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The *Vanuatu NGO Climate Change Adaptation Program* is a consortium comprising Oxfam in its role as lead agency, Save the Children Australia (SCA), CARE International in Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres Association (VRDTCA), the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) [supported by the French Red Cross (FRC)], and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) as well as the wider civil society network; Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Network (VCAN). The program is supported by AusAID and directly supports communities to build their resilience in nine islands across four provinces, and links the lessons to national policy and practice.

This response is based on the analysis of Oxfam program staff in Vanuatu from working in close collaboration with the consortium partners, the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and DRR (NAB) and civil society organisations through the VCAN network.

**1. *Given the diverse set of indicators that currently exist to measure and evaluate adaptation, how can communities, countries and development and adaptation agencies build on a common understanding of success in achieving climate resilience?***

The meaning of the word resilience is evolving. A common definition by development and humanitarian actors based on the current resilience discourse would be a first step towards a shared understanding of success and the ability to measure and evaluate it. The definition would need to be reviewed at regular intervals as the body of research on the determinants of resilience grows. Oxfam currently defines resilience as *the ability of women, men and children to realize their rights and improve their wellbeing despite shocks, stresses and uncertainty*<sup>1</sup>.

Accordingly, measurement of success must go beyond the measurement of technical fixes that have dominated the discussion so far. We need to be able to measure success in terms of:

- reductions in inequalities that underlie vulnerability and peoples' enjoyment of their rights,
- agency, skills and capacity of the most marginalized women and men to overcome a range of challenges they face and determine their own future, and
- progress towards tackling the inequality and injustice that makes them vulnerable to multiple and interlocking shocks, stresses and uncertainty.

Success in achieving climate-resilience also needs to be context-specific due to the different impacts of climate change and the different social, political, economical and cultural influences of location, culture, politics, governance, and other factors on adaptive capacity. This means that 'success' will be defined differently from place to place. While a common understanding of success could build on general guidelines/principles at international level, more contextualized indicators will be necessary at national, sub-national and community levels.

'*Characteristics approaches*' to M&E of resilience may assist in defining and sharing a common definition. Characteristics approaches build results around particular characteristics that are assumed to enhance the ability of households, communities, organisations or governments to cope with shocks and stresses and positively adapt to change. However these characteristics cannot simply be selected from a generic list. MEL systems at national, sub-national and community levels need to recognize the context specific nature of climate change impacts and resilience and the role of key stakeholders in defining success. Complementary research efforts, including risk and trend analysis, are needed in such approaches to ensure that the broader characteristics of resilience are contextually grounded. This type of approach is used, for example, by the Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Program in the Vanuatu context and Africa Climate

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<sup>1</sup> Hillier, D. et al (2013), *No Accident: Resilience and the Inequality of Risk*, Oxfam International, Oxford.

Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA). ACCRA's Local Adaptive Capacity (LAC) framework<sup>2</sup> is a good example of a broad framework that can be adapted for national and local contexts and has influenced the localised framework of the Vanuatu NGO Climate Adaptation program presented in Annex 1<sup>3</sup>. It is important to note that such frameworks do require both quantitative and qualitative metrics to effectively monitor and evaluate the achievement of greater equity, power and voice that are at their heart.

Who gets to define what success is? At every level, particularly at the community level, there should be strong involvement from all actors in defining success and in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating progress with the express aim of building and using these skills, networks and knowledge to adapt to future change. Moreover, the building and strengthening of relationships between communities, civil society and governments is necessary for ongoing dialogue and furthering common understanding of resilience, its drivers and indicators. In Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Climate Adaptation network is still in its early days, but we see the network playing a key role in fostering dialogue among civil society and with the government on defining and learning about what resilience is in Vanuatu.

**2. *How can a framework be created that links individual assessments with national level assessments to broaden the focus from the means of achieving outcomes (individual interventions) to the desired end result (countries' becoming less vulnerable and having more adaptive capacity)?***

Resilience needs to be considered at the individual, household and community levels because this is where the impacts of climate change are ultimately felt. As stated in above, this definition and its indicators must be context-specific with those most at risk playing a central role in defining and developing the measures of success for their context. However, given that risk and marginalisation is structural, the drivers of resilience should also be tracked through monitoring states' capacities and fulfillment of roles and responsibilities at all levels.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and post 2015 development framework could be strengthened to adequately measure resilience outcomes at all levels (local, municipality, district, national, regional and international), with resilience and reduced risk to women, men, boys and girls at the local level being the desired end result. A strengthened HFA would provide the foundation for a holistic approach to resilient long-term development that integrates both humanitarian and climate change adaptation targets and focuses on the most excluded and at risk with a stronger focus on gender. The resilience of people and communities as the end result would enable greater analysis and learning around the contribution of best practice processes (including states' fulfillment of their legal and political responsibility to reduce the risks faced by poor people) at all levels to bringing about positive changes in peoples' lives in terms of risk exposure and capacities. Nationwide gender-responsive participatory risk and capacity assessments at regular intervals could identify communities most at risk, provide baseline and progress information, and inform planning and investment decisions.

This proposition does have challenges in remaining relevant and appropriate in the context of the uncertainty of a changing environment and continued evolution of resilience thinking. This emphasises the need for frameworks to be flexible and responsive, with regular review with and by stakeholders. Likewise, aid effectiveness and aid modalities also need to be addressed for resilience targets to be realistic

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<sup>2</sup> Levine, S. et al (2011), *Rethinking support for adaptive capacity to climate change*, Overseas Development Institute, London

<sup>3</sup> Oxfam plans to further review and revise the framework to better articulate the role of rights and equity in each resilience feature.

and achievable. Donors need to provide governments and NGOs with long-term and flexible funding that can adapt to changing circumstances.

**3. *How can results from M&E be reported and disseminated so as to ensure that they are fed back into the respective adaptation process but also to allow for lessons learned and good practices identified to be shared with the wider community of adaptation planners and practitioners?***

A foundation to achieving coherent and joined up approaches to design, monitoring, evaluation and learning is the establishment of relationships, increased collaboration and the building of an environment of trust between states, civil society and donors. In fact, this should also be seen as a driver for resilience in itself.

While still in infancy, the modes of collaboration, networking and information sharing that have been established in Vanuatu through the civil society Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Network, Vanuatu Humanitarian Team and the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and DRR, point to new and supportive ways of engaging with and learning from all stakeholders working to build resilience. Civil society networks provide forums for sharing and discussing best practice and lessons learned among implementing organisations. Formal and supportive links between the networks and the government's decision making body are already demonstrating positive impacts in helping the government to incorporate NGOs' lessons into its own policy and practice and share these regionally.

In Vanuatu, regular face to face meetings and strengthened relationships among stakeholders is also supported by Vanuatu's National Advisory Board Portal, which provides an example of how results and lessons can be shared. The Portal is a repository of climate change reports, research, plans and monitoring visits that encourages coordination and information sharing across government and civil society. The Portal is starting to be used widely and is an example of information management and accountability at the national level.

An important strategy to promote the application of learning is the participation of a broad range of stakeholders in reflection and learning at all levels. This should be an integral part of all community based adaptation programs as well as those building state and institutional capacities. For example, the Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Program is using strategies such as joint reflection, joint analysis, peer monitoring and video documentation to promote learning, replication of best practice and linking these to planning cycles. However, good relationships will always be foundational for these processes to be effective and meaningful.