the disaster management cycle (replacing the DM ordinance of 2009)
<b>National Disaster Management Authority</b>	National Disaster Risk Management Framework (2007-2012)	National, Provincial, Districts	Intended to identify guiding principles and priorities for disaster risk reduction
<b>National Disaster Management Commission</b>	National Disaster Management Plan (2012-2022)	National, Provincial, Districts	To guide and mainstream institutional and technical DRM priorities, in recognition of the needs of pre-disaster phases.
<b>National Disaster Management Authority</b>	National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (2013)	National, Provincial, Districts	To outline priorities <sup>[1]</sup> and directions for risk reduction from a proactive perspective, with a special emphasis on prevention, mitigation and preparedness
<b>National Disaster Management Authority</b>	National Disaster Management Plan Implementation Road Map (2016-2030)	National, Provincial, Districts	Sets up priority activities <sup>[1]</sup> for the period of 2016-2030, with a focus on multi-hazard risk assessments, capacity building, community resilience and raising awareness.
<b>National Disaster Management Authority</b>	The National Disaster Response Plan (2019)	National, Provincial, Districts	Outlines the framework for disaster response based on identified roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders

Source: UNDRR/ADPC, 2019, p. 16

## 3. Lessons

### Covid-19

A recent analysis of disaster preparedness policy in the Asia-Pacific region in the light of Covid-19 points to the **lack of multi-sector planning and co-ordination (UNDRR, 2020)**. It argues that most strategies focus particularly on certain hazards prevalent on those countries. They therefore **ignore trans-border problems like Covid-19**. They tend to consider biological hazards as consequences of other hazards. They also **focus on hazards as opposed to vulnerabilities**. Risk management plans should therefore consider the possibility of health and natural disasters occurring at the same time. Sectoral plans should be aligned with disaster risk plans (UNDRR, 2020).

The report asserts that 'effective risk reduction<sup>[1]</sup> is only possible if all relevant threats are considered and mitigated against', meaning that multi-sector cooperation is needed (UNDRR, 2020, p. 4). 'COVID-19 is a practical example of a disaster that could not have been managed by ministries of health alone, despite being a health emergency. This applies to the management of all disasters, and becomes even more significant when it comes to the prevention of disasters and disaster risk' (UNDRR, 2020, pp. 25–26). **Strategies refer to multi-sectoral governing mechanisms, but 'rarely detail the roles and responsibilities of the respective sectors in implementing the strategies' (UNDRR, 2020, p. 9)**. However, the report does not discuss Pakistan specifically.

A United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) report highlights the danger of **cascading risks** (UN ESCAP, 2020). In 2021, Covid-19 outbreaks are likely to occur at the same time as natural hazards, which will create new risks and has the potential to push many into poverty. It recommends **monitoring of both climatic and pandemic data**. A risk strategy outlining the impact of both kinds of disaster and the variable levels of vulnerability will be required. In terms of addressing these vulnerabilities, it argues that managing climate risk is key. Stimulus money to address the pandemic can be used to climate-proof land and water resources. Social protection is a way to deal with cascading risks. The vulnerable can be better targeted using big data systems, provided privacy and bias issues can be overcome.

### DRR and climate change adaptation

**DRR shares aims and approaches with climate change adaptation (CCA)**. Both seek to identify, reduce and adapt to hazards. CCA focuses on adaptations to existing or predicted climate change. DRR is broader as it includes all kinds of hazards, including biological, environmental, geological, hydro-meteorological and technological hazards, although it tends to focus on sudden onset hazards in practice (Kazmi, 2016, p. 4; OECD, 2020).

It is argued that the two can be linked, and also be linked to social protection, as DRR, CCA and social protection all aim to reduce the effect of shocks on individuals and groups, and their ability to withstand and bounce back (Davies et al., 2013). Davies et al (2013) argue that the three programme types work separately but would benefit from working together. Examples (not specific to Pakistan) of work that links DRR and CCA can include altering crop strains, erosion protection and early warning systems (Begum et al., 2014, pp. 368–369).

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,<sup>7</sup> the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda all contain DRR and CCA goals (OECD, 2020). Platforms such as the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction and UNDRR also argue that a coherent approach on CCA and DRR is useful (Begum et al., 2014, p. 369; OECD, 2020).

However, in practice the Paris and Sendai agreements are often implemented separately. In national contexts, they are often implemented by different government ministries; have different funding structures which make it hard to link the two; lack data on sub-national risks; and are shaped by different perceptions, which CCA coming from longer-term planning and DRR often arising from humanitarian response (OECD, 2020).

The benefits of linking the two include (OECD, 2020):

- Better use of resources as duplication and overlaps between programmes can be avoided.
- A more coherent agenda in the long term.

The drawbacks are (OECD, 2020):

- It can detract attention from particular issues, such as disasters, that fall under only one agenda.
- Focusing on climate change can obscure the more directly human factors behind disaster risk, such as social vulnerability and exposure.

The OECD (2020) recommends that the two should be integrated 'on a continuum, from informal to strategic to systematic'.

Pakistan has a number of policies that link with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Climate Agreement or the Sustainable Development Goals (UNDRR/ADPC, 2019, p. 20). However, the literature shows relatively few links between the two in South Asia. One review shows limited convergence between CCA and DRR goals in South Asia and that 'legal and institutional frameworks to support integration of CCA and DRR are sorely lacking' (Seidler et al., 2018). A 2013 review of social protection, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation programmes in South Asia shows the challenges of integrating them (Davies et al., 2013). It finds almost no examples of integration in Pakistan.

## Synthesis of lessons and national-level analysis

**A 2013 review of community based disaster risk management programmes in Pakistan highlights a number of lessons** (Combaz, 2013). These include:

- A multi-hazard focus (including secondary hazards such as landslides after seismic activity) as part of multi-sectoral interventions is seen to be necessary to address all aspects of resilience and vulnerability.

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<sup>7</sup> A framework outlining priorities for disaster risk reduction, adopted by the UN in 2015.

- Quality of programming - the optimum use of local resources, transparency, accountability, respect for rights, knowledge management, as well as identifying spoilers, and monitoring and evaluation, are all identified as aspects of quality programmes.
- The need for 'meaningful engagement' with communities over long time periods and in a way that is sensitive to culture. The building of trust and the use of discussion platforms are important.
- The inclusion of all social groups is important. It can be difficult to involve women in some regions so tactics such as the use of gender-segregated groups can help. Gender analysis needs to be integrated into responses so that inequalities are not perpetuated by reconstruction efforts.
- Government leadership and ownership is important. Linkages between different levels of governance are also needed for effective programming.
- Co-operation between various institutions and stakeholders and the effective allocation of tasks to different organisations is another factor for success. This requires analysis of the strengths of each organisation, good communication, as well as alignment with national and international norms.
- The importance of capacity and capacity building – knowledge sharing, skills training and inspection systems were set up by various disaster organisations to ensure the spread of best practice to all stakeholders.
- The review found differences in local cultures and politics could enable or constrain DRR efforts, citing different religions, different governments, rural/urban differences or a recent experience of disasters.
- It found that DRR work is not often integrated with development work, or issues of ecological change. Much DRR is reactive to disasters rather than preventative - in addition, such efforts are not always sustained after the NGO leaves.
- There is limited co-ordination between NGOs. This means that interventions are not always part of a broader plan, and may only target some vulnerable villages.
- Multi-sectoral, integrated, multi-hazard work is effective. Interventions that address shelter, water, sanitation as well as assets and knowledge, help communities to deal with disasters.
- NGOs and the Pakistani authorities can be too top-down, ignoring local knowledge and conditions.
- Engineering and technical solutions are sometimes given priority over more effective and cheaper measures.
- It also identified a lack of capacity among communities, government bodies and NGOs. Many NGOs began work on DRR without sufficient knowledge. Pakistani government bodies often lack resources, particularly at district level. There is limited understanding of hazards.
- The review also highlights the political incentives that discourage government from investing in DRR, or lead them to detract from DRR goals. For instance water sharing and land tenure disputes between states may hamper DRR.
- There is confusion as to who is responsible for what in DRR amongst national, provincial and local governments. Local governments in particular lack the means to implement programmes.



- Communities are sometimes not involved in discussions on DRR. There are barriers to involving certain groups, such as women or religious minorities, in conservative areas.
- There is limited use of communities' autonomous capacities of local knowledge, although there are exceptions to this.
- Economic changes may have more wide-ranging and longer-lasting effects than NGO programmes. The spread of mobile phones, financial services, roads and civil society are examples of this, and may have positive effects on resilience by providing individuals with more possible coping strategies.

#### Co-ordination between responsible bodies

A Concern review of resilience programmes across the world over a decade, found that multiple actors need to co-operate to address the causes of risk and vulnerability. Coordination can be used to find the right NGO or government department to address a particular issue, avoid duplication, and share best practice. This is true for resilience building for communities, but also often for DRR (Clark-Ginsberg & Hunt, 2015, p. 14).

Nawab and Nyborg (2017) analyse Pakistan's ecosystem of government bodies, NGOs and their various policies, strategies, plans and programmes. They identify the problems in co-ordination between various government departments and NGOs working in Pakistan. It highlights a lack of concrete plans in government policy documents, or plans without the means to be implemented (e.g. no means to compel provincial governments to implement plans). There are also jurisdictional conflicts between different levels of government, as well as differing political agendas at times. They also identify a need to build capacity among district government staff.

**Humanitarian organisations, development organisations, communities, government departments and researchers all have different capabilities.** For example, development organisations have little relief and rehabilitation experience. Researchers can create innovative DRR methods, but lack ability to convince policymakers. Communities have knowledge and experience of adaptation, but cannot cope with large, sudden hazards (Nawab & Nyborg, 2017).

District level governments carry much of the responsibility for carrying out DRR. However, a lack of financial resources at district level mean plans cannot always be carried out. There is a lack of permanent staff and disaster specialists in government (Shah et al., 2020).

In Pakistan, NGOs use several forums to coordinate, including the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF), the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), the UN/NDMA-led cluster and working groups, and the National DRR Forum.

#### Vulnerability

**Understandings of resilience and vulnerability diverge.** Nawab and Nyborg (2017) point to a focus on disaster mitigation and outcome vulnerability, rather than social vulnerability, in government documents. Outcome vulnerability focuses on avoiding exposure to hazards. Social vulnerability focuses on socio-economic factors making certain groups vulnerable to hazards. In practice, there is much more focus on physical hazards than the reasons why some groups or institutions are more vulnerable to them (Arifeen & Nyborg, 2021).

Early warning systems implemented in the Lai Basin flood plain in the Rawalpindi/Islamabad conurbation were found to fail to consider gender (Mustafa et al., 2015). They ignore the fact that many women in the region spend much of their time at home and therefore have less access to information. The quality of early warnings was poor and, for example, seldom included actionable advice. Gender is mentioned in official policy, but is 'tokenistic' and official bodies display little knowledge of gender issues or best practice in early warning (Mustafa et al., 2015).

**A Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) report (2019), developed by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, has analysed Pakistan's DRR instruments and policies (UNDRR/ADPC, 2019).** The government has set up various bodies since the 2000s. Findings on the DRR landscape in Pakistan include (UNDRR/APDC, 2019):

- The 'establishment of a national disaster management fund has filled financial resource gaps and promoted resilient investments into all development projects related to DRR'. Robust monitoring is needed to show progress (p. 23).
- The need for consolidation of national risk assessments. It notes that guidelines and a Pakistan Shared Platform for Disaster Resilience Information are being developed for this (p. 15).
- There is a 'lack of available baseline data, [sex, age and disability disaggregated] SADD and contextualized information stored in comprehensive and updated disaster information management systems.' The government also lacks capacity to share it with lower levels of government (p. 22).
- District authorities lack funds. 'Direct allocation from federal level for provincial and district DRR activities is not in tune with the current budget system, and [Provincial Disaster Management Authorities] PDMAs and [District Disaster Management Authorities] DDMA's themselves have faced serious impediments in mobilizing locally-generated funds for DRR, amidst various competing demands. Alignment of donor priorities with national strategies and more effective resource allocation from donor-funded schemes should be explored' (p. 21)
- NGOs should take on a greater role. Currently, 'while platforms are established for coordination and joint initiatives such as through [the] Disaster Risk Reduction Forum, a network of INGOs and NGOs, their engagement in mitigation and preparedness is not strong enough to advocate for policy change nor trigger responsive acts from the government' (p. 22).
- The report argues that 'participatory approaches and work modality with non-state actors' need to be enhanced. This includes imparting technical skills to citizens and building trust.

## **ERRA Pakistan**

Following the 2005 earthquake, the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) led the recovery process, which was implemented by NGOs and contractors. It was part of the Pakistan government (set up under the Prime Minister's office), partly to coordinate the many actors involved in relief and reconstruction (GFDRR, 2014).

**A 2014 report on the work highlights the benefits of central control of reconstruction efforts** (GFDRR, 2014). It emphasises that decentralisation should be balanced by centralisation. A single body of oversight with legislative mandate, like ERRA, helps effective implementation. Recovery should be linked to development, necessitating long-term plans, the use of national standards, and co-operation between implementers. It recommends institutionalised, rather than informal, coordination mechanisms.

In the recovery from the 2005 earthquake, the government set policy standards and timeframes. Its recovery planning worked through four prongs at the same time: strategy and standard setting; setting up institutional arrangements; setting in motion consultative mechanisms; and undertaking preparatory exercises, surveys and fieldwork (GFDRR, 2014, p. 3).

Twelve sectoral recovery strategies were developed. As ERRA could not work in all 12 sectors at the same time, it developed principles for prioritisation. It first focused on those sectors meeting immediate needs arising from the earthquake: housing and livelihoods. **Sectoral prioritisation was based on the principles of: broadest impact, focusing on the most accessible projects first, avoiding legal disputes over land ownership, and ensuring a gender balance.**

Each major sector was led by a relevant donor (GFDRR, 2014, p. 24). Daily conferences were used to ensure coordination. The mechanism meant that ERRA had to approve work, which slowed things down, but ensured that duplication and overlaps were avoided. Before ERRA took this role, many implementers were doing reconstruction work in accessible locations and neglecting inaccessible ones.

The role of ERRA as a centralised body was seen as helpful in ensuring reconstruction was manageable. It oversaw and coordinated the work of various stakeholders. A dedicated agency also allowed the rebuilding to be undertaken fast and at scale (GFDRR, 2014, p. 9). A donor conference was held to reassure donors worried about financial transparency. Centralisation raised the problem of 'disengagement' among partners. However, efforts to encourage 'ownership' among stakeholders were made, such as consultations, feedback and teams (GFDRR, 2014, p. 16).

The aim to 'build back better' included ensuring that new buildings were resilient to seismic shocks as well as responsive to community needs. Plans for reconstruction were designed based on international best practice, but then adapted to the Pakistani context by a technical advisory group, and then 'vetted by implementers and the communities' (GFDRR, 2014, p. 16). ERRA offered training on seismic-resistant reconstruction to partners to ensure capacity was high. These organisations in turn offered training to affected communities (GFDRR, 2014, p. 25).

A vulnerability survey was conducted (funded by the Asian Development Bank [ADB] and the government). Vulnerability was defined through categories such as educational levels, employment status, skill development needs, disabilities, type of aid received, and income sources. It was shared by project implementers and the government's social protection programme, the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). Women-headed households, the landless and the virtually landless (who had land which was unusable because of the earthquake or where the deeds were missing) were identified for livelihoods grants.

**A United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) report on ERRA's work with local governments in Pakistan highlights the importance of capacity building** (UNISDR, 2010). ERRA worked in line with Priority Five of the Hyogo Framework for Action on strengthening community based disaster preparedness.<sup>8</sup> It aimed to increase the disaster resilience of local authorities and communities through workshops and training and community based disaster risk reduction with gender sensitivity. Workshops made guidelines on integrating DRR in reconstruction. District level hazard maps were also made. Overall, it trained 112 councils in Muzaarabad district in Pakistan Administered Kashmir and Mansehra district of North West Frontier Province.<sup>9</sup>

The project was found to be successful. The following factors were highlighted as important where DRR capacity is lacking (UNISDR, 2010, p. 43):

- Project planning processes must be participatory and transparent.
- A multi-sectoral approach is crucial to project success.
- There must be close coordination with local government to ensure ownership and sustainability of a project.
- The 2005 earthquake created an 'enabling environment' for DRR as many saw the need for better preparedness.
- The need for effective presence on the ground to coordinate with governments and projects in different districts.

### World Bank

The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) supported the Government of Pakistan in developing a Fiscal Disaster Risk Assessment (FDRA) report in 2019.<sup>10</sup>

Their evaluation found (World Bank, 2020):

- There is a paucity of data on hazards, public assets and risk. Pakistan's government needs improved assessment (p. 11)
- Coordination between federal, provincial and district government is a challenge. Different parts of government have different financial and technical capacity. Each province finances disaster protection in a different way. There is no clear demarcation between the roles of different authorities.
- Relatively few people have disaster insurance (1% of losses from the 2010 floods were insured). This means that most post-disaster costs are borne by the government. This was even true for public assets, which by law need to be insured (p. 13).
- There is no co-ordination between Pakistan's risk financing instruments.

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<sup>8</sup> The Hyogo Framework preceded the Sendai Framework. Priority Five focuses on preparedness for effective response.

<sup>9</sup> Since renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

<sup>10</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/improving-pakistan-s-fiscal-resilience-natural-disasters>

- There is a need to consult stakeholders among citizens, the private sector and government in order to assess the needs and possibilities.
- As it is a multi-sectoral strategy, many stakeholders will be involved, which means strong leadership and co-ordination are needed (p. 27).
- Systematic mapping and articulation of responsibilities for each institutional and financing instrument are required.
- Capacity building in for policy making, technical aspects and inter-agency co-ordination is required to ensure effective implementation and sustainability.

## NGOs response to the 2010 floods

A 2012 review looked at the work of several NGOs belonging to the UK's Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) following a public appeal for funds for the 2010 floods (Murtaza et al., 2012). The review included discussion of work by Christian Aid, Action Aid, Merlin, Concern, CARE and Plan International.

It found that the government's DRR 'suffers from a lack of political commitment, funding, skilled human resources, and coordination and suffers from fragmentation, and overlapping and unclear mandates among government agencies horizontally and vertically' (Murtaza et al., 2012). In fact, 'government programmes and policies often end up reducing people's resilience by increasing their exposure to physical hazards. **The malpractices of local elites reduce people's access to resources and information and increase their exposure to physical hazards'** (Murtaza et al., 2012, p. 32). Generally, the national response was weak as:

- It was focused on response
- It lacked prevention and mitigation
- The system was weak at the district level, where implementation occurs.

The review found that NGO work has been successful at promoting resilience through infrastructure; assets and knowledge; and community based organisations to better plan for disasters. It noted that there was good national-level coordination between NGOs through the DRR forum, although coordination remained limited at local level. The NGOs did not often identify excluded groups.

**The review argued that multi-sector DRR interventions are most effective at community level. In undertaking such work, NGOs should be strategic in their selection of sectors.** It suggested that in each district, NGOs, government and the local community should conduct a joint exercise to identify the most vulnerable communities, the hazards, and possibilities for prevention and mitigation activities. This would allow them to identify the least resilient areas and the sectors that need most support. It would also allow them to reduce overlapping between NGOs (Murtaza et al., 2012, p. 31). It provided analysis of particular sectors based on value-for-money, cost-effectiveness and durability (Murtaza et al., 2012, pp. 32–33).

A Christian Aid evaluation of work by itself and its partners on work including food, non-food items, health, temporary shelter and permanent housing, livelihoods and community level DRR discussed the issues of sector focus (Morgan et al., 2013). It agreed that 'the best interventions occurred when agencies built on their existing expertise and implemented sound approaches that applied good management with a strong interaction with partners' (Morgan et al., 2013).

However, the partnerships needed to co-ordinate between NGOs, which meant there were 'several levels of overhead for each institution involved' and associated costs (Morgan et al., 2013, p. 24).

The overall lessons learned are (Murtaza et al., 2012):

- NGOs need to coordinate to work effectively.
- Building resilience in communities requires long-term efforts (1-2 years).
- 'Women and minorities are generally more vulnerable to disasters due to their immobility and low empowerment but often still possess high skills and motivation for DRR work.'
- 'Multi-sectoral, integrated interventions in the same community, e.g., shelter, latrines, raised pumps, village embankments .... are most likely to truly improve resilience in the communities but this requires greater funding and coordination from donors.'
- Integrating DRR with development work will ensure it is more likely to continue to be supported for a long time.

## Multi-sector nutrition response

An intervention to support nutrition in at-risk communities was implemented in response to a drought in the Sindh region in 2015 by Concern Worldwide and Deutsche Welthungerhilfe and funded by the EU. It ran from May 2015 to August 2016 (Kunbher et al., 2017).

The programme addressed multiple-sectors, categorised as nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive. It therefore included food security and livelihoods (FSL) and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as well as nutrition elements. It was carried out in Umerkot and Tharparkar Districts. Its work included:

- Cash through training on nutrition and livestock management.
- Livestock assistance (e.g. vaccination).
- Solar-powered water pumping systems for wells.
- Rain-harvesting water ponds.
- Hygiene promotion.
- Nutrition specific response targeting children.

Recipients were targeted using household economy analysis vulnerability criteria.

**In terms of strategy, it was found that 'multi-sector interventions with a nutritional lens are an appropriate and effective way to tackle the drought situation' (Kunbher et al., 2017, p. 101).** Under-nutrition is multi-causal and the nutrition-sensitive programming addressed aspects affecting nutrition not necessarily addressed through nutrition programming. In this case, it highlighted the synergies between different NGOs' areas of expertise.

**The co-ordination of these different elements was judged to be a success.** The programme was coordinated through existing nutrition working groups, the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum, and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority Sindh (PDMA). Project implementation was coordinated at the district level and there were regular meetings to address issues. The analysis

emphasised that good co-ordination is essential, both between NGOs, NGOs and government, and between national and district governments.

A number of difficulties were raised by the intervention. The evaluation noted that in this case nutrition-sensitive interventions cost more per beneficiary than nutrition-specific ones. This could potentially affect how success is evaluated or constrain programming, and should be considered in planning future programmes.

Some interventions were less successful, as they were found to require long-term strategies beyond the scope of the programme. For example, work to change open defecation practices was found to be difficult for this reason.

Work on reducing water-borne diseases met difficulties including weather, lack of infrastructure. More generally, the analysis raised the point that **'establishing a new multi-sector intervention within a short timeframe was challenging; a quarter of the project time was taken up with inception and preparation'** (Kunbher et al., 2017, p. 102).

## Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) created a Pakistan Earthquake Fund to pool and deliver emergency funding, as well as technical assistance for reconstruction, rehabilitation and development. It was focused on immediate requirements and aimed to 'build back better'. It ran from 2005 to 2007 and gave grants worth USD 139.50 million (Asian Development Bank, 2015).

The evaluation of the fund identified the following successes, problems and lessons (ADB, 2015):

- There were problems in identification of subprojects, caused by lack of reliable data and poor use of identification criteria by implementing agencies.
- Managing demand was difficult, as expectations were not always set out in advance. This was a challenge as there was a high level of expectation of 'building back better' among local governments. As part of setting realistic expectations, the report recommends that 'reconstruction and upgrading should also be embedded in government standards of services that can be maintained and operated by the responsible agencies'.
- Working with government agencies increased their capacity to maintain infrastructure, manage procurement and build new schools and health facilities to multi-hazard resistant standard. The number of facilities owned by line departments also increased.
- The ADB proposed changes it believed would improve the health sector, which had 'endemic development challenges'. However, the government 'showed no political commitment' to these proposals. The ADB therefore recommends better alignment between reconstruction plans and states' development strategies in future.
- Line agencies, consultants and the private sector were unfamiliar with innovations in procurement (e.g. turnkey contracts and pre-engineered technologies). The procurement innovations therefore did not increase efficiency. It would therefore have been better to use technology or systems already familiar to locals and adjust these, rather than implementing completely new ones.
- There was confusion in roles between different layers of government. Clarity in roles and mandates is therefore necessary.

- Local populations and NGOs began work before governments had agreed standards and policies for the response, which led to inconsistencies. NGOs and bilateral donors sometimes built to higher standards than could be maintained by the government later.

## **Pakistan Red Crescent**

The Pakistan Red Crescent uses an integrated community-based risk reduction (ICBRR) approach, which links organisational development, health and DRR. It was implemented in ten communities in three provinces, and included strengthening community-based organisations to better address vulnerabilities. An outcome-based resilience index shows that this integrated programming approach successfully built community resilience (Kafle, 2017).

An integrated approach recognises 'that issues affecting community resilience are interconnected' and is therefore an effective way of building resilience in communities (Kafle, 2017, p. 39).

For actors undertaking programmes, integration entails 'a collaborative approach that uses common tools, joint planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation and the sharing of resources' (Kafle, 2017, p. 39).

The study's findings on integration of risk reduction are (Kafle, 2017, p. 49):

- Both NGO staff and people living in the villages where the programme was undertaken said that the integrated model helped build community ownership and resilience (p. 43).
- The review found that a single multi-sectoral team enabled a consolidated package of support to be given. It made programme delivery more effective.
- By pooling resources and reducing bureaucracy, it can save time and money.
- It can help co-ordinate activities and avoid overlapping.
- It can address a wider range of risks/vulnerabilities, as well as root causes, more effectively.
- It enabled all components of the Sendai framework to be represented.
- Such approaches require a high level of integration between governments, donors, NGOs, recipients etc.
- They can also take a long time to yield results, which may require NGOs to change their structures, funding etc.

## **Pathways to Resilience in Semi-arid Economies (PRISE) research on drylands**

Research by Pathways to Resilience in Semi-arid Economies (PRISE) uses a value chain analysis to discuss ways to increase resilience in drylands areas, including Pakistan (Jobbins et al., 2018). It is focused on broad policy perspectives.

Rising temperatures and increased droughts are evident in drylands. These areas are seen as vulnerable. However, the review suggests that viewing these areas primarily as vulnerable can overlook their strengths (Jobbins et al., 2018). For example, Pakistan's drylands produce cotton



for the textile sector, which supports 40% of the industrial labour force and employs 10 million farming families (Jobbins et al., 2018, p. 4).

The report shows that governments should focus on two policy areas for drylands (Jobbins et al., 2018):

- **Build on the strengths on dryland areas.** This includes paying dryland producers more ('producers at the lower end of value chains get paid much less than they should in comparison to the profit margins realised by actors at the higher end of the chains'). Drylands producers take on disproportionate amounts of risk. More vertical integration might help; as might improving access to trade and export markets; helping diversification of livelihoods (e.g. into service industries), and vertical integration (better products). Producers in drylands are often economically and geographically marginalised, so may not be aware of adaptation options, and would therefore benefit from this knowledge.
- **Enabling private companies.** The private sector engages in important economic activity in drylands. Remittances are also an important source of investment in these regions. Resilience programmers should acknowledge and encourage these strengths. Investing in overcoming barriers to adaptation in these often marginalised regions will help. For example, access to extension services - early warning systems and loans - will help economic activity, as will recognising the different roles of women.

## Oxfam in Pakistan

A Community-based Disaster Risk Management and Livelihoods (CBDRML) Programme ran from 2008 to 2012 (Walsh & Fuentes-Nieva, 2014). It was funded by Oxfam and the European Commission. The period in which it ran included significant floods in 2010.

CBDRML's main work included (Walsh & Fuentes-Nieva, 2014):

- Disaster risk reduction training (including first aid and search and rescue) and village disaster management planning;
- Construction of raised emergency shelters, culverts, water harvesting ponds, and 'flood-friendly' pit latrines;
- Livelihood, agriculture, and animal husbandry training;
- Distribution of goats and hand pumps to exceptionally vulnerable households.

Oxfam's review found the programme to be effective in increasing resilience in terms of quantitative measures, such as retention of assets, and the use of early warning systems (Walsh & Fuentes-Nieva, 2014). This meant they had more time to prepare, and lost less of their assets. However, there was no evidence that the programme increased diversification of livelihoods.

A more detailed study sought to understand the reasons behind these findings. It used a literature review, key informant interviews, a workshop, and focus group discussions, with Oxfam staff, those from other NGOs and government officials.

A participatory approach and networking capabilities were found to be key factors in supporting effective early warning systems. This included (Walsh & Fuentes-Nieva, 2014, p. 10):

- Relationship-building at community level, with an emphasis on partnership and participatory planning at an early stage in the process, and on the importance of local ownership and the mobilisation of local knowledge during implementation;
- The development of vertical linkages between different institutional levels using a range of influencing and mobilizing strategies, including the creation of democratic district-level forums for disaster risk reduction;
- The revival of hitherto moribund government plans and development of an early warning system that combined technology and social/institutional interaction, translating and simplifying early warning information for local use, enhancing access and understanding, and so local capacity to act on information;
- Undertaking a diverse range of other disaster risk reduction activities, including disaster risk management planning and training, and a range of other practical activities.
- The Doable Foundation and Help Foundation linked different institutions. They translated and simplified technical information. This created demand for information among villages.
- Good participatory skills (underlying effective community organising, planning, and training).
- A good social-ecological systems understanding of the local context (including awareness of the asymmetries of justice and rights in participating communities)

Reasons for the lack of livelihoods diversification were found to be:

- There are significant local constraints to livelihood diversification and the motivation to pursue it, including: the effects of physical displacement caused by flooding; poor access to state and other services and support for women in particular; lack of secure land tenure among the target communities.
- Livelihood diversification per se was not a programme objective, and programme timeframes and implementation further constrained its achievement. It was not designed to tackle structural constraints.

Overall, the report emphasised:

- The importance of building social and institutional capital, and the role played in this of a systemic mix of activities, including the introduction of and training in appropriate technologies, combined with social mobilisation;
- The importance of communication, information, and the development of a shared discourse and knowledge of entitlements among programme participants, empowering them to act in a timely fashion, most notably in response to the 2010 floods;
- The importance of participatory and rights-based approaches, local understanding, and the choice of partner organizations on the basis of their possession of these capabilities;
- The need for clear livelihood objectives, targeted interventions, and appropriate timelines if these are to be pursued in addition to the basic goals of disaster risk reduction and management.

## The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Pakistan

The FAO has run a number of programmes in Pakistan. Its work in Pakistan is aligned with the One UN Programme Second Phase (OP-II) and therefore works to the UN's OP-II priorities (FAO, 2017, pp. 7–8):

- Inclusive economic growth through the development of sustainable livelihoods (2);
- Increased national resilience to disasters, crises and external shocks (3);
- Strengthen governance and social cohesion (4);
- Food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable groups (6).

**The FAO ran 50 projects between 2012 and 2017.** 28 of these projects had the strategic objective to 'increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises' (FAO, 2017, p. 22)(p. 22). This include building resilience in communities and 'grassroots development and some capacity development activities for government staff'.

**The report highlights the issue of devolution of power to district governments,** and suggests that it is unclear what its effect on FAO programmes is yet (FAO, 2017, p. 25). It finds that it has been important to forge partnerships with national and provincial government bodies. Partnerships with provincial governments have been successful in the implementation of programmes, but less so on policy issues. The FAO worked well with a variety of partners from government, including the army in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

### Targeting

Many of the FAO's projects were community projects, which meant they were not targeted. Some interventions were focused on individuals and households – for these, targeting of the poor was undertaken by government partners. In some cases, targeting was done using criteria other than wealth (e.g. religion and ethnicity), or at least taking these criteria into consideration. For instance, the 'FAO's Balochistan projects reflected equal attention on the largest ethno-linguistic groups of Balochistan (the Baloch and the Pashtuns), between which there is a sensitive relationship that requires balance across the groups' (FAO, 2017, p. 30). In Sindh, the programme 'treated men and women equally, as well as minorities. For example, in Doulatpur Minor, Mirpurkhas, 40 percent are minority Hindus who were proportionately included among the beneficiaries' (FAO, 2017, p. 30).

It was found to be difficult to implement programming focused on women. The reasons for this were low literacy levels and the reluctance of the community to allow women to interact with development organisations. However, the report emphasises the benefits of such programmes. The FAO used male and female social mobilisation teams. Some projects were targeted at women individually or collectively. However, the report suggests that more focus on rural youth is needed.

### Strategic focus

The report suggests that there is too much focus on an 'extension agent approach to agriculture modernization and value chain development, rather than sector investment planning and economic analysis' (FAO, 2017, p. 56). Work in future should focus more on this enabling regulatory environment.

It also found that its work is too focused on post-disasters rather than prevention and adaption in relation to climate change (FAO, 2017, p. 57).

The report found that the FAO worked according to its comparative advantage. It 'is the organization best suited to synthesize the findings and recommendations on vulnerabilities and SDG tracing for policymakers' (FAO, 2017, p. 57).

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## Key websites

- Prevention Web, Pakistan: <https://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/asia/pak/>

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