



ROUTES TO RESILIENCE

INSIGHTS FROM BRACED YEAR 1

Paula Silva Villanueva, Catherine Gould and Florence Pichon

Synthesis paper



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Acronyms

BRACED	Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters
BRICS	Building Resilience in Chad and Sudan (BRACED project)
CIARE	Climate Information and Assets for Resilience in Ethiopia (BRACED project)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCF	Decentralising Climate Funds (BRACED project)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FM	Fund Manager
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IP	Implementing Partner
IRISS	Improving Resilience to Climate Change in South Sudan (BRACED project)
KM	Knowledge Manager
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAR	Market Approaches to Resilience (BRACED project)
MRR	Monitoring and Results Reporting
PHASE	Providing Humanitarian Assistance in Sahel Emergencies
PRESENCES	Projet de la Résilience face aux Chocs Environnementaux et Sociaux au Niger (BRACED project)
RIC4REC	Renforcement des Initiatives Communautaires pour la Résilience aux Extrêmes Climatiques (BRACED project)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SUR1M	Scaling up Resilience to Climate Extremes for over 1 Million People (BRACED project)
WHH	Welthungerhilfe (BRACED project – name of lead agency)

Foreword

Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) is a unique programme, the biggest global effort to build resilience locally, in highly vulnerable places, yet at scale. It aims to counter the rising risks to development in a changing climate and offer solutions that address some of the most pressing global priorities, expressed not only in the Paris Agreement, but also in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and in the commitments from the World Humanitarian Summit.

The BRACED Knowledge Manager is charged with supporting and strengthening knowledge management within BRACED, but also to ensure that lessons learnt are captured and amplified in support of these global goals. As part of our monitoring and evaluation (M&E) efforts, I am very proud to present this report, which provides the first programme-level synthesis of results from across the BRACED programme. It systematically and thoroughly analyses how BRACED projects are building resilience so far.

Of course, the first year is only the beginning and a lot of effort has gone into initial steps by BRACED project Implementing Partners: participatory analysis and assessments of climate vulnerability and capacity, the selection, design and initial implementation of resilience-building activities, and establishment of critical partnerships. However, we are already seeing important patterns, especially the critical roles of knowledge and attitudes, capacity and skills, partnerships and inclusive decision-making. Important lessons are also emerging about the time it takes to build resilience and the relative balance of different aspects of resilience that can be achieved over time, with a stronger emphasis on anticipatory and absorptive capacities in the initial stages; more time is needed to build adaptive capacity and achieve transformative change.

I trust that the evidence from this report will already start to inform not only the BRACED partners, but also a multitude of other actors implementing or funding resilience programmes, in the context of the increasing focus on resilience in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.

As a Knowledge Manager, we are confronted with new or sharper questions that will guide our work in the remainder of BRACED, in our M&E but also research and learning activities. The analysis has also resulted in important lessons for resilience M&E more broadly. These are shared in a separate companion paper.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of those in the BRACED family who have contributed to this analysis. First and foremost, there are the authors and the 15 Implementing Partners, who have generated the results on the ground and produced the project-level reporting. There are also our colleagues in the BRACED Fund Manager and the Department for International Development (DFID), as well as partners around us. We are on a learning journey together and this report is an important contribution to our collective efforts to build resilience, across the BRACED programme and in the world at large.

Maarten van Aalst

Director, BRACED Knowledge Manager



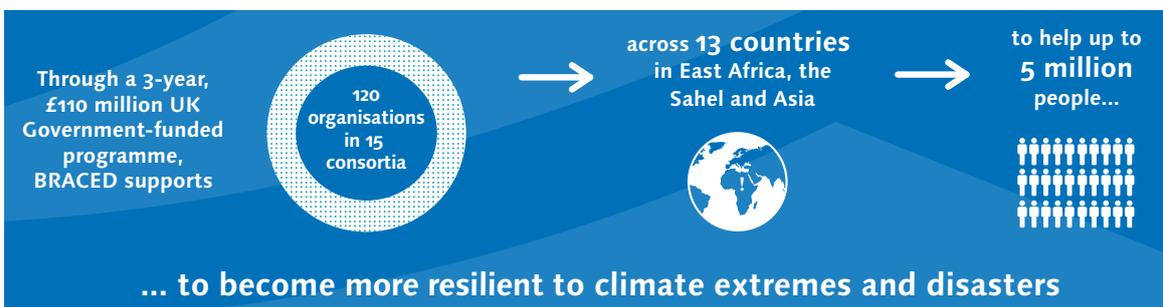
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Image: USAID

Introduction

One year into the implementation of the Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) programme, this report collates and synthesises evidence from BRACED project Implementing Partners' (IPs') year 1 annual reports, to understand how projects are building resilience so far. By synthesising the work of BRACED project IPs firmly grounded in practice, the findings, lessons and recommendations from this report contribute to the ongoing BRACED evidence and lesson generation efforts at the project and programme levels.

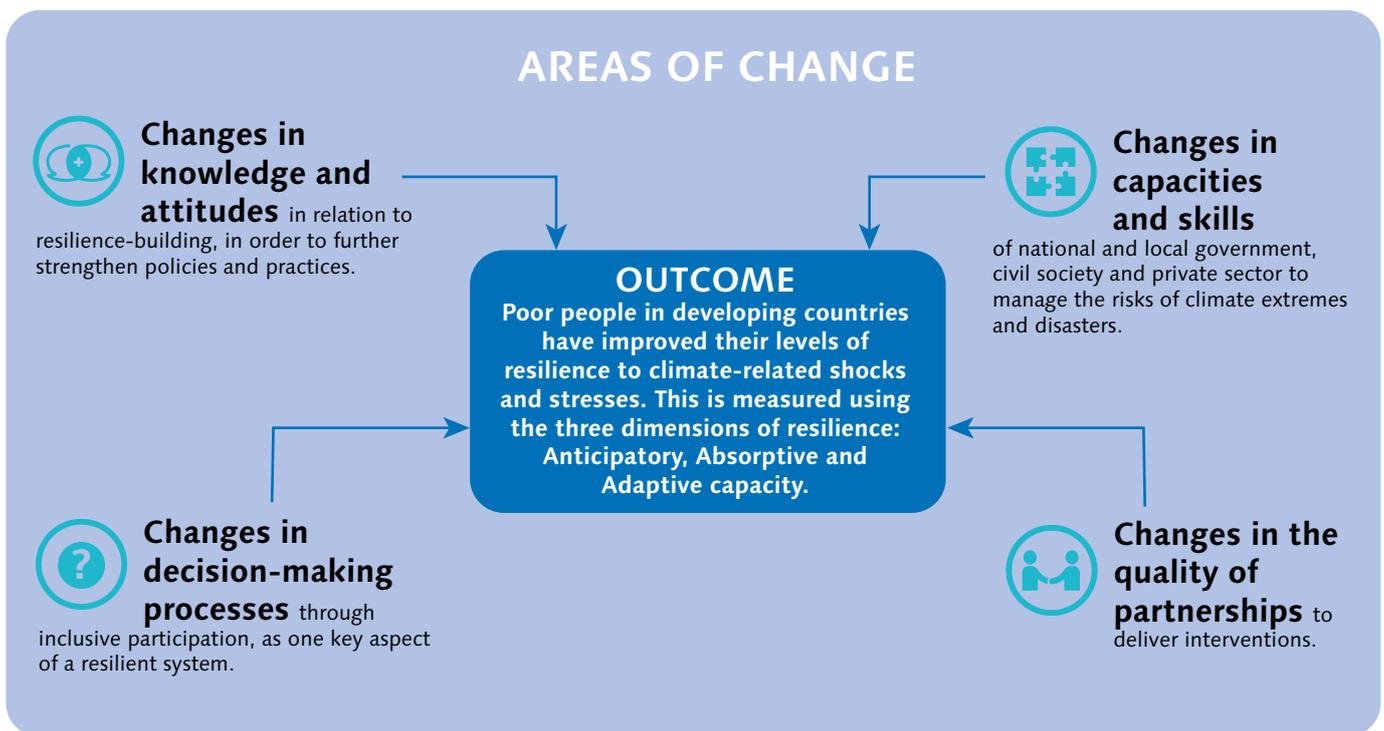
Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED)



The BRACED programme operates in some of the most fragile and challenging countries in the world. While the programme is not explicitly conflict or security focused, many of the projects are implemented in a context affected by conflict or instability. BRACED projects cover a wide range of issues, from securing, servicing and promoting trans-border livestock mobility across the Sahel, to sharing skills and technology to improve the uptake of climate information in Ethiopia, to supporting smallholder farmers in Nepal to take advantage of economic opportunities and investments in climate-smart technologies. The BRACED Knowledge Manager (KM) is generating an evidence base of what works and what does not to build resilience, in order to effect change across and beyond the BRACED focus countries. This report documents at the programme level how BRACED projects are contributing to building resilience to climate extremes and related disasters.

Synthesising progress to date across the set of projects against the BRACED monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework has involved a close examination of the BRACED pathways to resilience: an in-depth analysis of resilience outcomes and an assessment of the context in which BRACED projects operate, using both thematic and content analysis.

Figure 1: BRACED Areas of Change



A separate related report, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED' reflects on what has been learnt from the BRACED Monitoring and Results Reporting (MRR) efforts to date. This companion report reflects on the M&E framework itself and the experiences of the BRACED KM in rolling the framework out and applying it for the first time through the year 1 project- to programme-reporting process that was followed to produce the synthesis report.

Key findings: achievements and challenges

BRACED is a unique programme seeking to achieve highly ambitious aims in difficult and volatile contexts. The overall finding of this synthesis is that, despite contextual specificity, a series of key themes have emerged clearly across the set of projects. Though there have been delays in implementation and operational challenges, there is early evidence that, at the end of year 1, BRACED is starting to make encouraging progress. There is also an indication that, overall, project-level progress to date is in line with the programme-level theory of change.

“BRACED is a unique programme seeking to achieve highly ambitious aims in difficult and volatile contexts. The overall finding of this synthesis is that, despite contextual specificity, a series of key themes have emerged clearly across the set of projects”

BRACED project IPs have had an incredibly busy first year, initiating a very large number of activities in separate locations across different countries.

During year 1, efforts have concentrated on improving the knowledge base of key stakeholders through participatory assessments, and the selection, design and initial implementation of activities through participatory community-based approaches. Community dialogues and the establishment of community groups have set the groundwork for a supporting and enabling environment that enhances capacities and skills.

BRACED projects have established a wide range of strategic partners, from private sector to national meteorological offices to local civil societies and international research institutions, in order to support the effective delivery of project activities. Working through a diverse and complex set of partnerships has caused some delays in implementation. However, evidence to date shows that working in partnership is worth the time and effort, as this enables projects to access a greater range of technical expertise and capacities so they can address complex multi-faceted problems. Collaboration and networking undertaken by BRACED IPs have also presented opportunities to affect national-level policies.

During year 1, project IPs have also made substantial progress in creating an enabling environment for better access to, dissemination and use of climate and weather information. Climate and weather information is being used to engage with communities and sub-national policy processes and inform decision-making related to agricultural, pastoralist and disaster preparedness activities. The widespread use of information related to a major event (El Niño) confirms that BRACED IPs are proving effective in acting as intermediaries between more formal climate services, such as national meteorological offices, and communities. However, the use of climate information in community planning processes has been fairly limited so far. Where information has been used, there is a strong bias

towards prioritising localised short-term instrumental goals, coupled with a lack of focus on long-term adaptation. The reasons for this remain unknown.

There are emerging examples of capacity-building activities leading to changes in attitudes, behaviour and practice in relation to climate resilience planning, agricultural practices and production through market-based approaches and access to finance and savings for asset building and livelihood diversification. However, further steps are necessary to consolidate this and ensure the sustainability of emerging changes. Evidence so far highlights the importance of activities not being implemented in isolation from each other. Rather, they are integrated to address the underlying causes of vulnerability while enhancing resilience capacities. Essential ingredients of capacity-building approaches include working in close collaboration and building trust and leadership for the trainings to be successful and yield results. However, the cultural and socio-political dimension of influencing behaviour and practice are proving to be a challenge for BRACED projects. As a result, it is too early in the programme to demonstrate the extent to which improvements in capacity are influencing local planning processes.

Women's economic empowerment stands out as a key objective of most capacity-building efforts in BRACED. The participation of vulnerable groups in BRACED activities has increased, but this is only the first step towards inclusive decision-making. To date, projects have focused on creating safe spaces for the active engagement and participation of women and children in community-based activities. However, there is limited evidence with regard to whether the most marginalised groups are able to articulate their voices in these arenas, the extent to which their opinions and knowledge are considered and, ultimately, what changes in terms of enhanced resilience as a result.

A detailed analysis of BRACED pathways to resilience and lessons learnt can be found in [section 3](#).

When examining the extent to which programme activities are contributing to BRACED outcomes, in terms of three 'capacities' – anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive – BRACED projects appear to be on track to achieve positive outcome-level change. However, year 1 reports do not tell us the extent to which projects will achieve changes in outcome-level indicators by the end of the programme. Certain activities may have contributed to more meaningful outcomes than others:

When communities themselves are given the responsibility to define their own resilience priorities, some choose to only focus on building resilience capacities to deal with immediate threats. As a result, in projects where communities themselves define priorities, activities are oriented around enhancing anticipatory and absorptive capacity, which are perceived as more tangible than adapting to future risks. However, BRACED hypothesises that building anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities is needed to enhance resilience and adapt to longer-term climatic changes.

Diverse activities intend to build adaptive capacity, but may work across a longer time scale. Emerging evidence suggests that adaptive capacity is considered more challenging to build within the timescales of BRACED projects, as climatic changes are

less visible to community members and thus less likely to prompt immediate action. Adaptive capacity interventions often need to be accompanied with significant behavioural and social changes that are difficult to influence in the short term.

BRACED projects may generate more achievements in building anticipatory and absorptive capacity than adaptive capacity or transformative change.

Early insights suggest that absorptive and anticipatory capacities might be more relevant to the three-year BRACED timeframe.

A detailed analysis of themes and lessons learnt about BRACED outcomes can be found in [section 4](#).

The critical operational challenges faced to date have stemmed from working in countries vulnerable to both disasters and political instability, as well as conflict.

During the first year of BRACED, climate and disaster-related shocks affected nearly half of the countries in which the projects operate, impacting on project progress.

Anticipating and managing crisis is central to BRACED projects. During year 1, several IPs accessed and made use of contingency funding with the intention of protecting the development gains of BRACED investments in the face of shocks and stresses. However, year 1 annual reports provide limited narrative and contextualisation of progress to date in relation to the climatic context within which projects operate, along with how the activities and strategies implemented by IPs deal with this (and to what extent). The systematic monitoring and reporting of results in the context of shocks and stresses remains a gap and a challenge across BRACED projects.

BRACED projects operate within a complex interplay of social, cultural, environmental, political and economic factors that shape BRACED routes to resilience. BRACED projects are being implemented in areas of recurrent crisis, political instability and conflict, and in countries with weak governance systems. This report indicates a real danger that BRACED projects may not incorporate the 'real life' dynamics of resilience-building. Context does matter to resilience outcomes. A focus on shocks and stresses tends to overshadow the wider set of dynamics operating in a particular area or country.

A detailed analysis of contextual factors and emerging themes and lessons can be found in [section 5](#).

Concluding comments

Addressing the question of *How are BRACED projects building resilience to climate extremes and disasters?* requires an understanding of the multiple factors that make a resilience-building project or programme unique, and therefore goes beyond summarising progress to date. This report highlights the need for BRACED project IPs to further unpack the resilience 'story', identifying how activities are integrated and the extent to which interventions deal with climatic shocks, stresses and the wider set of contextual factors that impact on household and community resilience.

Despite progress made to date, it is too early in the programme to demonstrate outcome-level results in terms of improved resilience capacities. Evidence suggests that now the building blocks have been established, more tangible results will start to be seen during years 2 and 3. However, the authors would suggest that BRACED projects may have set ambitious outcome-level objectives, as the 'real life' dynamics of resilience-building may not have been incorporated into project design and implementation. Although BRACED is right to be ambitious, the time frame of the programme may mean that in some areas only marginal changes will be achieved. Given the complexity and long-term challenges that BRACED aims to address, there is a risk that substantial outcome-level changes may not be detectable by the end of the programme.

“Given the complexity and long-term challenges that BRACED aims to address, there is a risk that substantial outcome-level changes may not be detectable by the end of the programme”

It is also important to highlight that the BRACED programme theory of change is based on a bottom-up and top-down assumption. The bottom-up element is the field-based projects that are the focus of this report. The assumption was that while the project-level community-based approaches will achieve and deliver sustained outcomes and impact on people's resilience to climate extremes, successful practices and approaches would be replicated and scaled up through the (separate) top-down provision of national policy and capacity support and policy influence. The delays in the design and implementation of this complementary top-down work may hinder impact of the overall BRACED programme. Based on the findings of this report, the BRACED KM will identify any implications for the pathways and assumptions about how change happens and revise the programme-level theory of change accordingly, in conjunction with DFID, the BRACED Fund Manager (FM) and the project IPs.

BRACED is a unique programme. With IPs' work firmly rooted in practice, we hope that the findings and lessons emerging from this report will constitute a ground-breaking contribution to knowledge and evidence generation efforts in the field of climate and disaster resilience programmes and accompanying monitoring and results reporting efforts.

Key messages and recommendations

Six key messages with cross-cutting recommendations for both the KM at the programme level and IPs at the project level have been identified through the findings of this report. Together, these will improve the BRACED programme's ongoing efforts to build knowledge and evidence on what works to strengthen resilience.

It is important to note that BRACED is nearly two years into its three-year implementation timeframe. There are therefore some limitations to what

can be adapted and achieved in the remainder of the programme. That said, many of the recommendations proposed are in line with – and further build upon – existing research, monitoring and learning work, particularly of the KM, creating scope for their application. The recommendations are not prescriptive; it is suggested that IPs consider them in the context of their projects. The key messages and recommendations might also be relevant for those designing and implementing other resilience-building projects and programmes.

Key message 1: Accessing and using weather and climate information is a critical element in building anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities.

To be successful, projects need to overcome potential challenges and bias towards prioritising localised short-term climate information. More support should be offered to IPs and communities in building bridges between the seemingly easier use of near-term information and the more challenging use of longer-term information.

Recommendations: BRACED presents a unique opportunity to integrate climate services into resilience programming. To achieve this, IPs and the KM should further explore:

- **The incentives and motivations behind the observed focus on near-term climate information.** Is this driven by supply constraints (e.g. lack of available data or capacity) or by a lack of demand (e.g. stakeholders not asking for longer term projections)? If it is the former, the KM should support IPs in addressing these constraints (e.g. through its Climate and Weather Helpdesk).
- **The new roles that IPs are playing as intermediaries/advisors between formal climate services and communities.** How are these advisory functions perceived by the targeted users over time? (There is KM research specifically looking at this.)
- **The extent to which the limited reference to historical data or longer-term (decadal to multi-decadal) projections limits the adaptation components of BRACED projects.**

Key message 2: Achieving meaningful resilience outcomes requires knowledge, skills and capacities that go beyond the expertise of a particular IP. Effective partnerships are a critical component of resilience-building programmes in order to draw on each other's expertise, knowledge, experience and resources and to join forces for common goals as much as possible. Identifying the 'right' combination of partners is as important as the design and implementation of project activities. Even when knowledge, financial means and a supportive (governance) environment are often still lacking, IPs can sometimes produce creative, affordable and applicable technologies and solutions through networking and partnerships.

Recommendations: Partnerships that have the potential to provide effective approaches to resilience-building are vital for the BRACED projects to yield maximum impact. During the remainder of BRACED, IPs and the KM should develop a better understanding about the following:

- **The role of partnerships in resilience-building, and how best to ensure that partnerships are greater than the sum of their parts.** There is a need to better understand how inter-organisational learning across partners translates into longer-term, positive impacts to increase community resilience.
 - **Establishing a means of credibly measuring, reviewing and documenting partnerships, in terms of both results and processes.**
-

Key message 3: The starting point for enhancing individuals' resilience is recognising and addressing social exclusion and gender inequality. While improvements in women's participation in projects' activities and access to resources are fundamental steps to take, they do not in themselves change power relations, and therefore may not translate into inclusive decision-making.

Recommendations: In order to build a better understanding of how social exclusion and inequality can be addressed, IPs and the KM should:

- **Pay closer attention to the sociocultural aspects underpinning anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities.** This includes improving the analysis between transforming gender relations and the project's theory of change for resilience-building.
 - **Document cases where inclusive decision-making takes place,** in particular, examples illustrating the links between participation, voice and power.
 - **Further investigate and document the specific types of activities and strategies that should be integrated in resilience programming to support inclusive decision-making.**
-

Key message 4: Building anticipatory and absorptive capacity to deal with current risks and threats is the first step for communities that are highly vulnerable to climate change. As BRACED projects continue in years 2 and 3, it will be important to think about how anticipatory and absorptive capacities can be developed in ways that provide a solid foundation for building adaptive

capacity in the longer term. Understanding how resilience capacities interrelate – and revisiting whether it is more challenging to build adaptive capacity in the lifespan of a BRACED project – will be a key insight to inform theories for building community-level resilience on the ground.

Recommendations: To build a comprehensive understanding of resilience outcomes and inform future resilience theory, programme design and implementation, IPs and the KM should consider the following in the remainder of BRACED:

- **In places where communities are prioritising enhancing anticipatory and absorptive capacity, investigate how these capacities are being built** in ways that provide a solid foundation for building adaptive capacity in the longer term.
- **As shocks and stresses occur, document if and how people and communities are learning from these**, and whether they rebuild in ways that reduce their future vulnerability.
- **Investigate the role that community groups play in enhancing social capital**, and thus enabling communities to cope with disaster events and strengthen their absorptive capacity.
- **Document the level of integration, layering, timing and sequencing of the different capacity-building activities** needed to improve absorptive, adaptive and anticipatory capacities.

Key message 5: While resilience-building interventions have building capacity to manage shocks and stresses as a primary objective, addressing and dealing with the socioeconomic and political dimensions of resilience-building are equally important. Writing operational risks away into an assumption column is not enough. The operational challenges of working in complex settings not only call for more pragmatic project designs and time frames, but also for exploring how links to other programmes addressing issues, such as peacebuilding and governance reforms, are necessary prerequisites for climate resilience programmes.

Recommendations: Improving programme design and implementation begins with the recognition and addressing of the 'real-life' challenges involved in implementing resilience-building projects and programmes. IPs and the KM should work closely together to develop an evidence base and better understanding of:

- **The role of contingency fund mechanisms in resilience-building programmes, along with the extent to which they can**

support protecting resilience gains both in advance of, and in the face of shocks and stresses during the project cycle. The KM is already working with recipient IPs of the PHASE funding, on an evaluative learning piece with this as its focus.

- **The opportunities and trade-offs of integrating climate disaster and peacebuilding goals as prerequisite criteria for resilience-building interventions**, by engaging conflict experts.
- **How to better integrate context analysis, beyond merely listing risks and assumptions, in programme design and M&E.** The design and implementation of resilience-building programmes should include not only technical aspects, but also the sociocultural factors that influence attitudes, behaviour and practice.

Key message 6: While resilience-building projects focus on building anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacity to shocks and stresses, in practice resilience-building programmes seem to be, at their core, 'good' development projects with 'tweaks'. BRACED has come a long way in conceptualising and operationalising resilience in practice. IPs have also developed tailored indices and established baselines in order to measure progress and achievements. Understanding the factors that constitute the resilience of particular households is the starting point for devising, deploying and implementing resilience-building strategies. Evidence and emerging lessons to date highlights that BRACED routes to resilience are underpinned by development programming that explicitly takes climate shocks and stresses into account and builds stakeholders' capacity to manage climate and disaster risk. While there is evidence that such approaches require in-depth assessments and analysis of stakeholders' vulnerabilities and capacities, it is difficult to identify – from year 1 reports – how such approaches translate into a 'different' set of activities that go beyond 'good' development work and risk management approaches.

Recommendations: There is a risk that BRACED may look like 'old wine in new bottles'. In order to support effective project and programme design, implementation, M&E and future funding by the end of the programme, the **KM along with IPs should identify and develop a set of criteria that identifies what makes resilience-building different in practice.**

Specific reflections, lessons and recommendations on monitoring and results reporting can be found in the companion report, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED'.

Questions for further reflection, debate and learning

With the aim of contributing to ongoing learning about resilience programming, the authors wish to engage project IPs, the KM, DFID and wider audiences in considering two critical questions that arise as a result of the findings of this report. Emerging insights shed some light for initiating discussion; however, the BRACED programme should continue to answer the following questions throughout its lifetime:

What is BRACED doing differently? The question that arises in practice is: what 'tweaks' should we expect to see in projects that otherwise draw heavily from good 'simple' local development? Emerging evidence to date suggests that, at the community level, integrated disaster risk management with development approaches is one way of enhancing resilience. Put differently, the BRACED projects show that resilience is built through good development with 'tweaks' that support communities to deal with shocks and stresses. At the programming and organisational level, however, resilience-building approaches require working in different partnerships, using different kinds of information and being much more flexible in planning and spending. To some extent, that may not alter the content of the interventions at the household level, but it certainly changes the way the project implementer has to plan and deliver interventions.

“Resilience-building approaches require working in different partnerships, using different kinds of information and being much more flexible in planning and spending”

What is a realistic time frame in which to strengthen resilience and build a solid evidence base? Evidence to date suggests that two key factors question the achievability of the overall programme. First, at the project level, setting up the structures and partnerships required to implement project activities (that is, the foundations for resilience-building activities) takes longer than originally envisaged. Second, even if objectives are met, it is questionable whether it is possible to generate the evidence to demonstrate that resilience has been built within the time frame of the projects. This is because building resilience requires attitudinal, behavioural and capacity changes, all of which take time. IPs and the KM may have set goals that are too ambitious, both in terms of achieving objectives and generating evidence and lessons on what works and what does not in building resilience to climate extremes and disasters. A three-year programme such as BRACED should not expect ultimate lessons on 'what works best' to build resilience but, rather, to generate emerging guidance in terms of tweaks to good development and promising ways of working to build and evaluate anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities.



1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Image: Asian
Development Bank

1.1 The BRACED programme

The three-year, £110 million DFID-funded Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) programme¹ aims to build the resilience of up to 5 million vulnerable people against climate extremes and disasters. It was launched in January 2015 and supports over 120 organisations in 15 consortia across 13 countries in East Africa, the Sahel and Asia.

The 15 projects are led by BRACED Implementing Partners (IPs) who are connected through a Fund Manager (FM) and a Knowledge Manager (KM). The FM is responsible for overseeing the delivery of BRACED projects. The KM² leads the monitoring, evaluation and research activities based on the projects at the programme level. The evidence and knowledge generated feeds into learning, uptake and communication activities in order to effect change across and beyond the BRACED focus countries (see annex 1 for more information about the BRACED components).

¹ www.braced.org

² BRACED Knowledge Manager (2016) Learning about resilience through the BRACED programme: An introduction to the role of the BRACED Knowledge Manager. BRACED Knowledge Manager information leaflet. London: ODI

One key contribution to the BRACED KM's work is an annual programme-level synthesis and analysis of BRACED projects' annual monitoring and results reporting. This is based on a BRACED programme theory of change (see annex 2) and supporting Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework and system developed by the KM Monitoring and Results Reporting (MRR) team to understand how resilience is being built in BRACED. (For further information on the BRACED theory of change, M&E framework and system, see the companion report, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED',³ and the BRACED M&E Guidance Notes.⁴ To understand how the MRR work fits within a broader M&E system implemented by both the KM and FM, see annex 3.)

1.2 Purpose of this report

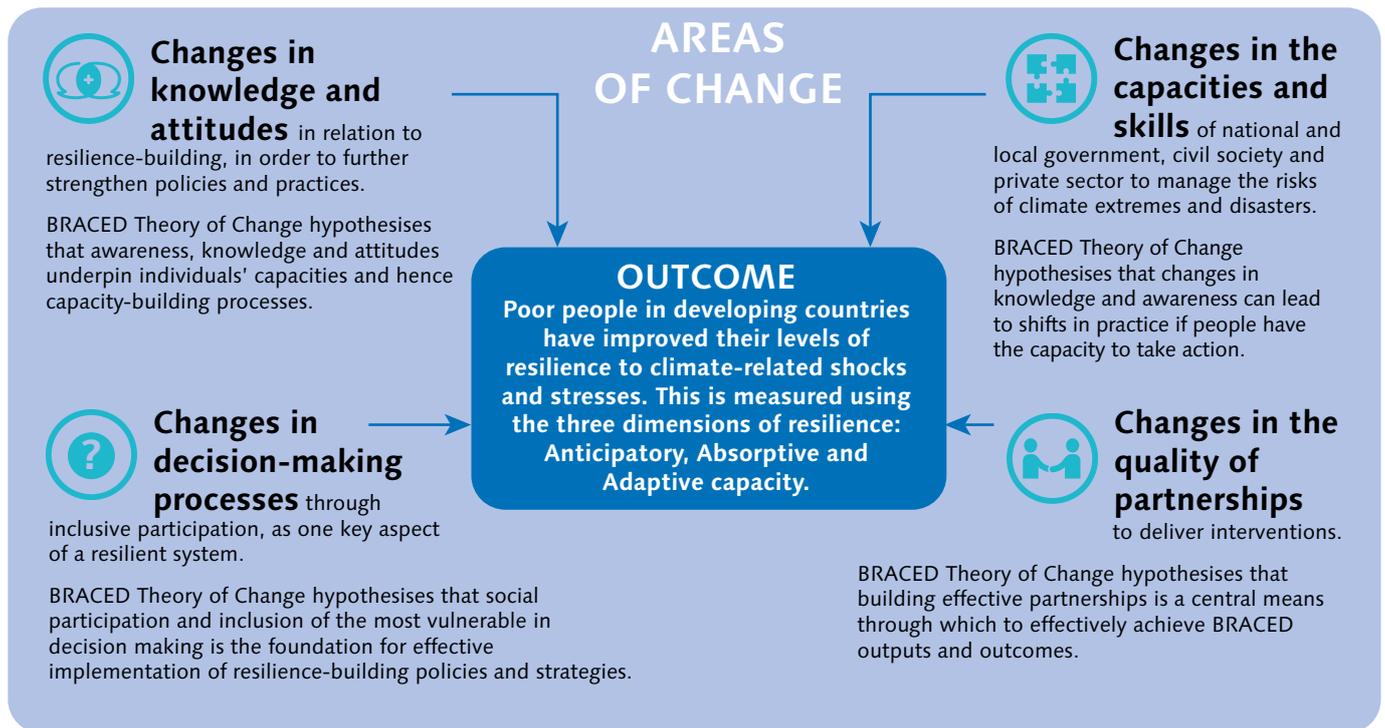
This report is the culmination of the BRACED KM's MRR work to date. It examines the following question: **How are BRACED projects building resilience to climate extremes and disasters?** The report outlines key evidence and findings in response to this central question bringing together and synthesising evidence from IPs' year 1 project annual reports at the programme level. In particular, it examines progress against two elements of the BRACED theory of change: the pathways to resilience and the expected outcomes. Figure 2 illustrates this part of the theory of change.

“This report is the culmination of the BRACED Knowledge Manager's MRR work to date. It examines the following question: How are BRACED projects building resilience to climate extremes and disasters?”

Each BRACED project is using different intervention strategies and being implemented in different climatic and operating contexts. (For details on the projects, see annex 4.) This report identifies emerging themes, challenges and draws broader lessons about changes in resilience, how these can be understood and the factors shaping them. It is anticipated that these will be further built upon by research, monitoring and evaluation of both IPs and the KM during the remainder of the programme. (For details of the KM's ongoing research work see annex 8.)

- 3 Silva Villanueva, P., Gould, C. (2016) 'Routes to Resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Reflection Paper.
- 4 Silva Villanueva, P., Gould, C., Gregorowski, R., Bahadur, A. (2015) 'BRACED programme monitoring and evaluation guidance notes'. BRACED Knowledge Manager.

Figure 2: BRACED Areas of Change



A companion paper produced at the same time as this one, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED', examines a related question: 'What lessons have we learnt from the monitoring and results reporting efforts to date in BRACED?' This reflection paper reflects on the M&E framework itself and the experiences of the KM in rolling out the framework and testing it for the first time through the year 1 project- to programme-reporting process followed in order to produce this synthesis report.

This report focuses on *how change is happening* across the BRACED programme rather than on the project or programme results per se. The synthesis does not aim to evaluate BRACED project-level interventions or pass judgement on IPs' progress or performance.

This report is aimed at the following audiences:

- **BRACED Project Implementing Partners:** a qualitative assessment of year 1 results, evidence and learning across projects. This will enable further shared learning between the KM and IPs, as well as peer-to-peer learning on how change is happening in BRACED. This may, in turn, support IPs' own revision of their project theories of change.⁵
- **BRACED Knowledge Manager:** a foundational piece of evidence that informs the wider KM evidence generation process. It is anticipated that the report content will be drawn upon in the KM's forthcoming mid-term evidence and learning report.
- **BRACED donor DFID:** a qualitative assessment of year 1 results, evidence and learning across projects. It is anticipated that DFID will be most interested in how the BRACED programme is building resilience so far.
- **Others designing, implementing and funding resilience-building programmes:** a contribution to broader sectoral knowledge about designing and implementing resilience-building programmes. The findings, lessons and recommendations from this report build on the work of BRACED project IPs firmly grounded in practice.

⁵ BRACED project Implementing Partners will review their project theories of change based on the results of their year 1 annual reporting and project mid-term review.



2. METHODOLOGY

Image:
Olivier Girard,
(CIFOR)

2.1 Making sense of the project data

Project IPs have provided systematic qualitative and explanatory reporting for the first time on the changes that are happening as a result of their projects, and how the context is affecting these changes. The set of IP year 1 annual reports detail the progress and learning of 14 BRACED projects against the BRACED M&E framework.⁶ This includes reporting on:

- the resilience pathways that enable projects to move from outputs to outcomes
- project resilience outcomes in terms of resilience capacities
- how the context has affected the project's resilience-building efforts.

This report combines a framework and thematic synthesis approach to identify themes across the BRACED projects and enable a programme-level analysis. Framework and thematic synthesis are an approach to systematic qualitative synthesis that is often used to identify, analyse and report patterns (or recurring themes) within primary qualitative data, to explain and answer particular questions. The following table summarises the framework used and its questions

⁶ IPs submitted their first annual reports on 31 May 2016 for the period to 31 March 2016.

that formed the basis of the project- to programme-level synthesis (based on the M&E framework):

Table 1: Programme synthesis analytical framework

OVERARCHING QUESTION	THEME	SUB-QUESTIONS
How are BRACED components A&B building resilience to climate extremes and disasters?	Pathways to resilience	<p>How are BRACED projects improving knowledge and influencing attitudes?</p> <p>How are BRACED projects strengthening capacities and skills of different stakeholders?</p> <p>To what extent is working in partnerships improving BRACED project interventions?</p> <p>How are BRACED projects influencing decision-making processes?</p>
	Understanding resilience outcomes	To what extent can we see change happening in terms of capacity to anticipate, adapt to and absorb climate shocks and stresses?
	Resilience in context	To what extent is the context enabling or constraining change?

2.2 Moving from project data to a broader view

The project- to programme-level synthesis was undertaken as follows:

1. Project-level analysis and synthesis (July 2016)

- a. First, we developed a **project screening grid** (see annex 5) with a set of 20 questions. The purpose of this was to closely examine each component of the BRACED M&E framework.
- b. We then **assessed and systematically reviewed the set of project annual reports**, summarising each one by capturing the answers to the same set of 20 questions in an Excel spreadsheet. During this process, **recurring key words** for each question were identified.
- c. Once project reports were summarised against the project screening grid, we **organised recurring key words into project-specific descriptive themes**. This required the expert judgement of the MRR team to ensure the standardisation of definitions across projects. This resulted in a clear understanding about each project's efforts and challenges to date.
- d. At this stage, we **synthesised each annual report at the project level against the analytical framework** outlined above. This produced a new interpretation that went beyond the results covered in the IP's report and enabled standardisation across projects.

2. Project- to programme-level synthesis and analysis (August–November 2016)

- a. Once project-level data had been examined and synthesised against a common set of questions and framework, we proceeded with a programme-level thematic synthesis. This was completed against the core question of this report, using a **comparative analysis of the project-level themes**. Content analysis led to the identification and mapping of recurring themes at programme level (see annex 6). This was guided by the expert knowledge and interpretation of the MRR team, based on our intimate knowledge of the programme. This analysis identified common practices, as well as the main difficulties and factors of success, representative good practices and challenges, and generated learning on specific issues.
 - b. Once programme-level themes were identified, we conducted **consultations with the ongoing KM research streams** to deepen the analysis and understanding of findings. This includes: Climate information and services,⁷ Gender,⁸ Reality of Resilience,⁹ Climate resilience and financial services,¹⁰ The role of contingency mechanisms in resilience programmes,¹¹ Tracking resilience (3As)¹² and Measuring resilience.¹³ (References to the KM's ongoing research work are provided in annex 8.)
3. Finally, a **webinar with representatives from 10 IPs** was held, in October 2016, to present preliminary findings and provide a space for sharing further inputs and lessons based on their own reporting experiences. Colleagues from the FM were also consulted for their feedback and reflections on the BRACED M&E framework, based on their ongoing interactions with IPs as part of donor monitoring.

7 Wilkinson, E., Budimir, M., Ahmed, A. K. and Ouma, G. (2015) 'Climate Information and services in BRACED countries'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI; Jones, L., Harvey, B. and Godfrey-Woods, R. (2016) 'The changing role of NGOs in supporting climate services'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

8 Le Masson, V., Norton, A. and Wilkinson, E. (2015) 'Gender and Resilience'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI; Le Masson, V. (2015) 'Gender and Resilience: from theory to practice'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

9 <http://www.braced.org/reality-of-resilience/case-studies>

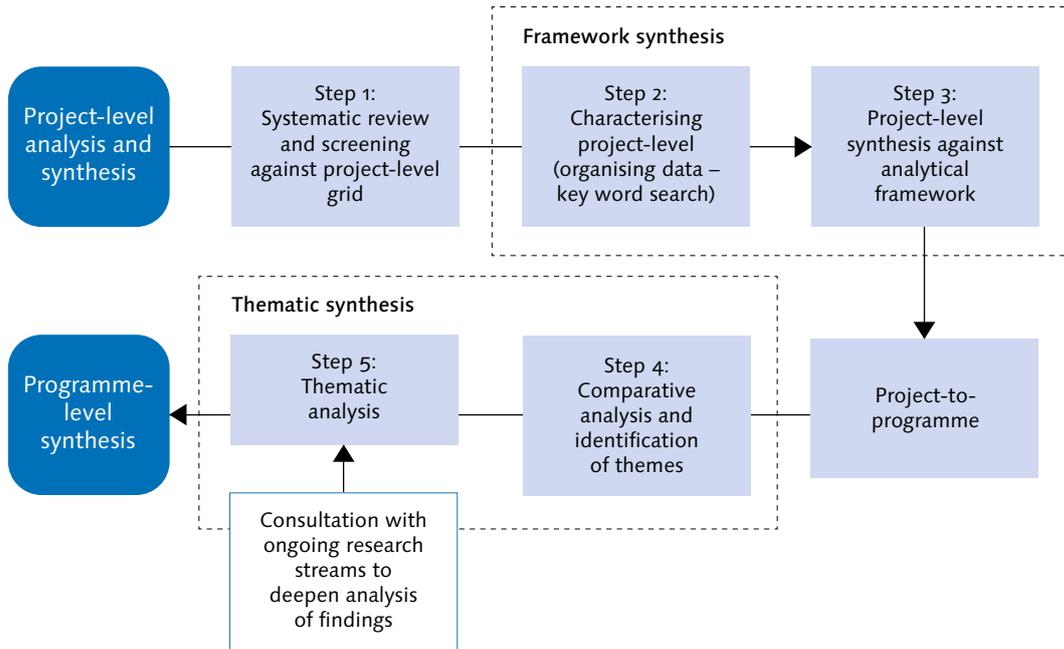
10 Haworth A., Frandon-Martinez C., Fayolle, V. and Simonet, C. (2016) 'Climate resilience and financial services: Lessons from Ethiopia, Mali and Myanmar'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

11 Peters, K., Venton, P., Pichon, F., Jones, L. (2016) 'Evaluative learning for resilience: Providing Humanitarian Assistance for Sahel Emergencies (PHASE)'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Evaluation Paper. London: ODI.

12 Bahadur, A.V., Peters, K., Wilkinson, E., Pichon, F., Gray, K. and Tanner, T. (2015) 'The 3As: Tracking resilience across BRACED'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

13 Wilson, D. and Yaron, G. (2016) 'Laying the foundations for measuring resilience'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

Figure 3: Synthesis methodology



2.3 Limitations

The IPs' annual reports are the main source of data providing the evidence base for the programme-level analysis and, subsequently, this report. They are self-reported.¹⁴ The synthesis has attempted to overcome any bias this may create by referring to MRR team knowledge of the projects as well as other project and KM data sources.

The BRACED M&E framework tracks progress against complex change processes. In BRACED, monitoring and results reporting aims to go beyond asking 'Is the set of BRACED projects taking the actions they said they would take?' to ask 'How is BRACED progressing towards the expected change?' The difference between these two approaches is extremely important. In the more limited approach, monitoring and reporting may focus on a) tracking project activities and outputs and b) the use of resources. In the broader approach, it also involves:

- tracking stakeholders' changes in policy and practice
- testing project assumptions
- recording strategies and actions being taken by partners and non-partners
- understanding the extent to which the operational environment enables or constrains change.

The year 1 project annual reports reveal that it is **too early in the programme for this kind of analysis – most reports still focus on deliverables and outputs,**

¹⁴ The MRR team worked with the FM to design the first annual report and train the IPs in its completion. The companion report 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED' offers more information on the reporting templates.

with few illustrative examples of change. Where change has been reported and analysed, the data is anecdotal at this stage.

While IPs reported against all aspects of the BRACED M&E framework, and often very comprehensively, there are a number of factors that have limited the analysis. Many of the original risks identified when planning the synthesis were avoided, while most of the ones that did arise were anticipated:

- BRACED projects cover a wide range of issues and operate in very different contexts, from securing, servicing and promoting trans-border livestock mobility across the Sahel, to supporting smallholder farmers in Nepal to take advantage of economic opportunities and investments in climate-smart technologies. This **project and context specificity has proven a challenge for the programme-level synthesis and aggregation of diverse data.** This report has sought to overcome this by following a thematic synthesis analysis, enabling the identification of common patterns and themes across the set of projects.
- The BRACED KM M&E framework was designed and set up once the BRACED projects had already been designed and approved, meaning the project-level theories of change and M&E frameworks had already been established. **Project-level M&E systems were therefore not originally developed to capture all the dimensions of the programme-level M&E framework.** As a result, IPs have struggled to adhere to the overarching programme-wide definitions of the M&E framework.¹⁵ While it is positive that IPs have taken ownership of these and interpreted them for their project context, those times where the overarching definitions have not been followed have made comparable analysis more difficult. This report has sought to overcome this by synthesising project-level data against the programme-level definitions as set in the original **BRACED M&E Guidance Notes** and using MRR team expert judgement where differences arise.
- On the whole, **IPs have not reported against outcome-level results for year 1** (only four of the 14 IPs have provided this data). This is partly due to a) the set-up and implementation delays seen across the programme and b) project-level M&E systems not being established to measure and report on outcome-level results on an annual basis. IPs originally planned for baseline, mid-line and end-line data collection. Even those reporting at the outcome level this time have indicated that it is too early in the programme to see outcome-level change. However, all IPs have been able to outline their theory of how they expect the project to build resilience through the '3As' over its lifetime.
- While a lot of data was received on the context of each project, **there has been limited analysis of how the context is enabling or constraining change.** The present report has sought to overcome this by consulting with BRACED KM research colleagues in order to deepen the analysis based on their research work.

¹⁵ This is particularly apparent when outlining the different levels of change (expect, like and love to see), both anticipated and realised, across the four Areas of Change.

The companion report, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED', further explores some of these challenges and issues in terms of the evidence and learning they offer on how to monitor and measure resilience-building.

2.4 Structure of the report

As this report intends to contribute to BRACED knowledge and evidence generation efforts, beyond presenting key findings and lessons against specific programme-level themes, it contains a number of project-level illustrative examples. What makes BRACED rich is the diversity of projects, contexts and approaches. Even though programme-level themes have emerged, these have been implemented differently in different contexts in practice – and the present report aims to illustrate such diversity and differences in approaches. The content of the report is substantial in order to sufficiently represent and analyse the data of 14 different projects, from a programme perspective, using the three different lenses of the BRACED M&E framework. The following information is intended to help the reader to navigate through the report:

- **Sections 3, 4 and 5** present findings against each element of the BRACED M&E framework in turn: **pathways to resilience; resilience outcomes; and resilience in context**.
 - **Key findings and lessons are highlighted at the start of each section.** Despite the wide range and diversity of contexts, projects and approaches, BRACED projects share a number of common themes. These are identified and analysed under each part of the M&E framework. (Annex 6 provides a complete mapping of projects' activities and emerging themes.)
 - **Illustrative examples provide a short narrative about a specific project to clarify a particular theme or finding.** As many projects as possible have been included as illustrative examples to demonstrate the number and breadth of projects. These examples should not be taken to provide a statistically significant representation. (A small number of these illustrative examples are provided in the main report, with supplementary illustrative examples available in [annex 7](#).)
 - In order to foster reflection and learning, a series of text boxes with points for reflection and specific examples of contextual factors affecting projects are also highlighted.
- **Section 6** draws the previous three parts together, providing **conclusions and recommendations for BRACED stakeholders** and suggesting areas for further debate and reflection.

BRACED projects, along with the evidence generated by IPs are referred to as project names and highlighted in bold, while a list of the project names and acronyms can be found in [annex 4](#).



3. PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE

Image:
Neil Palmer (CIAT)

This section describes and analyses the processes and pathways through which BRACED projects are contributing to resilience-building at the end of year 1. The BRACED programme theory of change identifies four interrelated '**Areas of Change**' in which change needs to happen to achieve the BRACED programme's long-term objective. These four areas form an integral part of the BRACED programme-level M&E framework. They enable us to better understand the set of processes that link project outputs to resilience outcomes and ultimately to impacts on human well-being. They also provide the framework for assessment of the BRACED trajectory towards impact.

The four Areas of Change are defined as:

1. **Changes in knowledge and attitudes** in relation to resilience-building, in order to further strengthen policies and practices.
 2. **Changes in the capacities and skills** of national and local government, civil society and private sector to manage the risks of climate extremes and disasters.
 3. **Changes in the quality of partnerships** to deliver interventions.
 4. **Changes in decision-making processes** through inclusive participation, as one key aspect of a resilient system.
-

The BRACED programme theory of change does not presuppose that all four areas are necessary for impact to occur. Rather, different combinations are required according to the context that projects operate within and also project visions of change. There are contexts in which it is not necessary for IPs to act in all four areas for meaningful impact to occur, particularly when other actors are advancing work in other areas.

In BRACED, tracking progress against each Area of Change is influenced by Outcome Mapping¹⁶ thinking, which encourages progress monitoring in complex and non-linear development processes. The desired changes inherent in project designs are defined by IPs in terms of 'expect to see', 'like to see', and 'love to see'. These 'Progress Markers' indicate the levels of progress that can be expected in relation to each stakeholder as the BRACED projects evolve over the three-year period. 'Boundary partners' in the context of BRACED are those individuals and groups that IPs work and interact with under the project, in order to bring about change under one or more Areas of Change, beyond just direct project beneficiaries. (For more information on the Areas of Change, see Note 3 of the BRACED M&E Guidance Notes.)

3.1 Changes in resilience knowledge and attitudes

About this Area of Change: In order to strengthen policy and practice, this Area of Change covers changes in knowledge and attitudes towards climate and disaster resilience. The BRACED programme theory of change hypothesises that awareness, knowledge and attitudes underpin individuals' capacities and hence capacity-building processes. At this level, activities are geared towards influencing attitudes and behaviour and generating incentives to adopt and apply new practises. Main key stakeholders in BRACED projects include local communities and local authorities.

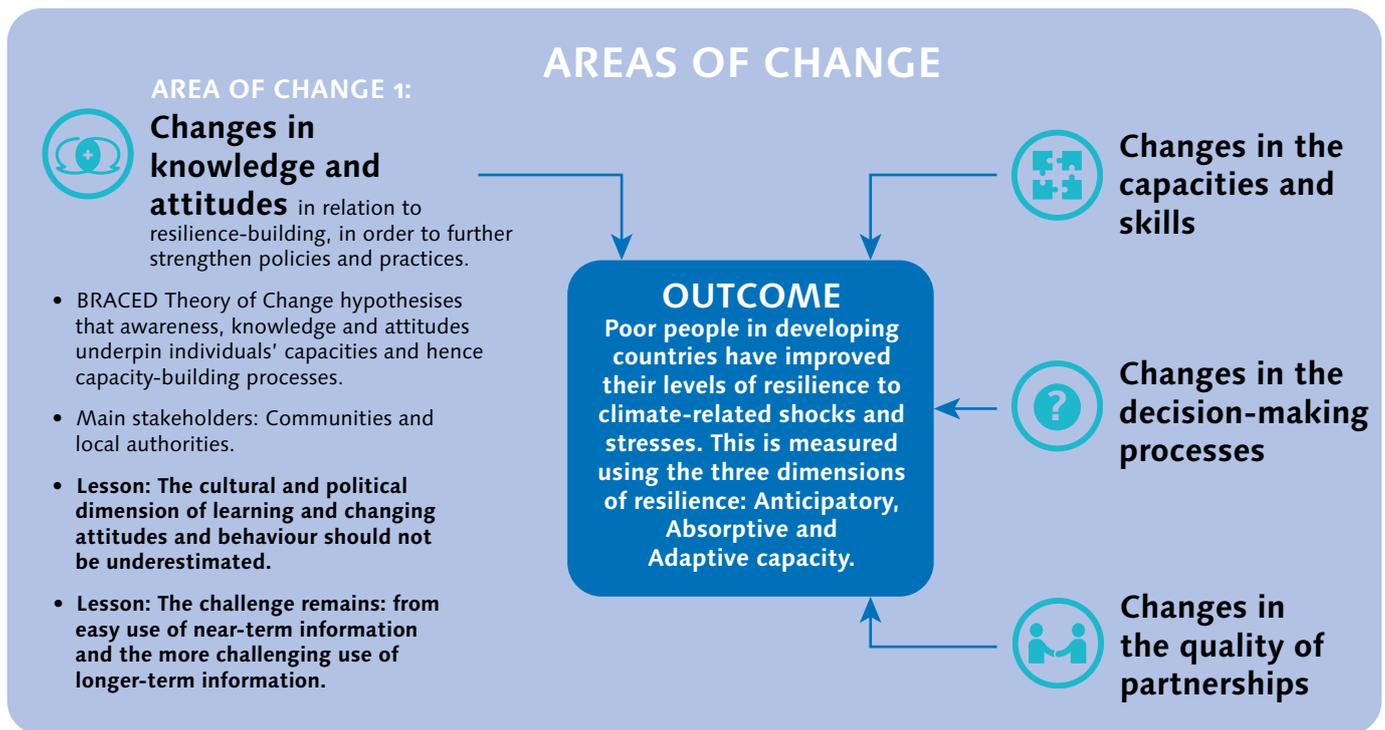
Summary of key findings

Level of change: The majority of IPs' activities can be seen as addressing the 'expect to see' progress markers, as they are contributing to knowledge around resilience to climate change and creating an enabling environment for increasing capacity and skills to improve resilience, in particular at the household and community level.

Projects' progress to date suggests that community dialogues and participatory planning processes are the entry point and contribute to increasing awareness and knowledge about climate and disaster

¹⁶ Outcome Mapping: puts people at the centre, defines outcomes as changes in behaviour and helps measure contribution to complex change processes. (Source: Outcome Mapping website: www.outcomemapping.ca).

Figure 4: Key findings from the first Area of Change – Knowledge and attitudes



resilience processes and approaches. Cultural beliefs, gender dynamics and social norms are key factors that influence changes in awareness and knowledge, particularly in relation to climate and weather information.

In relation to the use of climate and weather information, efforts to date have predominantly focused on setting up processes and partnerships for delivering climate information to stakeholders. Due to the early stages of activities centred on improving 'access' to climate information, the actual use of weather forecasts has been limited to the planning of project activities. However, the widespread use of information related to a major event (El Niño) confirms that IPs are proving effective in acting as intermediaries between more formal climate services, such as national meteorological offices and communities.

The next reporting period (year 2) should be one of great importance in terms of assessing the level of uptake and impact achieved. One area of progress that should be monitored is work to address the constraining factors around access to and use of climate information. Many of the challenges that have been identified by IPs are well known, but there are also opportunities to address questions of information literacy, timing of information availability, lack of training and lack of coordination.

Emerging lessons

- The cultural and political dimension of learning and changing attitudes and behaviour should not be underestimated.**
 Raising awareness and knowledge about climate and disaster resilience underpins the need to drive changes in individuals and communities' behaviour and practice. Participatory and community-based assessments and planning processes might be the starting point towards change; however, BRACED could be missing an important part of the change story if IPs do not better define and report how projects address the cultural, social and political dimensions that underpin stakeholders' practices.
 - The challenge remains: from easy use of near-term information and the more challenging use of longer-term information.**
 Near-term climate information seems readily available and easily applicable for IPs in the majority of contexts. The use of longer-term historical data or projections is much more limited, which affects the adaptation-specific dimensions of BRACED to some extent. More support should be offered to IPs and communities in building bridges between the seemingly easy use of near-term information and the more challenging use of longer-term information.
-

How is progress tracked? In BRACED, knowledge transfer mechanisms are tracked through a series of progress markers. These help us understand the extent to which the acquisition of new knowledge leads to changes in attitude and, ultimately, to the adoption of new practices. IPs report progress against three overarching progress markers that reflect the progression towards the desired level of change. Table 2 illustrates the progress markers within this Area of Change. This programme-level synthesis and analysis has considered the changes reported by IPs and identified emerging themes around these overarching progress markers.

Table 2: Knowledge and attitudes progress markers

EXPECT TO SEE	LIKE TO SEE	LOVE TO SEE
Knowledge is transferred	Knowledge is taken up and applied	Knowledge informs wider policy and practice (beyond beneficiaries)

As part of finalising their project-level M&E and in response to KM feedback, each IP identified what changes they expected, would like and would love to see

in each relevant project stakeholder during the lifetime of the project.¹⁷ At the end of year 1, they then reported change against these as a 'baseline'.

- At the 'expect to see' level, IPs' specific progress markers included the transfer of basic knowledge and understanding of key concepts and processes through targeted training activities and the participation of local communities and local government in planning processes.
- At the 'like to see' level, progress markers included ownership of project activities, the integration of community plans into local government plans and participation of governments and communities in the development of action plans.
- At the 'love to see' level, progress markers included the application of new knowledge into non-targeted community plans and actions.

Addressing knowledge and attitudes: emerging themes

Much of the work conducted by IPs during year 1 has been in the area of awareness raising and knowledge generation. Projects have included specific awareness-raising activities as well as informal and formal stakeholder meetings to spark discussions, interest and incentives. Intrinsic factors, such as cultural beliefs, perceptions and social norms, may determine the extent to which knowledge influences attitudes and practice. During year 1, most IPs reported changes emerging in two themes. (Annex 6 contains a complete mapping of projects' activities and emerging themes.)

EMERGING THEME 1: COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

For most BRACED projects, mobilisation and awareness raising are the starting point for addressing immediate concerns and knowledge gaps, as well as in organising stakeholders around wider issues (10 projects). To this end, community-based planning processes play a central role for enhancing knowledge and influencing attitudes of local communities and other stakeholders. For the most part, these planning processes are used to identify local priorities and needs while strengthening the knowledge base about climatic risk and vulnerabilities.

**“Across BRACED projects, planning processes
are highly context-specific and they take
different names and processes”**

Fostering local planning processes is viewed as the key entry point for building knowledge and understanding about climatic and disaster risk. Across BRACED

¹⁷ A small number of IPs did not identify stakeholders and progress markers for each Area of Change as part of their project M&E plan. To fill this gap, these IPs developed a set of 'baseline' progress markers as part of their year 1 reporting.

projects, planning processes are highly context-specific and they take different names and processes. This includes Local Adaptation Plans for Action (LAPAs) (**ANUKULAN**), Village Risk Management plans through BRAPA analysis (**CIARE**, **Zaman Lebidi**), Community-based Disaster Risk Management plans (CBDRM) (**SUR1M**), Community Adaptation Action Plans (CAADP) (**PRESENCES**) and community participatory resilience assessments (**DCF**). Common to all these processes is the shared objective of fostering participatory learning and local planning that is focused on local needs and priorities.

Ensuring and promoting the equal participation of men and women in the planning and decision-making process is also a key feature across these approaches. Where projects were able to report statistics disaggregated by gender (9 projects), there was often relatively high participation of women. However, IPs did not clearly report the extent to which, beyond participation, women's priorities are included in the planning process. This is explored further in relation to inclusive resilience-building (see section 3.4).

Through the planning process, considerable efforts and progress have been made in relation to establishing groups and structures that facilitate knowledge transfer (11 out of 14). Leadership, ownership and participation are strengthened through the establishment of community groups who are responsible for the implementation of the planned activities. It is expected that the leaders and champions of such groups would act as the key change agents to shifts in attitudes to help eliminate any barriers to enabling capacity. Examples of these community groups include: Early Warning Committees in Burkina Faso (**Zaman Lebidi**) Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in Myanmar (**Myanmar Alliance**), Kenya/Uganda (**PROGRESS**) and Chad (**BRICS**); Farmer groups in Niger/Mali (**SUR1M**); Resilience and Adaptation Committees in Kenya and Uganda (**PROGRESS**) and Adaptation committees in Mali and Senegal (**DCF**). Through these groups, beyond 'traditional' knowledge transfer and awareness-raising activities, BRACED projects foster experiential learning processes, linking training with practice and translating experience into knowledge. IP reports present early indications of ownership and leadership potentially paving the way for inclusive implementation processes (see section 3.4, Area of Change 4: Inclusive decision-making processes).

A common feature across BRACED projects is the need to strengthen the planning process through training and capacity building, in particular in relation to local government stakeholders and technical services (9 out of 14 projects). This is explored further in relation to capacity building in section 3.2. Yet, BRACED projects tend to assume a relatively straightforward, linear process of knowledge transfer and changes in practices and capacities. Discussions about power relations, incentives and cultural norms are hardly mentioned in year 1 reports. Documenting the individual and collective processes of attitudinal change is something that should be addressed in next year's project reporting.

Differences can be found in the processes by which IPs engage local governments in the planning processes. In BRACED projects that focus on disaster risk management planning, there is a tendency to use these community-level

planning processes to link to government. In Mali, the **RIC4REC** project supports community working groups to support village risk assessments and develop community-based plans. The project facilitated meetings between communities and local councils, where the community-based disaster risk management plans and priorities were presented. Similarly, the **ANUKULAN** project is working with the Village Development Committees and local population to develop local adaptation plans of action (LAPAs). These LAPAs intend to integrate disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation planning, which previously had been treated as administratively separate by the government.

During year 1, IPs reported that through participatory assessment and planning processes and the establishment of local committees, communities and the local government demonstrated increased levels of understanding of key concepts and processes, such as climate change, DRR, and vulnerability and capacity assessments (10 out of 14 projects). A review of IPs' reports highlights that it is too early in the programme to demonstrate the extent to which improvements in awareness and knowledge are influencing changes in planning processes. To date, projects have engaged communities and local governments in the development of disaster risk management/climate change adaptation community-based plans. Some examples provided by IPs indicate an engagement with local government to integrate these into government development plans. However, the limited reference to integration or mainstreaming processes raises questions about the extent to which BRACED projects will achieve long-lasting, sustainable change. Project mid-term reviews, due in November 2016, may provide supplementary data on this.

When linking community-based planning to higher levels of governance, simple process indicators (i.e. the development of a new policy mainstreaming adaptation or DRR measures, or the establishment of a forum for collaborating on resilience) are not sufficient to understand the change process. These should be accompanied with a more detailed narrative about the enforcement of these policies or an examination of how making these links has resulted in positive changes on project beneficiaries. As projects move past the early stages of implementation, documenting such processes and how they lead to outcome-level changes is as important as noting the processes themselves.

There are also clear differences between these approaches, mainly in relation to the use of climate information. This is another emerging theme of this synthesis.

EMERGING THEME 2: ACCESSING AND USING CLIMATE AND WEATHER INFORMATION

Climate services are key to supporting the resilience of people and communities. A key area of knowledge generation and application in the BRACED programme relates to climate and weather information (14 projects). BRACED attempts to create an enabling environment for better access, use and application of weather and climate information in countries where there are severe challenges in connecting climate information producers and end users. This is an area of ongoing research for the BRACED KM in collaboration with IPs (see [annex 8](#) for references).

The challenge for IPs as climate information intermediaries¹⁸ is to access and use all the types of climate information needed to build anticipatory, adaptive and absorptive capacities to enable beneficiaries to cope with and prepare better for climate extremes in the short term, better plan for increasing seasonal variability and make decisions to adapt to longer-term shifts in averages and climate extremes.¹⁹

Within this context, IPs are widely accessing and using weather and climate information – with a strong bias towards near-term to seasonal time scales. Rainfall data appears to be the most accessed information, with seasonal information on onset and secession dates being widely communicated. In the case of projects covering pastoral communities, information covering home and transhumance areas is provided. In addition, information on temperature, hydrology (**SUR1M**), vegetation coverage (NDVI) (**MAR, BRICS**) are used. Unsurprisingly, given the difference in climatic context, the data sought by the **Myanmar Alliance** is considerably different, focusing on floods, cyclones and storm surge. Use of climate information related to the recent El Niño events was widely reported, and there is considerable evidence of the use of advisories by IPs contributing to averted losses.

Climate and weather information are mostly being used to engage with communities and sub-national policy processes, informing decision-making related to agricultural, pastoral and disaster preparedness activities. The use of climate information in community planning processes has been fairly limited so far. Several projects (including **BRICS, IRISS, PRESENCES, DCF** and **Myanmar Alliance**) are in the early stages of implementing this, or of building on past work to do so. The extent to which climate and weather information is already being used to inform local level decision-making differs between projects.

There are some examples of BRACED IPs using climate information to engage with longer-term planning activities (**ANUKULAN, DCF, RIC4REC**), but these processes tend to be in preparatory or very early stages at this point. This is heavily influenced by the overall state of progress of the IPs in terms of setting up the relevant partnerships and related project activities, as well as the availability of data. For instance, the **IRISS** project reported that: *'Localised weather data is virtually unavailable in South Sudan. Reliable downscaled meteorological predictions are therefore not available, and information accessed in country is largely limited to seasonal regional projections such as those provided by ICPAC and FEWSNET.'* However, the limited reference to historical data (with **MAR** and **ANUKULAN** as two exceptions) or longer-term (decadal to multi-decadal)

¹⁸ Jones, L., Harvey, B. and Godfrey-Wood, R. (2016) 'The changing role of NGOs in supporting climate services'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

¹⁹ For a review of weather and climate information for BRACED programme countries, see Wilkinson, E., Budimir, M., Ahmed, A.K. and Ouma, G. (2015) 'Climate information and services in BRACED countries'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

projections raises questions about the extent to which BRACED IPs are bringing a robust adaptation dimension to their work. This could be investigated further.

Some IPs are still in the early stages of making use of even basic near-term climate and weather information. On the whole, however, there is a clear trend towards them using climate information for resilience-building activities, at least with regard to near-term (daily to seasonal) planning and decision-making. There are a few examples of IPs using the information for more strategic decision-making, either in terms of their own work or in association with local/national authorities. For instance, the **MAR** project reported using climate data to design the Afar drought response project. The **Myanmar Alliance** project has used the data to prepare for hosting a monsoon forum. In Uganda, El Niño forecasts led to the development of a strategy in Karamoja aimed at taking advantage of the rainfall period (**PROGRESS**).

At the community level, there is widespread use of radio, television, community learning groups, theatre and other tailored formats for building awareness and communicating climate information. There are examples of these in table 3 below:

Table 3: Illustrative examples – communication tools and approaches for climate information

PROJECT (COUNTRY)	COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND APPROACHE
DCF (Mali + Senegal)	Partnerships with radio for broadcast in local languages; partnership with technical services to translate climate information for farmers
Myanmar Alliance (Myanmar)	Monsoon forum to share forecasts at state/regional level; climate profiles for local planners; discussions with national television station
PROGRESS (Uganda + Kenya)	Radio weather announcements; shared learning dialogues; drama and songs performed by youth and women's groups
WHH (Burkina Faso)	Broadcasts through community radio stations; local monitoring by farmers
Zaman Lebidi (Burkina Faso)	Radio broadcasts coordinated by partner 'Internews'

In the majority of cases, IPs have either embedded communications partners in their teams or formed external partnerships with them. A significant number of these collaborations are already operational, while others anticipate them being operational for the next cropping season.

Context matters: cultural values and beliefs

Successful use of climate information at community level hinges on understanding how people make sense of changes in their local climate and how they interpret associated risks and opportunities. When sharing knowledge and building awareness about climate information, cultural values may impact the applicability and use of information received by communities. For example, field supervisors and partner organisations in the **PRESENCES** project in Niger reported that the concept of probability behind climate information is a challenge and affects people's trust because community members are used to absolute truths.

Similarly, the **BRICS** report in Chad and Sudan questions the project's basic assumption that if the right early warning information is available, *then* people want to have it and use it. This is not necessarily the case, particularly for pastoralists who are wary of any outside influence or information, due to historic marginalisation. Project theories of change, monitoring and reporting systems need to clearly reflect upon and articulate the hypothesis and assumptions underpinning knowledge transfer processes.

The list of decisions that were informed through the distribution of climate information in year 1 is extensive, particularly at the household to community scales. These tend to focus on immediate and near-term decisions on issues such as cropping, transhumance and responses to extreme weather. One case in point is provided by the **PROGRESS** project. The Kenya Meteorological Department issued an El Niño warning in July 2015. They named 23 counties likely to be affected, including Wajir. The El Niño rains did not happen at the predicted magnitude; however, an average amount of rains caused flash floods in some of the BRACED project villages. The information on the prediction of the El Niño rains was widely disseminated through radio broadcasts, shared learning dialogue and general awareness creation by the Resilience Adaptation Committees. This enabled many households to move to raised grounds, which contributed to reducing the effects of the flash floods. A case in point was Abakore, where 50 households moved from their homes to higher grounds. When the rains eventually came to this area, there was no casualties.

Perhaps because it is early in the programme, there are a limited number of impacts noted beyond the community level. This could be an area of further analysis for the KM at later stages of the programme, as could the introduction of further monitoring of the levels of contribution of IP activities to decision-making (e.g. through contribution analysis).

Point for reflection: Information tends to be readily available, but are IPs making the most of this?

Overwhelmingly, climate information is being sourced from freely available public sources such as met office bulletins and advisories, AGHRYMET advisories, UN websites and online portals. As such, IPs are primarily playing a translation and brokering role. This is in line with what we would have expected.²⁰ However, the extent to which many IPs are actually undertaking further translation (into another language or other formats) in order to 'add value', as opposed to passing along the existing analysis is not clear. It appears that, in many instances, it is simply a matter of passing on this information and having it communicated through appropriate local channels. IPs generally note that the information is easily accessible for them, though they state that this does not mean it is as accessible to communities without the necessary connectivity and levels of literacy. In a small number of cases (**PRESENCES, ANUKULAN**), communities are being identified as sources of local climate information, which is being drawn upon in co-production processes such as participatory scenario planning.

Across the projects, but in West Africa in particular, there appears to be a consistent involvement with the regional or thematic centres of excellence like AGRHYMET, ICPAC and FEWSNET in the acquisition and interpretation of climate information. The involvement of national met services is noted in most cases, though it is not always clear what the nature of that involvement is. In some instances, there are multiple potential providers of information, with some reports of a lack of clarity on how responsibilities have been divided. For instance, in the **Zaman Lebidi** project, both the Burkina Faso and UK met offices are identified as providers but it appears that there have been challenges in getting climate information integrated into implementation activities. They note, for example, that *'it is not clear what decisions, if any, have been made on the basis of the information provided by the DGM [national met office] to date, especially as it is not thought that the BAD [10-day forecast] is being routinely provided to partners'*.

Examples of IPs undertaking new and additional data processing and analysis for their areas of intervention are limited (**MAR, IRISS**). This tended to be limited to IPs where there is a technical lead who is already highly competent in using the tools in question, or who actually developed these tools. There are however, a number of examples of projects collecting local level data through the purchase of rain gauges (**IRISS**), establishing local monitoring stations (**WHH**), or through participatory processes for collecting qualitative data (**PRESENCES, ANUKULAN**). These trends may be linked to the nature of the climate information being sought: near term weather forecasting (which tends to be widely available). It is unclear, however, whether the focus on this

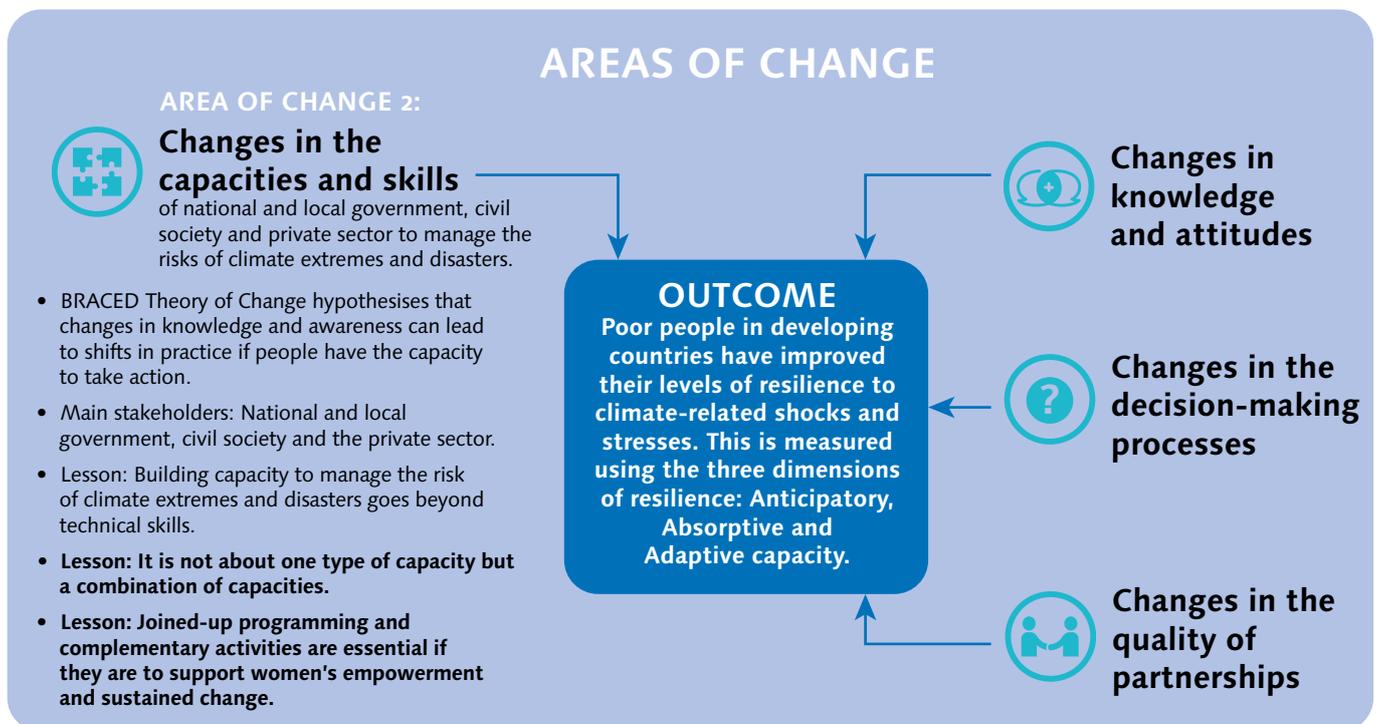
²⁰ Jones, L., Harvey, B. and Godfrey-Woods, R. (2016) *The changing role of NGOs in supporting climate services*. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

form of information is driven by supply (i.e. a lack of additional data that may require new analysis or modelling) or by demand (e.g. stakeholders not asking for longer term projections). Further research would help clarify these issues.

3.2 Strengthening capacities and skills to manage climate and disaster risks

About this Area of Change: Building resilience is complex process that involves more than knowledge and awareness building. The BRACED theory of change hypothesises that changes in knowledge and awareness can lead to shifts in practice if people have the capacity to take action. The lack of capacity and skills to manage the risk of climate extremes and disasters is seen across BRACED projects as a key bottleneck in improving climate and disaster resilience. Strengthening the capacities and skills of national and local government, civil society and the private sector to manage the risks of climate extremes and disasters is vital to BRACED achieving its outcomes and long-term goals. Progress markers within the Area of Change of strengthening capacities and skills look at the set of processes that translate increased capacity and skills to changing practice and policy.

Figure 5: Key findings from the second Area of Change – Capacities and skills



Summary of key findings

Level of change: To date, most IPs have achieved their 'expect to see' progress markers as a large number capacity-building activities have been implemented for a wide range of stakeholders. Annual reports indicate that IPs are confident that BRACED projects have had an impact and many are able to describe specific examples where this has happened. However, as yet this is not more than anecdotal evidence.

Evidence to date highlights that capacity-building processes in BRACED address a wide range of actors and sectors. As illustrated below, there are a few examples of capacity-building activities shaping attitudes, behaviours and practice. Further steps are still necessary to consolidate this and ensure the sustainability of emerging changes. Findings suggest that the focus and approach of capacity development on individuals and – to a lesser extent – institutions, is limited. The system under which the targeted interventions are taking place, the processes involved and the mechanisms required all need to be further explored and understood. This could be an area of further investigation in next year's annual reports, as well as in project final evaluations.

The process of promoting women's empowerment is slow and BRACED projects are demonstrating positive action for the first year of implementation (e.g. collecting gender-disaggregated data and targeting women and girls to ensure they benefit from equal opportunities). The assumption that women's economic empowerment leads to wider social empowerment and resilience is not yet documented with evidence and is an area that would therefore benefit from further research.

Emerging lessons

- **Building capacity to manage the risk of climate extremes and disasters goes beyond technical skills.** Institutional change, leadership, empowerment and public participation are critical so that stakeholders can effectively use newly acquired knowledge and skills and do so in a sustainable way. Understanding capacity-building processes in isolation from the underlying structural issues shaping vulnerability may limit the potential for transformation. So too can failing to adequately analyse the political relationships that mediate the ways in which particular capacity-building processes result in differentiated outcomes for different groups.

- **It is not about one type of capacity but a combination of capacities.** The value of capacity-building activities lies in blending a wide range of them. For example, financial literacy training with formal links between VSLAs and Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) could be combined with the sensitisation of government actors, along with producer and marketing groups. Integrating, sequencing, and layering activities is critical if those actions are to support the sustainability of projects' core objectives.
- **Joined-up programming and complementary activities are essential if they are to support women's empowerment and sustained change,** rather than short-term, localised and more instrumental gains.

How is progress tracked: In BRACED, capacity building is tracked through a series of progress markers at the output level. This helps us understand the extent to which capacity-building processes actually lead to changes in the capabilities of key project stakeholders to manage the risks of climate extremes and disasters more effectively in relation to project objectives. IPs report progress against three overarching progress markers. These reflect the progression towards the desired overall change the projects aim to achieve. Table 4 illustrates the overarching progress markers within this Area of Change. This synthesis and analysis has considered the changes reported by IPs and identified emerging themes around these overarching progress markers.

Table 4: Capacity and skills progress markers

EXPECT TO SEE	LIKE TO SEE	LOVE TO SEE
Building of key skills	Shaping attitudes and behaviours	Supporting new practices and policies

As with the knowledge and attitudes Area of Change, each IP identified what changes they expected, would like and would love to see in each relevant project stakeholder during the lifetime of the project, as part of finalising their project-level M&E, and in response to KM feedback (or they included this as part of their year 1 reporting). At the end of year 1, they then reported change against these as a 'baseline'.

- At the 'expect to see' level, project-specific progress markers included areas such as provision of training, delivery of key capacity-building activities and the participation of targeted stakeholders.
- At the 'like to see' level, progress markers included the leadership and participation, adoption of new practices, increases in demand for trainings by non-project beneficiaries and replication of new practices in non-project areas.
- At the 'love to see' level, progress markers included changes in productive systems, planning processes.

It is important to highlight that BRACED IPs promote capacity building beyond 'traditional' training programmes through experiential learning, linking trainings with practice and translating the experience into new knowledge. As such, it has proven difficult for IPs to distinctively report progress and changes in knowledge and awareness (section 3.1) and capacity building. Where relevant, this section makes a clear distinction between the two.

Strengthening capacities and skills: emerging themes

As with knowledge generation activities, much of the support provided to stakeholders by BRACED projects to date has been in the area of capacity building (14 projects). Projects include specific capacity-building components across a wide variety of issues, ranging from value chain development to hygiene and nutritional practices. Capacity building is a long-term endeavour that often follows unpredictable trajectories. Tangible results are difficult to demonstrate in the short term. It is well known that there are several factors that influence whether skills development will lead to changes in practice and performance. Issues such as the quality of the learning process, personal incentives and the wider context within which learning takes place may determine the extent to which capacity-building processes ultimately lead to expected changes. Having said this, most IPs reported emerging changes during year 1.

Table 5 provides a summary of capacity-building activities conducted to date and the emerging changes reported by IPs. A small number of additional illustrative examples are provided throughout this section, with further examples available in annex 7.

Table 5: Synthesis of individual capacity-building activities and emerging changes

BUILDING CAPACITY FIELDS	ACTIVITIES (ILLUSTRATIVE)	CHANGES (ILLUSTRATIVE)
Planning	Training on resilience assessments and prioritisation, use of climate data Improving access to relevant data Establishment of relevant governance processes (linking communities and local governments)	Local governments design action plans together and priority interventions are planned/funded (PROGRESS, SUR1M, MAR, Myanmar Alliance, PRESENCES, RIC4REC, Zaman Lebidi, IRISS)
Agricultural practices	Training on climate-smart agricultural practices Establishment of structures to provide advisory services (e.g. veterinary or phytosanitary services) Access to private sector	Farmers adopt new (climate-smart) agricultural practices, including new income-generating activities (DCF, IRISS-expected, ANUKULAN, BRICS, PROGRESS, SUR1M, Myanmar Alliance-expected, WHH, PRESENCES, Zaman Lebidi, CIARE, RIC4REC)
Domestic practices	Training on hygiene and on nutrition practices Establishment of structures to provide advisory services (e.g. health centres) Support to build infrastructure (e.g. latrines and wells)	Households adopt new domestic practices enhancing their resilience (e.g. dietary diversity, hygiene and water management) (ANUKULAN, BRICS, Zaman Lebidi)

BUILDING CAPACITY FIELDS	ACTIVITIES (ILLUSTRATIVE)	CHANGES (ILLUSTRATIVE)
Infrastructure	Training on climate-smart building practices Training/establishment of early warning systems	Communities adopt new practices in a sustainable way, including new income-generating activities (Myanmar Alliance-expected) Communities benefit from improved early warning process and infrastructure (Myanmar Alliance, WHH-expected, SUR1M, ANUKULAN, Zaman Lebidi-expected, BRICS-expected)
Natural resources management	Training on natural resources management, potentially in combination with training on agriculture (conservation agriculture) Supporting discussions and negotiations between users and service providers Establishment/reinforcement of legal services/dispute management services	Communities adopt new climate-smart, natural resources management practices, including new income-generating activities (BRICS, PROGRESS, SUR1M, MAR-expected, PRESENCES, RIC4REC) Land-use conflicts are decreasing (especially between pastoralists and farmers)
Financial and managerial skills, entrepreneurship	Trainings on finance, savings, entrepreneurship, management Trainings on new income-generating activities (e.g. cook stoves, tree nurseries and market service providers) Improved access markets (e.g. seeds) Improved access to savings, finance and insurance mechanisms (e.g. VSLAs and insurance schemes)	Households develop new businesses through livelihood diversification and new income-generating activities (ANUKULAN, BRICS, PROGRESS, SUR1M, MAR-expected, WHH, RIC4REC) Women are empowered as economic agents Farmers are empowered as private agents (ANUKULAN, PROGRESS, SUR1M, WHH, RIC4REC) Households have access to finance and savings (PROGRESS, SUR1M, MAR-expected, Myanmar Alliance-expected, PRESENCES, CIARE)
Advocacy	Trainings on advocacy (e.g. land tenure rights and gender issues) Establishment/reinforcement of structures of legal services/dispute management services	Vulnerable groups participate in decision-making processes (Livestock Mobility, ANUKULAN); gender focus (PROGRESS, SUR1M, WHH)
Early warning and DRR	Training on use of climate data Training on early warning systems – to collect, monitor and disseminate data locally Dissemination of relevant data and information through media broadcasts Installation of early warning infrastructure (e.g. gauges) Infrastructure works to prevent and limit impacts (e.g. renovation of water ponds)	Households and communities are alerted and prepared. in case of threats (PROGRESS, SUR1M, Zaman Lebidi-expected, ANUKULAN, BRICS-expected, Myanmar Alliance) Local knowledge and data are taken into account in early warning systems (SUR1M, IRISS-expected, WHH-expected, Zaman Lebidi-expected, RIC4REC)

In BRACED projects, capacity encompasses both the 'hard' skills (i.e. specific technical or specialised knowledge and know-how, such as finance and infrastructure) and the 'soft' or social ones (for example, communication and leadership) that enable individuals and institutions to carry out activities and achieve their objectives. A review of capacity-building activities across the BRACED programme highlights the context specificity and wide range of cross-sectoral activities implemented by BRACED projects. Yet, IPs' reports reveal two interrelated themes when it comes to capacity building: a) whose capacity and b) capacity to do what? BRACED projects are working at two different levels: individuals and government officials (within and across departments).

“A review of capacity-building activities across the BRACED programme highlights the context specificity and wide range of cross-sectoral activities implemented by BRACED projects”

EMERGING THEME 1: BUILDING FARMERS' AND PASTORALISTS' CAPACITY

Not surprisingly for a programme that aims to strengthen resilience, BRACED capacity-building efforts focus largely on the technical capacity of individuals. IPs have used a wide variety of methods to support capacity building so far. Some of the most frequently mentioned included: technical workshops, training of trainers, information sharing, training of service providers to deliver hands-on training at the field level with targeted beneficiaries, joint planning and joint implementation and demonstration sessions.

It is not the purpose of this synthesis to provide a detailed review of the wide range of capacity-building activities being implemented across BRACED projects. However, across the projects, three key activities stand out as central to BRACED work:

- DRR planning (see Area of Change 1: Knowledge and Attitudes)
- the promotion of climate-smart agricultural practices and technologies, through market-based approaches
- access to finance and savings for asset building and livelihood diversification.

Across these activities, capacity building is often coupled with the provision of infrastructure, community grants, equipment and/or technologies.

Specific stakeholders include farmers and pastoralists, with a strong focus on women across the programme. Market-based agricultural approaches are a key feature of most BRACED projects (**RIC4REC, IRISS, Myanmar Alliance, WHH, SUR1M, ANUKULAN, Zaman Lebidi, CIARE, BRICS**). Most capacity-building activities organise farmers into groups, providing training in the use of new planting methods, as well as climate-smart technologies. A critical element of the capacity-building activities is to better connect pastoralist farmers with traders and buyers.

For example, the **SUR1M** project promotes the transfer of climate-smart agro-forestry and livestock technologies to lead farmers, enabling producers to choose cost-effective agronomic models adapted to their ecology. The project has reported that this change is especially visible in the successful introduction of a certified seed system into the project zone, leading producers to use new varieties of millet, sorghum and cowpea. Despite below-average early rains in Niger and the attack of pests on millet and cowpea during the agricultural campaign in 2015/2016, producers who used short-cycle seeds and adopted best agricultural practices had significantly higher yields than those who used old seed varieties. In the light of the results obtained on the use of the new variations, producers in project communes have established a partnership with seed companies and agro-dealers to facilitate a supply chain of improved/certified seeds for the next campaign.

Context matters: Capacity-building activities and efforts to improve agricultural production and income generation are hampered when beneficiaries do not have access to land

In Burkina Faso, the dualism between the traditional and modern land tenure system affects access to land and constitutes a source of conflict between farmers. As reported by one IP, *'Land tenure issues could also reduce women's beneficiaries access to land as most of the land owners are men'*. During year 1, the **WHH** project has worked with local communities to secure user rights to land through transparent agreements between land users and owners. Farmer groups and women's groups were supported through community agents to lead negotiations with land owners and local authorities.

In sites where there is a private landowner, informal land tenure agreements have been established. This facilitates the security of investments in the rice paddies and market gardens. Beneficiaries cultivate the sites seasonally and vacate them during the rainy season. Generally, the investment in infrastructure in such sites is secured, but the law does not currently guarantee that the land owner or their relatives will not claim the site back.

The informal land tenure agreement is however a tool commonly used to manage risks to the extent possible under the law. Out of 40 sites in three different provinces, where beneficiaries are engaged in group production, 24 are permanently owned by the group who cultivates the land. In 16 sites, the access to land is secure during the dry season, while the land owner uses the land for crop cultivation during the rainy season. In 14 out of these 30 sites, the negotiations on access to land with land owners is ongoing, even when the producer groups are using the land during the dry season. During year 1, the informal land tenure agreements in the 16 seasonal sites enabled close to 1000 female producers in the communities in the vicinity of these wetlands to have access to land for market gardening and rice production.

Capacity to access financial services is another area of concern of BRACED projects²¹ (10 projects) and is also an ongoing area of research for the KM (see annex 8 for references). BRACED projects pay particular attention to addressing the limited experience and access to financial services among vulnerable groups by building capacity and setting up strategic partnerships with the private sector (see Area of Change 3: Partnerships). Key activities include capacity building for the establishment, management and participation of VSLAs (**PRESENCES, PROGRESS, MAR, Myanmar Alliance**), SILCs (**SUR1M**) and self-help groups (**CIARE, Myanmar Alliance**). Ultimately, beyond capacity, the main objective of such activities is to facilitate the access and use of finance. For example, in the **Myanmar Alliance** project, the loan facility/financial services enable beneficiaries to access finance to adopt new income-generating activities. Loans are reported as being used to diversify livelihood activities, as well as for health and education purposes. (Use of financial services is further explored in terms of outcomes in section 4.1.)

“Capacity building in relation to access to markets and financial services goes beyond training on financial literacy and management”

Although a key challenge for these activities relates to low literacy levels in the areas where BRACED projects operate, capacity building in relation to access to markets and financial services goes beyond training on financial literacy and management. Project theories of change emphasise the importance of encouraging collective action, collaboration and self-organisation, and promoting self-sufficiency, enhancing decision-making and increasing asset bases. It might be too early in the programme to report changes at this level, as IPs have been setting up the required structures and capacity-building processes. Also, most of these activities have just begun.

Point for reflection: Addressing and capturing the intangible in gender and capacity building

Where IPs were able to report statistics disaggregated by gender, there was often relatively high participation of women in project capacity-building activities (11 projects). Exercises ensured women were active members for DRR planning, agriculture trainings, and financial and business planning (**ANUKULAN, CIARE, PROGRESS, SUR1M, WHH, Zaman Lebidi**). Capturing intangible processes of participation and empowerment can be difficult, but systematising the inclusion of women in these forums represents potential for

²¹ For an overview of the context and structure of the financial services sector in three BRACED countries – namely, Ethiopia, Mali and Myanmar – see Haworth A., Frandon-Martinez, C., Fayolle, V. and Simonet, C. (2016) ‘Climate resilience and financial services: Lessons from Ethiopia, Mali and Myanmar’. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

greater change if these voices are included meaningfully. IPs reported some progress in this regard, but women continue to be relegated from decisions about land use or household spending, which highlights that more activities are needed to raise awareness on women's rights and access to land in order to foster women's empowerment and resilience (SUR1M).

Attempting to change social norms will require consistently revisiting barriers to women's participation as they manifest over the course of BRACED (see [Area of change 4: Inclusive decision-making](#)). The **Zaman Lebidi** project, which showed high participation of women in their trainings, still noted that some were unable to attend due to their high workload, lack of time and the attitudes of their husbands. In response, **Zaman Lebidi** staff were planning on reinforcing awareness raising with local chiefs. To combat similar attitudes, the **PROGRESS** project selected influential community members, such as business people, local leaders and sub-county officials, to be 'gender champions'. These gender champions helped facilitate dialogues on gender, gender-based violence and the importance of investing in women and girls.

EMERGING THEME 2: BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND TECHNICAL SERVICES, WITHIN AND ACROSS SECTORS

Many projects focus on providing targeted capacity building support to local governments (9 projects). These include capacity building on gender responsive budgeting (**PROGRESS**), planning, mobilisation and management of financial resources (**SUR1M, DCF**), and early warning systems (**SUR1M, BRICS**). The ultimate objective of these activities is to design solutions with local governments in a collaborative manner and to integrate climate and disaster considerations into local planning.

IPs' reports reveal that training local government officials beyond technical capacity necessitates close collaboration, timing, trust and leadership as essential ingredients for the trainings to be successful and yield results (**SUR1M, DCF, PROGRESS, ANUKULAN**).

For example, in the **DCF** project, the adaptation committees established at the departmental level in Senegal and at the commune, *cercle*, and regional level in Mali serve as a local coordinating mechanism for key actors, including relevant climate services and radio. Adaptation committee members (civil society, constituent representative, local government and technical services) have been trained on how to manage climate funds and use climate information in the planning process, as well as in their M&E efforts. Within these processes, resilience assessments have been developed jointly with local authority representatives. The IP reported that this has led to new attitudes about climatic risk, as participatory resilience assessments have helped local actors to develop a nuanced understanding of the vulnerabilities and capacities of different groups. Communities have been supported to develop resilient project proposals aligned with the DCF objectives. As a result, a range of investments have been proposed by a variety of stakeholders. A first set of 69 projects have been selected by the adaptation committees.

Despite the process and emerging results, it is not always easy to see changes within government in the short term. Such change is much more of a long-term goal and therefore not something that could easily be reached within the projects' relatively short three-year time frame.

“In addition to building the capacity of key government officials and departments, few IPs strongly encourage an integrated multi-stakeholder engagement on issues, rather than seeing solutions in one stakeholder/department alone”

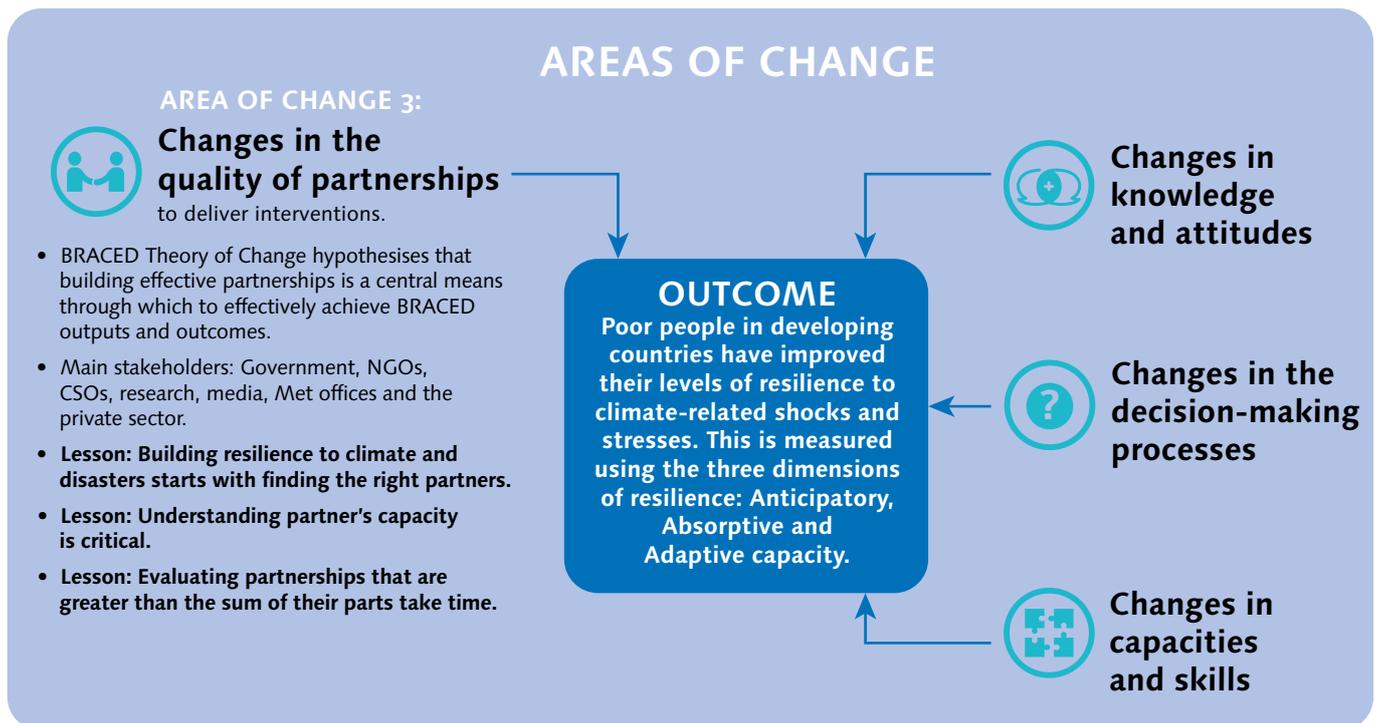
In addition to building the capacity of key government officials and departments, few IPs strongly encourage an integrated multi-stakeholder engagement on issues, rather than seeing solutions in one stakeholder/department alone (9 projects). Efforts in this area cannot be labelled as pure capacity development activities; these inputs may contribute to capacity development in one form or another, but they are ultimately more likely to be measured in terms of the resulting outcomes.

IPs' reports indicate that approaches to engaging with a wider group of multi-sectoral stakeholders improves relationships with them and may even contribute to institutional capacity (**PRESENCES, RIC4REC, DCF, Myanmar Alliance, SUR1M, ANUKULAN, PROGRESS, Livestock Mobility**). Emerging changes can be seen in improved relationships and institutional linkages between organisations. For example, emerging evidence from the **Myanmar Alliance** project suggests that ongoing resilience training for government officials and regular coordination meetings are leading to increased collaboration between community-based organisations and townships officials, as more regular meetings occur at the township level facilitated by the project. In the future, these could lead to stronger collaborations and an **improved organisational capacity to link up and down departments/organisations**.

3.3 Building partnerships to deliver interventions for resilience

About this Area of Change: In order to effectively deliver interventions, this area covers changes in the quality of partnerships established to deliver better project and programme results. Working through a diverse set of partnerships was a criteria for applying for BRACED in the first place, and is therefore a feature of the programme's design and, in turn, driven by it. The BRACED programme theory of change hypothesises that building effective partnerships is a central means through which to effectively achieve BRACED outputs and outcomes. Working in partnerships across levels and sectors enables projects

Figure 6: Key findings from the third Area of Change – Building partnerships



to access a range of expertise and capacities in order to address complex multi-faceted problems requiring the participation of various actors, organisations and institutions.

Summary of key findings

Level of change: Partnerships are vital if the BRACED programme is to yield maximum impact. With few exceptions, projects have achieved their 'like to see' progress markers as they are already jointly implementing project activities. The type, scope and purpose of partnerships established to date vary significantly from project to project. Evidence to date suggests that there is value in investing time and effort in building partnerships. Amongst others, it is through partnerships that projects have been able to improve access and dissemination of climate information through met offices and the media, improve access to finance and insurance through the private sector and improve the quality of evidence generation through research institutions. Yet, despite progress and achievements to date, building effective partnerships has proven to be a critical yet challenging task across projects and, in some instances, has caused delays in implementation.

Emerging lessons

- **Building resilience to climate and disasters starts with finding the right partners.** The breadth of partnerships highlights that building resilience to climate and disaster extremes requires tailored partnerships that meet the needs of a specific community, country or region. Main challenges faced to date relate to weak project assumptions about the nature and scope of the partnership as well with regard to the operational environment within which partners operate. Context analysis is critical in understanding who the best partners are. Partnerships can sometimes be challenging but necessary; therefore, sufficient time and flexible planning time should be allocated.
- **Understanding partner's capacity is critical.** Partnerships have provided an opportunity for IPs to create innovative ways of working together, addressing complex problems through a means significantly different from unilateral implementation and providing an opportunity to increase the depth and breadth of programming. However, effective partnerships take considerable effort and work, particularly in the early months of initial partnership negotiation. For example, there are many examples of IPs having to devote more time than expected to building partners' capacity. Allowing enough time during the inception phase is critical for staff and partners to develop their skills on key concepts and approaches (e.g. resilience or gender equality) and to ensure that project teams share a common understanding of goals, along with the approaches needed to achieve them, for the context they operate within.
- **Evaluating partnerships that are greater than the sum of their parts take time.** Despite the widespread assumption and limited evidence that partnerships are effective, there is limited systematic evidence of a link between partnership and improved BRACED outcomes. In light of this, BRACED presents a unique opportunity to explore the role of partnerships in resilience-building, as well as how best to ensure that partnerships are greater than the sum of their parts. There is a need to better understand how inter-organisational learning across partners translates into longer-term, positive impacts to increase community resilience.

How do we track progress? BRACED understands partnership to be the formal arrangement between a minimum of two organisations to work collaboratively to achieve mutually beneficial objectives. It is considered more than simply sharing

finances and normally involves some form of joint operations and skills sharing at a more formal level than just collaboration. Most progress to date has been reported under this Area of Change. Progress markers within this Area of Change look at the coordination and joint implementation between partners and their ability to deliver improved results. Table 6 illustrates the overarching progress markers within this Area of Change. This synthesis and analysis has considered the changes reported by IPs and identified emerging themes around these overarching progress markers.

Table 6: Building effective partnerships progress markers

EXPECT TO SEE	LIKE TO SEE	LOVE TO SEE
Partnerships are established and agree on a set of principles and objectives for working together	Partners engage and are involved in joint planning and implementation of activities	Partnerships deliver improved results

As with the a) knowledge and attitudes and b) capacities and skills Areas of Change, each IP – as part of finalising their project-level M&E and in response to KM feedback – identified what changes they expected, would like and would love to see in each relevant project stakeholder during the lifetime of the project (or they included this as part of their year 1 reporting). At the end of year 1, the IPs then reported change against these as a 'baseline'.

- At the 'expect to see' level, project-specific progress markers included areas such as setting up collaboration protocols and coordination actions, signing of agreements, joint planning and implementation of initial assessment activities and establishment of partnerships beyond the IP consortia.
- At the 'like to see' level, progress markers included joint implementation of project activities, signing of new agreements with emerging new partnerships.
- At the 'love to see' level, progress markers included replication of the partnership model, stronger links between partners, partners replicating tools and approaches in non-BRACED projects.

Effective partnerships: emerging themes

It is important to highlight that synthesising BRACED progress against the partnerships Area of Change has been challenging. A review of the reports reveals that there are different ways of understanding and reporting about the type, purpose and delivery of partnerships. For example, some IPs have reported ongoing collaborations and networking as a form of partnership. As a result, progress to date should be taken with caution. In addition, it is not always clear when reports are referring to partnerships within IP consortia and/or between consortia and external organisations. Eight IPs track this number as an output indicator, with figures varying from a few partners (less than 10: **IRISS, Myanmar Alliance, DCF, MAR, CIARE**) to a very large number (25: **SUR1M**, 38: **Zaman**

Lebidi, 58: ANUKULAN). Projects with a large number of partners are largely based on partnerships with local governments. Where relevant, this synthesis makes a clear distinction between partnerships and other forms of collaboration. During year 1, most IPs reported changes emerging in two themes. (A complete mapping of projects activities and emerging themes can be found in [annex 6](#). A small number of additional illustrative examples are provided throughout this section, with further examples available in [annex 7](#).)

EMERGING THEME 1: WORKING TOGETHER – LEVERAGING RESOURCES AND CAPACITIES

Project annual reports reveal that building resilience requires new kinds of collaborative strategies in which a wide range of stakeholders play a critical role. Much of BRACED project work takes place through partnerships that leverage effective responses and strategic alliances that provide a means for wider outreach, impact, influence and learning. In these partnerships, BRACED projects are working with private companies, climate service providers, local, sub-national and national government departments, research institutions and other NGOs (both international and local) to draw together the respective strength of these different organisations. The type, nature and scale of such partnerships vary across the BRACED programme.

“Much of BRACED project work takes place through partnerships that leverage effective responses and strategic alliances that provide a means for wider outreach, impact, influence and learning”

Table 7: Illustrative examples – BRACED main partnerships

PARTNER	PURPOSE OF PARTNERSHIP	EXAMPLE
Climate Information providers and the media	Production, translation and transfer of climate information Dissemination of information to users	The Zaman Lebidi project works in partnership with both the meteorological agency (DGM) – agreement signed and support from the UK Met Office procured – and the communication sector, to help deliver relevant data to users. Internews is leading the interventions to ensure that relevant information reaches radio stations for onwards dissemination.
Research institutions	Technical research support Advancing the body of knowledge and evidence Supporting evidence-based advocacy efforts	In an effort to understand what climate means in the Sudan and Chad contexts, the BRICS project has worked with government research institutions, such as the Geneina Agriculture Research Station. The collaboration has helped to deepen the understanding of the best production systems that may help both communities and households to increase their resilience to climate change. This has involved the testing of a pilot activity on local seed multiplication, which showed positive results of early crop maturing, increased yields and improved resistance to diseases, providing evidence of the relevance of such a partnership in the project.

PARTNER	PURPOSE OF PARTNERSHIP	EXAMPLE
Private sector	Facilitating communities' access to markets and financial resources; private sector development Effective service delivery	The ANUKULAN project builds on extensive collaboration with service providers to help promote the dissemination of climate-smart technologies at different scales. At the local scale, the project facilitated linkages between input suppliers, output traders and production groups – through meetings, coordination workshops and demonstration events. At the national scale, the project identified potential private partners to enable the delivery of services in line with the new technologies promoted by the project. Within the Livestock Mobility project, public-private partnerships have been established for the delivery of key services to pastoral and agro-pastoral women and men along the corridors, which has led to the provision of fodder supplements in fodder banks (where construction and renovation of fodder facilities have been built or renovated) and of animal health products in veterinary depots.
Local, sub-national and national government departments	Enabling and facilitating the implementation of interventions Promoting potential scaling up in country	In the PROGRESS project, the county government is the project's most critical partner. Through this partnership, a gender desk in the target area has been established, enabling victims to report and to access support in case of problems.
Local NGOs/ civil society	More effective implementation at the local level Support locally driven solutions	Within the Myanmar Alliance project, the implementation of activities locally relies on local NGOs – partnerships have been established with over 50 like-minded NGOs.
INGOs / international institutions	Thematic expertise, large scale-programming and funding Stronger policy advocacy and lobby efforts	The BRICS project has partnered with World Bank Group and Sudan's Forests National Corporation. In this partnership, Concern has agreed to support the state-level focal point, which coordinates forestry initiatives at the community level. This partnership has the potential to strengthen state-level support to ensure that the national project remains on track and is linked into the work on forestry at community and state level, as well as coordinating it.

Table 7 provides a snapshot of one-to-one partnerships. However, IPs are engaging in multiple partnerships for the implementation of BRACED projects (see annex 6). Understanding BRACED pathways of change through effective partner delivery needs to take into account the complex network of actors engaged in the delivery of each project. BRACED IPs' variety of partnerships reflects the wide range of activities and issues that BRACED projects are attempting to address. While it is too early in the programme to assess the extent to which BRACED partnerships are contributing to better development results, there are key issues that require further attention and investigation.

First, understanding if BRACED projects present and build the 'right' combination of partnerships to achieve project results is critical to BRACED programme success. Second, a review of project reports also highlights that the timing and sequencing of implementation activities are crucial. For example, in Niger, the **PRESENCES** project has established partnerships with the State Technical Services and institutions such as AGRHYMET, along with the weather services, for the implementation and monitoring of activities, while ensuring the quality of the work. The project uses the meteorological information provided by AGRHYMET to decide the type of seeds to be used and time for planting with local communities. This partnership has enabled the project to ensure that

activities are informed by climate information and that communities have access to climate information.

“Working in partnership requires time, capacity and flexibility in project design and implementation. Some IPs have faced difficulties in obtaining partnership agreements with national bodies”

Some of these partnerships have proved challenging to establish. Working in partnership requires time, capacity and flexibility in project design and implementation. Some IPs have faced difficulties in obtaining partnership agreements with national bodies. For example, in Ethiopia, the difficult operating environment with regard to the national government meant that both the **MAR** and **CIARE** projects were stalled for several months in obtaining permissions and agreements from national authorities to implement some of their activities. This was especially the case in relation to microfinance provision and working with local and national media. It is therefore important to clearly articulate the assumptions and hypothesis underpinning this pathway of change. There are also examples of IPs having to spend more time than expected on building. For example, the **BRICS** and **PROGRESS** projects required training on gender for partners that was not initially intended, as this was felt to be necessary in order to improve their understanding and gender equality approaches in the promotion and implementation of project activities.

Context matters: understanding partners' capacity

In addition to working with key stakeholders in communities through partnerships, BRACED IPs need to look inwards and consider how gender equality messages, which are often culturally sensitive, are conveyed by implementing staff. The **BRICS** project undertook a Gender Equitable Attitude survey with its own staff to understand the dynamics at play, which (more widely) can have enormous implications for successes on the ground. The project found highly inequitable gender attitudes in both Chad and Sudan, with over half of staff stating that women should tolerate violence at home to keep families together. Most staff agreed that a woman's most important role is as a caregiver to her husband and family. The project increased training for staff to create a working environment that was more conducive to gender-sensitive programming.

‘Encouragingly, there is a strong appetite amongst staff for capacity building and training on equality and gender issues and most teams appeared enthusiastic at the idea of strengthening efforts to integrate gender considerations within their programme activities. BRICS will build on this potential in future equality work’.

Building partnerships with the private sector to foster access to markets and financial services is critical yet challenging (6 projects). This is an area of ongoing research for the KM (see annex 8 for references). Smallholder farmers face serious obstacles in transitioning from subsistence farming to commercial farming. Major barriers include access to financing, inputs and improved technologies to generate marketable surplus, as well as high cost to reach markets, due to poor infrastructure. Engaging the private sector as a partner is essential for BRACED projects (**SUR1M, MAR, PROGRESS, ANUKULAN, Livestock Mobility, WHH, RIC4REC**), as these attempt to promote inclusive partnerships between local governments, businesses and communities. Most of these partnerships have an objective to enhance access to agricultural inputs, technology, markets and finance of project beneficiaries. There is also a common aim to complement interventions in order to build capacities locally (e.g. entrepreneurial or marketing skills). This is particularly seen in efforts to support income generation and livelihoods diversification, as well as building the asset base among the most vulnerable.

For example, the **ANUKULAN** project builds on extensive collaboration with service providers to promote the dissemination of climate-smart technologies at different scales. At the local scale, the project has facilitated linkages between input suppliers, output traders and production groups through meetings, coordination workshops and demonstration events. At the national scale, the project has identified potential private partners to enable the delivery of services in line with the new technologies promoted by the project, such as micro-irrigation technologies, including drip irrigation, solar powered lift irrigation through sunflower pump and multiple use water systems (MUS). To date, memorandums of understanding have been signed with various private actors. Emerging changes include the active and regular discussion between producers and buyers on market prices and marketing channels, as well as the uptake of new technologies by farmers and private input providers.

Partnering with the private sector is also enabling IPs to improve beneficiaries' access to financial and insurance services in agricultural and pastoral areas (4 projects). The establishment of such partnerships complement efforts to build individual financial and entrepreneurship skills. Most projects promote the development of VSLAs or SILCs structures (**PRESENCES, Myanmar Alliance, SUR1M, MAR, CIARE, PROGRESS**). Partnerships have been made with formal and informal institutions such as commercial banks (e.g. **PROGRESS**), insurance funds (e.g. **MAR**) and microfinance institutions (e.g. **MAR, PRESENCES**).

For example, the **MAR** project initiated different processes to improve communities' access to financial resources. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) provide loans and technical support to savings and credit cooperative organisations (SACCOs/VSLAs) established locally – with 120 VSLAs working with 2,600 beneficiaries. Local MFI offices have a discretionary authority up to a threshold loan amount (agreed with the head office). Conditions for improving the delivery of financial services have been defined: agreements have been signed with MFIs to expand delivery centres and to provide services with flexible modalities convenient for vulnerable clients. The **MAR** project is also

developing micro-insurance products. A memorandum of understanding, to set up the guarantee fund, has been signed with the Nyala Insurance Company and the preparation work has been completed. Finally, preparations to implement a mobile banking service with the help of providers, such as M-Birr, are now underway. So far, collaboration with the financial sector has resulted in the setting up of a financial infrastructure that is relevant to local needs; effective access to finance is still pending, as the VSLAs have started functioning but the MFIs have yet to start disbursing funds to them.

A critical factor for success when engaging the private sector relates to interest and incentives for the private sector to engage, as well as the enabling policy environment and regulatory frameworks. Despite changes already emerging as a result of such partnerships, IPs are facing key challenges that may inhibit outcome-level results at a later stage. Challenges include a lack of interest from private sector companies in engaging with rural low-income areas and a limited number of skilled retailers and payment processes. For example, the **WHH** project reported that the certification of production sites was challenging for some seed suppliers and constrained by stipulations of the regulatory framework pertaining to the cultivable area. Weak market and financial sector infrastructure challenge the extent to which projects will contribute to improve financial inclusion in the long term (**PROGRESS, WHH, ANUKULAN, Livestock Mobility**).

EMERGING THEME 2: STRENGTHENING NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

A review of IPs' reports reveals that networking and close collaboration with key stakeholders are as critical as building effective partnerships. During year 1, BRACED projects (**DCF, Myanmar Alliance, WHH, ANUKULAN, Livestock Mobility**) have been closely interacting and collaborating with local, sub-national and national debates to support the scaling up of interventions. When windows of opportunities appear, such collaborations are already yielding important results.

For example, in the **WHH** project in Burkina Faso, the Directorate of Vegetable Production – Department of Plant Protection – of the Ministry of Agriculture has taken 'full ownership' of the plant clinic approach promoted by the project as its own initiative. The Ministry organised a mission to accelerate the implementation of plant clinic sessions in the project area. The Ministry currently rolls out the same approach to seven other regions in the country; extension officers from the project area, as successors of plant doctors whose duty stations changed after the elections, have been invited to a training session for plant doctors of other regions of the country.

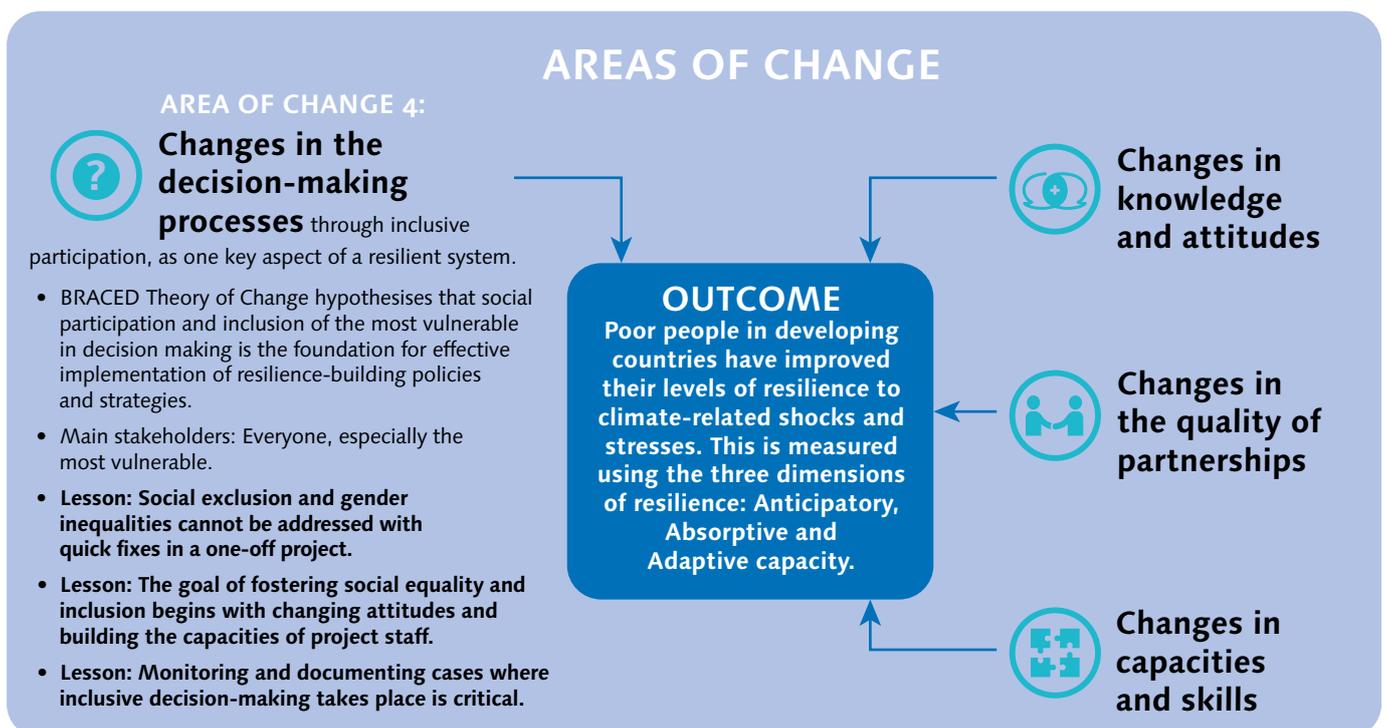
In Myanmar, the **Myanmar Alliance** project interacts and provides technical inputs into a large number of institutional initiatives in relation to resilience-building in the country. This includes the Myanmar Action Plan for DRR, the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy led by the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, and the development of a National Framework for Community Disaster Resilience. In addition, the project representatives are members of the Myanmar DRR working group (DRR-WG) – with two

members on the Steering Committee – and of the DRR-WG Technical Task forces; meanwhile, the project members, Action Aid and BBC Media Action are members of the Public Awareness task force. The Myanmar Alliance has been selected to represent Myanmar in the AADMER Partnership Group. As a result of this active involvement, the project benefits from a strong institutional support and the project's concepts are used in the definition of national frameworks such as the new 'Myanmar National Framework for Community Disaster Resilience' that promotes the BRACED approach as one of the best practices. National departments (Disaster Risk Reduction secretary and Department of Social Welfare secretaries) have highlighted their interest in expanding the BRACED resilience-building approach to new communities and international actors. The Asian Development Bank has included the Myanmar Alliance definition of community resilience and community resilience assessment and action planning cycle, highlighting it as one of the best practices on resilience-building.

3.4 Improving decision-making through inclusive resilience-building

This Area of Change refers to ensuring that resilience-building measures are inclusive: How does BRACED ensure that people who are economically poor, socially and politically marginalised or otherwise vulnerable are taken into account in planning, budgeting and implementation? Social participation and inclusion of the most vulnerable in decision-making is the foundation of fair and effective implementation of resilience-building policies and strategies. The least information and progress has been reported by IPs against this Area of Change.

Figure 7: Key findings from the fourth Area of Change – Decision-making



Summary of key findings

Level of change: all IPs have, this year, generally sought to ensure that activities are 'responsive' (the 'expect to see' progress marker) by ensuring that vulnerable/at risk groups are engaged and involved in defining the challenges and problems they face. Most efforts have been responsive to women's needs and are leading to their increased participation in project activities. While projects integrate strong attention to gender considerations, there has been limited mention of other vulnerable groups on the basis of age, ethnicity or disability in reporting. In addition, although improvements in the access of these groups to resources and participation are fundamental steps to take, they do not in themselves change power relations, and therefore may not translate into legitimate decision-making.

Emerging lessons

- **Social exclusion and gender inequalities cannot be addressed with quick fixes in a one-off project.** The starting point for enhancing individuals' resilience lies in recognising and addressing social exclusion and inequality. Not taking this action may further marginalise those who lack access to decision-making. However, ensuring truly inclusive decision-making processes and plans that build resilience for all is not (and should not be) seen as an achievable outcome for a three-year project.
- **The goal of fostering social equality and inclusion begins with changing attitudes and building the capacities of project staff,** who will then contribute to implementing inclusive activities. BRACED projects help to increase opportunities for women to learn new skills, participate in activities and access new spaces of decision-making at the household and community levels. However, progress to date refers mostly to support intended to address women's needs. Very little has been documented in terms of how BRACED addresses women's interests in terms of their control over key resources such as land rights.
- **Monitoring and documenting cases where inclusive decision-making takes place is critical.** The issue of power and voice is a key aspect across the portfolio, but it has not been properly captured in IPs' reports. Gender, social inclusion and conflict analysis is critical, as is looking for unintended consequences

(good and bad), tracking the process and continually adjusting approaches. The links between participation/voice and more inclusive decision-making processes need to be explicitly captured in project and programme-level M&E frameworks.

How is progress tracked? In the BRACED programme, progress towards fostering inclusive decision-making is tracked through a series of progress markers to understand the extent to which project activities ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable and at risk groups. Progress markers within this Area of Change look at the graduated set of processes from ensuring and increasing the most vulnerable participate in decision-making to legitimate processes where vulnerable groups influence and shape ultimate decisions. At the end of year 1, IPs reported change against these as a 'baseline'.

Table 8: Inclusive decision-making progress markers

EXPECT TO SEE – RESPONSIVENESS:	LIKE TO SEE – PARTICIPATION:	LOVE TO SEE – LEGITIMACY:
Vulnerable/at risk groups are engaged and involved in defining the challenges and problems they face	Vulnerable/at risk groups are engaged and involved in defining the challenges and problems they face AND engaged and involved in shaping the decision-making process for addressing and solving them	Vulnerable/at risk groups are engaged and involved in defining the challenges and problems they face, and are engaged and involved in the decision-making process for addressing and solving these AND engaged and involved in reviewing and refining the outcomes (both positive and negative) of the decision-making process they have shaped

As with the other three Areas of Change, each IP as part of finalising their project-level M&E and in response to KM feedback, identified what changes they expected, would like and would love to see in each relevant project stakeholder during the lifetime of the project (or included this as part of their year 1 reporting).

- At the 'expect to see' level, project-specific progress markers included areas such as active involvement and participation of vulnerable groups, with a strong focus on women and children.
- At the 'like to see' level, progress markers included leadership and accountability, and participation in decision-making processes.
- At the 'love to see' level, progress markers included sustainability and ongoing interaction, and dialogue between communities and local authorities.

Inclusive decision-making: emerging themes

Achievements contributing to more inclusive decision-making have been reported against different Areas of Change, highlighting that IPs see these processes as part and parcel of the implementation of project activities. However, when asked specifically about progress and emerging changes as a result of such inclusion efforts, there is limited data available. Looking across the project annual reports for year 1, there is one emerging theme. (A complete mapping of projects activities and emerging themes can be found in annex 6.)

EMERGING THEME 1: FOSTERING REPRESENTATION, PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP OF THE MOST VULNERABLE

Inclusion and gender empowerment in BRACED is an area of ongoing research for the BRACED KM in collaboration with IPs (see annex 8 for references). BRACED projects aim to facilitate active, legitimate participatory decision-making processes for stakeholders. To date, most efforts have concentrated on the creation of spaces for the active engagement of vulnerable groups – particularly women and children – in the assessment, planning and implementation of project activities. Some projects (**IRISS, Myanmar Alliance, SUR1M, ANUKULAN, PROGRESS, MAR**) ensure significant representation of women in the structures established within the project (e.g. in VSLAs, farmers' groups and communities' committees). Less discussion and reflection has been received in relation to decision-making processes. For example, **PROGRESS** provided a series of training to local government officials on gender responsive budgeting. The training was conducted just before the budgeting cycle and anecdotal evidence suggests that trained government officials are placing special emphasis on resilience-building priorities. There are early indications of ownership and leadership emerging from such trainings. The county government demonstrated high quality leadership during the launch of the project gender desk. Indeed, **PROGRESS** reported that there was evidence of shared vision after the launch of the project with the key government departments and other resilience actors participating. However, effective changes were not *'tracked to ascertain the level and impact of gender responsive planning and implementation'*.

Ensuring social inclusion is an integral part of IPs' approach to project implementation. Through bottom-up approaches, BRACED IPs have also been responsive to local needs, engaging local communities and authorities in the identification of local priorities and needs as well as in the implementation of project activities. Monitoring field visits and meetings with beneficiaries – such as in the case of the **Zaman Lebidi** project – have helped the project team to learn from beneficiaries' feedback and concerns.

Project activities have also targeted gendered interests through fostering women leadership (10 projects). The **ANUKULAN** project shows progress in this regard thanks to the increased participation of women in managing structures of marketing and planning committees (where women represent between 50% and 60% of members). However, the project has also usefully reported challenges to foster women's participation and reach a 50% – or even 40% – target when the percentage of women as Government of Nepal staff is already low.

Ensuring the participation of vulnerable groups is a positive sign, but this is only the first step towards inclusive decision-making. Despite efforts in ensuring participation in decision-making processes, to date, evidence for assessing whether decision-making processes have become more inclusive is still weak. There is limited evidence on whether the most marginalised groups are able to articulate their voices in these arenas. To be inclusive, vulnerable groups should be able to participate in these spaces and bring a valuable contribution to the deliberations. This involves issues such as language, participants' selection process and the removal of barriers, including those that are financial, social and cultural. It necessitates thinking about who is and who is not included in these spaces. For example, when the **Zaman Lebidi** project describes the creation of complaint committees, it would be useful to report who the members of these committees are (disaggregated by sex/age) and how people formulate complaints, in order to better understand if all members of the community can easily raise their voices and what barriers they possibly face.

**“Ensuring the participation of vulnerable groups
is a positive sign, but this is only the first step
towards inclusive decision-making”**

To date, there is limited evidence to help us understand how BRACED projects are addressing such issues and discern clear differences in the approaches followed by IPs to foster inclusive decision-making processes. It remains unclear how change will occur. It is critical to understand if this gap is due to limited data available or the lack of monitoring and reporting efforts in this area. This issue should be further explored during year 2 reporting.

3.5 Summary: BRACED pathways to resilience

During year 1, the BRACED projects have made progress at the 'expect to see' level in the following areas:

- improving knowledge and influencing attitudes towards resilience planning and action
- establishing new partnerships to deliver integrated set of activities
- accessing and generating climate information accessible to government and citizens
- fostering inclusive decision-making.

A review of IPs' reports against the Areas of Change framework reveals that, despite the differing contexts the projects are operating in, there are clear themes and processes that are common across the set of projects:

RESILIENCE PATHWAYS – EMERGING THEMES

Changes in resilience knowledge and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1: Community-based participatory planning • Theme 2: Accessing and using climate and weather information
Strengthening capacities and skills to manage climate and disaster risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 3: Building farmers' and pastoralists' capacity • Theme 4: Building capacity of government officials and technical services, within and across sectors
Building partnerships to deliver interventions for resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 5: Working together – leveraging resources and capacities • Theme 6: Strengthening collaboration and networking
Improving decision-making through inclusive resilience-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 7: Fostering representation, participation and leadership of the most vulnerable

In order to see change both within and across these four overarching processes, a wide range of activities are being implemented. For example, each project is addressing the knowledge and capacity gaps of multiple stakeholders for multiple purposes. Progress to date demonstrates that the processes are ongoing, interrelated and reinforcing of one another. The fact there are a number and range of project activities requires each IP to establish working relationships and partnerships with a wide set of actors across sectors and levels. The data shows that establishing partnerships is an important precursor for capacity development, as are changes in the awareness and commitment of stakeholders. At this stage of the change process, the challenge lies in understanding the level of integration and sequencing of different activities and processes. IP reports so far do not offer clarity with regard to this, but it will be explored by each project's mid-term review and analysed by the KM at the programme level.²²

“Designing, implementing and reporting pathways to resilience cannot take place in isolation from the operational environment within which a project operates”

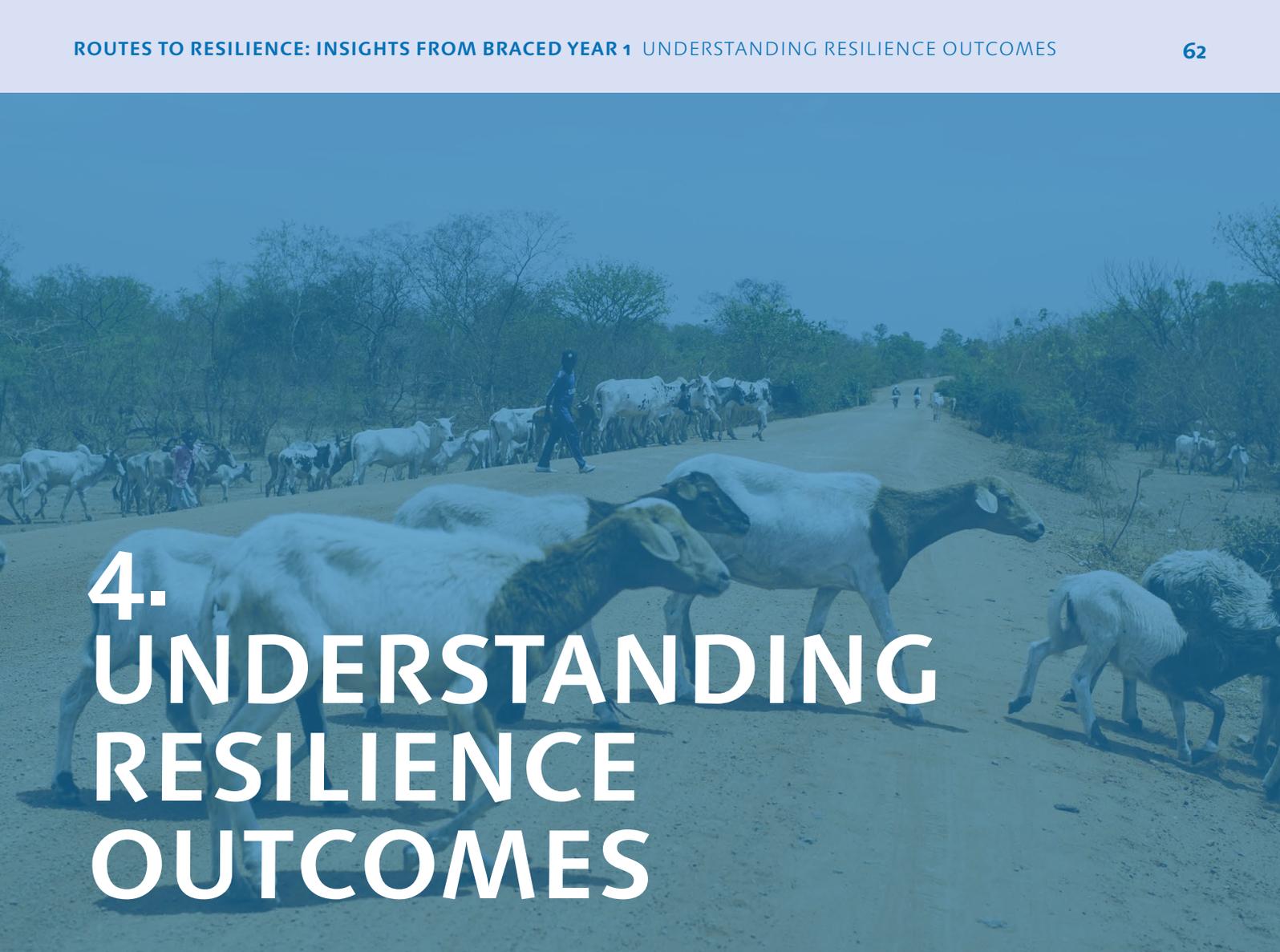
Designing, implementing and reporting pathways to resilience cannot take place in isolation from the operational environment within which a project operates. BRACED activities have been informed by participatory vulnerability, risk and resilience assessments. However, IPs' reports have revealed an overemphasis on processes targeting individuals and communities through community-based

²² As part of its evaluation activities, the KM will synthesise the set of project mid-term reviews and identify how and why different combinations of activities have strengthened resilience in particular contexts.

planning processes. Although such approaches are critical to ensure community ownership and responsiveness, data to date demonstrates that such approaches and activities tend to prioritise addressing localised, short-term instrumental gains. It remains unknown how BRACED projects take into account the dependencies between households, communities and government decision-making processes. While BRACED projects may be well-suited to strengthening knowledge and addressing capacity gaps through a wide set of partnerships and improving inclusive decision-making at the local level, they might also be well-placed to impact on national government policies, processes and systems where changes are also required. Although it is too early in the programme to explore outcome-level results so far, it is unclear how far project interventions will lead to these and, more importantly, the extent to which the outcomes would be sustainable.

Programmes as complex as BRACED are inherently difficult to coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate. The task is even more challenging, given the range of consortium members and institutional partners involved in each IP, as well as the difficulty in promoting effective engagement and the empowerment of chronically poor beneficiaries to access technologies and private markets, be involved in decision-making processes and use climate information. Most projects' first year efforts went into conducting robust baselines, building the capacity of IP consortium partners, establishing systems for project implementation and reaching formal agreements with institutional partners. Such challenges prove to be a serious constraint for three-year projects. As a result, BRACED projects have progressed well along their 'expect to see' progress markers across the four Areas of Change of the BRACED theory of change. During year 1, there have been some examples of projects progressing further along to their 'like to see' markers. However, evidence remains anecdotal to date.

Year 1 project reports against the Areas of Change indicate that it is difficult to discern how resilience programming and activities differ from development work. In order to capture complexity and understand resilience-building as more than an ad hoc set of activities and processes, it will be important for year 2 and 3 reporting to enable this kind of analysis. (The companion report offers more reflections with regard to how reporting could be improved for subsequent years.) Similarly, the progress marker approach may lead to a 'false' idea of linear processes of change. BRACED experience in year 1 demonstrates that the pathways towards building resilience are not defined and characterised by linear processes. Change has sometimes been realised at the 'love to see' level without change in terms of what IPs would 'expect' or 'like to see'. It is not clear why this is. For example, it is not known whether it is because of bias in the data and some IPs being more self-critical than others. There is also ambiguity with regard to why the level of overall change differs from project to project. Capturing the essence of resilience-building programmes requires reflective M&E processes that capture the multi-dimensional and multi-level processes of change. Not doing so questions the added value of resilience programming and, more importantly, how it differs from business-as-usual development work.



4. UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE OUTCOMES

Image: Ollivier Girard, (CIFOR)

About outcomes in BRACED: Section 3 has presented progress to date along BRACED pathways to resilience, enabling us to understand the process through which project activities may contribute to more meaningful outcomes. This section reviews how the BRACED projects have, together, progressed in improving anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities, and in achieving transformative change at the end of year 1.

Summary of key findings

Level of progress to date: BRACED projects appear to be on track to achieve some positive outcome-level changes. However, year 1 project reports do not tell us the *extent* to which they will achieve changes in outcome-level indicators. For adaptive capacity indicators around natural resource management, it may take much longer than three years to see substantial changes in a) environmental regeneration and b) the ways people interact with the natural world. Similarly, levels of savings (used as a proxy for absorptive capacity) may increase with the establishment of voluntary savings and loans groups, but we should not expect beneficiaries living under the poverty line to accrue substantial savings in a few years. It may be possible to meet anticipatory capacity

targets through, for example, the establishment of early warning systems and elaborating disaster risk management plans. However, this will not tell us how effective early warning systems and disaster management plans have been in practice when people dealt with disaster events.

At both the programme and the project level, we need to be cautious when describing these changes. This will ensure that we are being true to the nature of these outcomes on the ground. Although BRACED projects are right to be ambitious, the time frame of the programme means that, in some areas, only marginal changes will be achieved. The extent to which we will observe progress will be clear in year 3, and these results may challenge some of the programme's assumptions about how to build resilience effectively.

Emerging lessons

- **When communities define resilience priorities, activities are oriented around enhancing anticipatory and absorptive capacity.** The 3As framework hypothesises that all three capacities are needed to enhance resilience and adapt to longer-term climatic changes. Yet, in some cases, communities themselves preferred focusing on building resilience capacities to deal with immediate threats. BRACED projects operate in contexts where the climate is already changing, however, and prioritising immediate threats to people's lives *is* an important step to adapting to the current climate. As BRACED projects continue in years 2 and 3, it is important to think about how anticipatory and absorptive capacities can be built in ways that provide a solid foundation for building adaptive capacity in the longer-term.
- **For some outcomes, project-level reporting differs from the conceptual understanding of the resilience capacities described in the 3As framework.** The largest discrepancies between project reporting and the 3As framework involve the: use of climate information; role of savings and income; importance of learning from disaster events; and role of social capital. These discrepancies show how, in some cases, one intervention can contribute to multiple resilience capacities. They also highlight opportunities where project-level reporting can collect more detailed information that is not captured in the existing choice of indicators, by supplementing quantitative metrics with qualitative information

using the templates provided. Exploring these points of divergence can improve the evidence base around the interventions that support resilience. They can also validate or challenge theories on how to build community resilience, at scale.

- **The BRACED programme may generate more achievements in building anticipatory and absorptive capacity than adaptive capacity (or transformation).** Absorptive and anticipatory capacities might be more relevant to the three-year timeframe of the BRACED programme, even if BRACED projects should also support adaptive capacity in the longer-term. Additionally, in places where the climate has noticeably changed, dealing with present shocks and stresses *is* a strategy for building adaptive capacity. At present, there is not enough evidence to predict that BRACED as a programme will achieve more gains in anticipatory and absorptive capacities, but these early insights should be followed up on and elaborated further in year 2 and 3 reporting.

How do we track progress? BRACED projects report against two International Climate Fund key performance indicators (KPIs) at the outcome level: KPI 4 and KPI 15. The first, KPI 4, is defined as *'the number of people whose resilience has been improved as a result of BRACED support'*. This number is derived from collating project-level reporting at the outcome level, where projects have identified the project-specific outcome indicators that will demonstrate changes in resilience. In order to understand how resilience has changed, IPs have tagged these indicators to resilience capacities. BRACED defines resilience capacities as anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive, also known as the '3As'. In some cases, projects have identified additional indicators for transformative change. Here, IPs decide how to weight the indicators according to their project theories of change and how they expect to see progress in building resilience.

The second indicator all projects report against is the self-assessed outcome-level qualitative KPI 15, which is defined as *'the extent to which interventions are likely to have a transformational impact'*. During year 1, IPs were encouraged to report against changes they interpreted as representing the 'pillars' and 'characteristics' of transformation as defined by BRACED. More details on the 3As framework are available in Note 4 of the [BRACED M&E Guidance Notes](#) and the paper ['The 3As: Tracking resilience across BRACED'](#).

Complementing KPI 4

The International Climate Fund's KPI 4 is a mandatory outcome-level indicator for all BRACED projects in their logframes. The indicator refers to the '*number of people whose resilience has been improved as a result of BRACED support*' and is the benchmark of BRACED programme-level achievements in resilience-building.

In year 1, projects reported that the resilience of 129,987 people had been improved. This figure is based on IPs' logical framework reporting which is then compiled, quality assured and aggregated by the BRACED Fund Manager. Although most projects did not report at the outcome level in year 1, this synthesis intends to explain this figure on an annual basis, identifying what kind of progress has been achieved and the nature of expected outcomes, using the 3As and Areas of Change frameworks. Because most IPs did not report outcomes this year, there is not sufficient data to explain the figure reported in detail. However, by reviewing all project reports, it is possible to identify ways that projects are working towards the goals outlined in their theories of change that will contribute to KPI 4.

This section presents emerging findings from year 1 at the outcome level. The challenges and emerging lessons in using the 3As and transformation framework for understanding project and programme resilience outcomes are discussed in the companion report, '*Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED*'.

4.1 The resilience capacities being built

The ultimate intended outcome of BRACED projects is to strengthen climate and disaster resilience of targeted populations. As already mentioned, year 1 project-level reporting demonstrated an increase in the resilience of 129,987 individuals for the four projects that conducted additional surveying beyond their baselines (KPI 4). This figure is an early sign of progress, but it tells us less about the nature of the outcome-level changes that IPs expect to see or the challenges they have encountered along the way. Resilience is a multi-faceted concept, and projects intend to support people's resilience capacities in diverse ways. To complement the quantitative KPI 4 measure of resilience, this synthesis examines resilience outcomes through the 3As framework by reviewing the outcome indicators that feed into KPI 4. The 3As framework was developed to help deconstruct resilience-building into a set of resilience 'functions'. The framework draws on resilience theory to break resilience down into three major components:

- the capacity to anticipate a shock or stress
- the capacity to absorb and recover from its impacts
- the capacity to adapt to longer-term climate-related changes.

It describes transformation as an approach that attempts to engineer substantial change through policy, leadership, empowerment, technology and innovation. This focus encourages resilience-building programmes to move beyond incremental changes in people's ability to manage shocks and stresses. It also transforms patterns of vulnerability.

“Applying the 3As framework to project M&E data is underpinned by an intention to help us understand *the extent to which* projects have progressed in building resilience”

Applying the 3As framework to project M&E data is underpinned by an intention to help us understand *the extent to which* projects have progressed in building resilience. It is possible that a community is capable of anticipating and preparing for a disaster, but is not able to recover from its impacts. Alternatively, a household could be well-placed to withstand a one-off stress, but lack the resources and capacity to adapt in the longer-term to increased and sustained climate variability. This section of the report adds some depth to the initial BRACED outcome figure by considering a) how projects are progressing against a holistic set of resilience capacities and b) whether they are enabling transformative change, to provide a more grounded picture of what the BRACED programme can expect to achieve.

Finally, conceptualising resilience in terms of capacities puts human agency at the centre of resilience-building. Unlike a focus on assets or income, a focus on capacities puts emphasis on people's choices and actions. When attempting to quantify resilience capacities, such as through KPI 4, it is important to note that the mere existence of a capacity does not mean it will be applied. BRACED beneficiaries may have access to climate information and the necessary training to understand it, but could choose not to use it to inform their livelihood decisions (adaptive capacity). Similarly, people could accumulate savings through participation in a village savings and loans association, but choose to allocate household savings for other purposes and lack necessary resources during a shock or stress (absorptive capacity). A capacity-focused framework like the 3As enables us to understand progress in building resilience capacities with respect to interventions, but it does not tell us how people behave and what choices they make when confronted with a shock or stress. Efforts to quantify resilience should take care when describing changes in resilience capacities, as these will ultimately be contingent on people's attitudes and choices.

Most IPs were not able to provide outcome-level data or evidence in their early stages of project delivery at the time of year 1 reporting. Instead, reports described which indicators would be tracked to understand changes in resilience capacities by the end of BRACED project implementation. The four projects that were able to provide data on progress against indicators showed very

small changes or mixed results in terms of resilience-related indicators. These results can be attributed to a range of factors, including the prematurity of tracking outcome indicators in year 1, high seasonal variability that limited the comparability of survey results and delays in project implementation that prevented projects from achieving their desired year 1 goals in time. Accordingly, this analysis focuses on the potential for enhancing resilience, examining the choice of outcome indicators tracked in year 1 project reports and relying on the narrative provided by IPs on their progress in building resilience capacities.

Resilience capacities: emerging themes

Three themes emerge from an analysis of project reporting against the 3As.

EMERGING THEME 1: BUILDING ANTICIPATORY CAPACITY THROUGH EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS, RESILIENCE PLANNING, AND USE OF CLIMATE INFORMATION

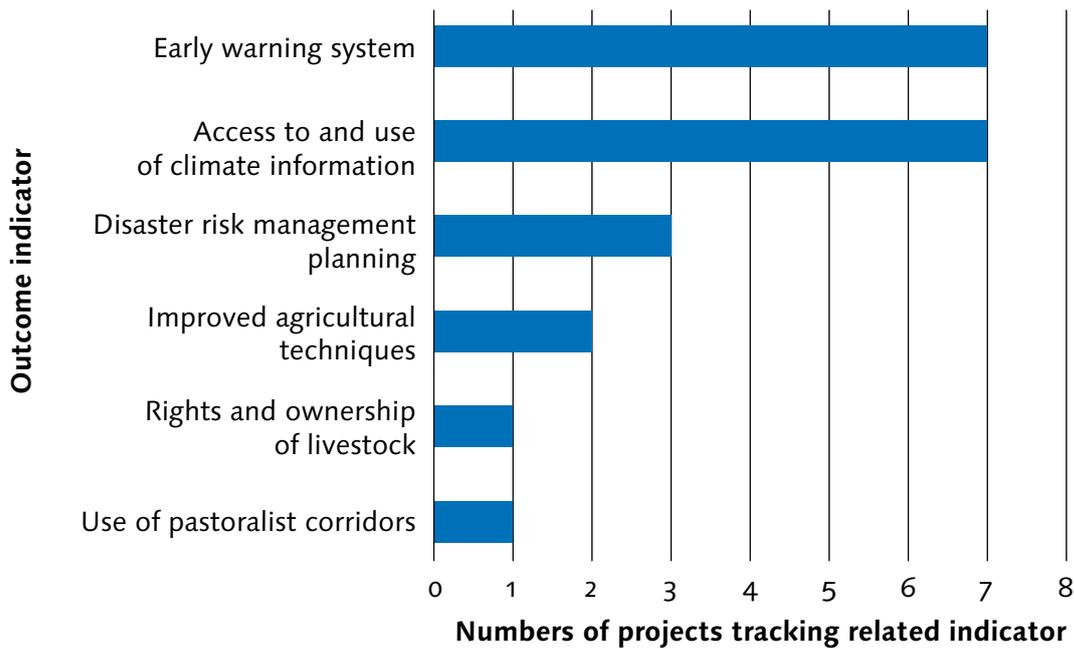
*Anticipatory capacity is the ability of social systems to anticipate and reduce the impact of climate variability and extremes through preparedness and planning. Anticipatory capacity is seen in proactive action before a foreseen event to avoid upheaval, either by avoiding or reducing exposure or by minimising vulnerability to specific hazards.*²³

Improvements in anticipatory capacity were most evident in projects that established early warning systems and disaster management committees in year 1 of project implementation. These achievements did not require extensive surveying to report concrete progress, which included the completion of resilience trainings and the development of disaster management or resilience plans. Encouragingly, these disaster risk management/resilience plans were a method of linking to and influencing local or national government planning in four projects (**ANUKULAN, RIC4REC, PRESENCES, Myanmar Alliance**).

In addition to early warning systems and resilience planning, five IPs cited use of climate information as a key component of enhancing anticipatory capacity (**IRISS, DCF, PRESENCES, PROGRESS, WHH**), in addition to three IPs who reported this as a component of adaptive capacity (**CIARE, Myanmar Alliance, PROGRESS**). These projects reported varying levels of progress in the uptake of climate information, but the majority were at least at a stage where they were able to disseminate climate information to community members (see section 3.1 for more detail). Uptake of climate information proved a challenge in some contexts; in the **BRICS** project in Sudan, the project report stated that pastoral communities were less receptive and sometimes distrusted modern weather information services. Supporting use of climate information for livelihood decisions required different strategies for different target groups.

²³ Bahadur, A.V., Peters, K., Wilkinson, E., Pichon, F., Gray, K. and Tanner, T. (2015) The 3As: Tracking resilience across BRACED. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

Figure 8: Anticipatory capacity outcome indicators



Note. Related indicators have been grouped to provide an indication of what outcomes BRACED IPs expect to see in the timeframe of their project interventions.

The establishment of community-based early warning systems was another pathway towards enhancing anticipatory capacity, with seven projects tracking indicators related to early warning systems (**Zaman Lebidi, SUR1M, RIC4REC, Myanmar Alliance, MAR, CIARE, ANUKULAN, BRICS**). The **MAR** project in Ethiopia was able to report quantitative improvement in the reported use of community-based early warning systems. Survey results found that 35% of the population used community-based early warning systems, up from 20% of the population at the baseline. Without a shock or a stress to test the early warning system, it is difficult to draw conclusions as to whether increased access to early warning translates to better preparedness.

One method of gauging preparedness is by looking at the communities' responses to localised climate shocks that occurred in the first year of the BRACED programme. In Myanmar, preparedness measures were put to the test when a fire²⁴ broke out and community members were able to extinguish it before official fire services arrived at the scene, saving an estimated 60 homes (**Myanmar Alliance**). The Myanmar Alliance project documents credit this to the early action by community members and equipment provided by BRACED at the behest of community members who had prioritised fire as the most pressing climactic threat to their communities. In another case, the **SUR1M** project in Niger found that pockets of extreme food insecurity related to pest infestations, as well as irregular distribution of rain, were common. However, the report states that many beneficiaries in Niger were able to use certified seeds and climate-smart agriculture practices to have high enough yields, even after the impact of drought and pests, to provide a net benefit of surplus production that could be stored for consumption or sale later.

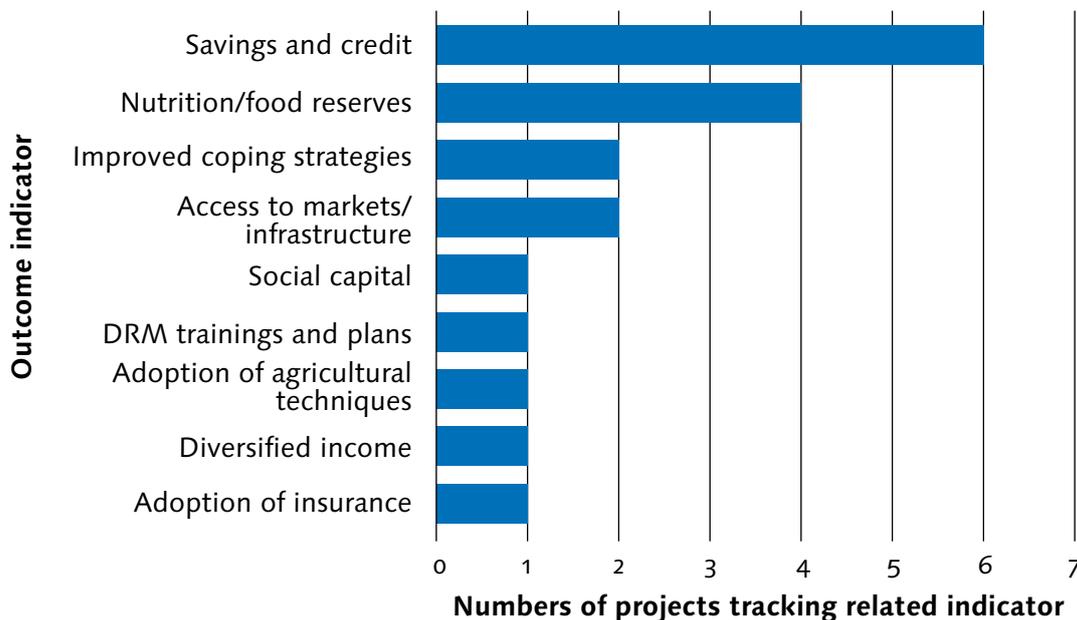
²⁴ Fires thought to be a result of climate change are not necessarily substantiated in the report.

EMERGING THEME 2: IMPROVED NUTRITION AND ACCESS TO FINANCIAL RESOURCES AS KEY COMPONENTS OF ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY

The ability of social systems to absorb and cope with the impacts of climate variability and extremes is known as 'absorptive capacity'. It refers to the ability of social systems, using available skills and resources, to face and manage adverse conditions, emergencies or disasters.²⁵

Gains in absorptive capacity were tracked in a number of ways throughout the projects, though the most common was through the use of indicators related to use of savings and credit.²⁶ Reports used indicators related to access to savings and credit, social capital and food reserves or improved dietary diversity. Indicators related to access to infrastructure markets were tagged against absorptive capacity in two projects (**DCF, Livestock Mobility**), though the remaining 12 projects converged on the importance of finance and food to absorb the impacts of crises. As mentioned in section 3, access to savings and credit was commonly supported through savings groups, which had an additional objective of enhancing social capital and formalising traditional social protection schemes. Women formed at least half – if not the majority – of membership in these groups, with projects indicating that this could lay the foundation for greater decision-making power in the household and community.

Figure 9: Absorptive capacity outcome indicators



Note. Related indicators have been grouped to provide an indication of what outcomes BRACED IPs expect to see in the timeframe of their project interventions.

²⁵ Bahadur, A.V., Peters, K., Wilkinson, E., Pichon, F., Gray, K. and Tanner, T. (2015) *The 3As: Tracking resilience across BRACED*. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

²⁶ The role of social protection in building absorptive capacity is explored in Ulrichs, M. (2016) 'Increasing people's resilience to shocks through social protection'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

Despite these actions to improve absorptive capacity, a few of the IPs operating in more challenging contexts, particularly those project areas affected by drought, observed beneficiaries adopt some negative coping strategies. This was measured using the Coping Strategies Index, which indicates how many negative coping strategies a household is adopting. This finding must be treated with caution; the project-level reporting did not specify which strategies were being used and the sampling methods were not able to account for seasonality. Without more information, this cannot be used as an indication that the project did not make any gains in supporting absorptive capacity. It does, nonetheless, raise attention to the absence of discussion about whether efforts to build resilience capacities helped reduce the impacts of shocks or stresses that occurred in the project area. A deeper engagement with the reality of beneficiaries' experiences would go a long way in helping programme-level reporting make sense of whether the BRACED model is able to support resilience capacities in difficult contexts and, if so, how it does this.

EMERGING THEME 3: WORKING ACROSS LONGER TIME SCALES TO BUILD ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Adaptive capacity is the ability of social systems to adapt to multiple, long-term and future climate change risks, and also to learn and adjust after a disaster. It is the capacity to take deliberate and planned decisions to achieve a desired state even when conditions have changed or are about to change.

The BRACED programme intends to build adaptive capacity in a wealth of ways, and the diversity of approaches is reflected in the choice of outcome indicators the IPs are tracking. During year 1, adaptive capacity was cross-tagged with the highest number of indicators, ranging from access to water, adoption of business practices, improved income, changes in herd size, and application of climate-smart agricultural practices. Tracking adoption of technologies and improved production or income were the most common approaches. For climate-smart agriculture projects, 'adoption of climate-smart technology or techniques'-related indicators are important proxies for understanding the adaptation behaviours that farmers undertake with the materials and knowledge gained through the BRACED programme. Much of the progress towards these key indicators has been through provision of trainings on specific techniques, such as in off-season vegetable farming (**ANUKULAN**) or on smart business skills for agricultural activities (**SUR1M**). The results of these trainings are intended to translate into outcome-level indicators, but in year 1 these activities did not yield outcome-level results.

Figure 10: Adaptive capacity outcome indicators



Note. Related indicators have been grouped to provide an indication of what outcomes BRACED IPs expect to see in the timeframe of their project interventions.

A few projects tracked indicators of adaptive capacity that are linked to other capacities in the '3As' conceptual framework. Access to and use of credit and savings is described as an important component of absorptive capacity in the conceptual framework, but projects also reported this as a component of adaptive capacity. Three projects categorised 'use of credit and savings' as adaptive, explaining that savings and credit supported households to make investments in climate-resilient production (**PRESENCES, PROGRESS, SUR1M**). Other indicators were used across all three resilience capacities, such as in the **Livestock Mobility** project. Their indicator '*changes in pastoral women, men and children counted on corridors*', which intends to track fluidity of livestock movements, was considered indicative of anticipatory, adaptive and anticipatory capacity. The project report explained that this indicator provides information about timing of departure and that of destocking before transhumance, along with the number of people leaving a household. This can show how pastoral families are anticipating climatic events, adapting to longer-term changes and absorbing climate impacts (by moving elsewhere).

Broadly, adaptive capacity was considered more challenging to build within the timescales of BRACED projects. The DCF project opted not to track changes in adaptive capacity at all, explaining that in the longer term all activities would be considered adaptive, but that *'we have reported outcomes under absorptive and anticipatory capacities, as our assessment shows that these will be most relevant in the timeframe of the project'*. Indeed, in projects where communities prioritised resilience actions, activities meant to enhance anticipatory and absorptive capacities were favoured. According to project reports, incremental climatic changes are less visible to community members and thus less likely to prompt immediate action. Furthermore, adaptive capacity interventions often need to be accompanied with significant behavioural and social changes that tend to be difficult to move or track in the short term.

The 3As framework emphasises a key element of adaptive capacity that is not tracked in the BRACED project indicators: the ability to learn from disturbances, and thus recover in a way that reduces vulnerability to the same shock should it happen again. After a significant disaster event, there may be a window of opportunity to 'build back better', bringing together stakeholders affected and determining a more resilient development trajectory. Some BRACED IPs dealt with shocks and stresses in year 1 (see section 4.3) and their documentation of the changes these events may have brought about at the local level presents an opportunity to track how BRACED has supported adaptive capacity during a recovery period. Because of the context-specific nature of disaster recovery experiences, this type of information is not well-suited to a single indicator. Elaborating a narrative on experiences of learning from disturbances could be included in next year's reporting, which will ask about the experience of shocks and stresses in the project area.

Point for reflection: There are instances where resilience theory and practice diverge

The definitions, descriptions, and proposed indicators that IPs use to track resilience capacities in their annual reports broadly mirror those suggested in the 3As framework. Yet a few key elements differ from the conceptual understanding of the resilience capacities it sets out. These are explored below. IPs that applied a slightly different understanding of how resilience capacities are built, in their year 1 reporting, are not wrong. Rather, this highlights interesting questions to explore at the project-level to validate and challenge some of the ideas underpinning the 3As theories about how to build resilience at the community-level, at scale.

- **The ability to learn from disturbances, as well as recover in a way that reduces vulnerability to future shocks, is embedded in the definition of adaptive capacity in the 3As framework, but was absent from projects' outcome reporting.** Understanding whether households or communities were able to 'build back better' after a disaster event is a process that is not easily encapsulated in a single indicator, so projects have understandably focused their outcome-level M&E efforts elsewhere.

Nonetheless, documenting this learning process – if and when it happens – is especially important, given that BRACED beneficiaries have dealt with shocks and stresses in year 1. With support from BRACED IPs, communities that have experienced disaster events may be able to address underlying vulnerabilities in a way that makes them more resilient to that event in the future, demonstrating a high level of adaptive capacity. The project annual report asks about experience of disaster events in this in the project area, and this question could be expanded to record how community-level decision-making changed in the wake of disturbances, during year 1.

- In the 3As framework, the use of climate information is considered a vital component of adaptive capacity. **With the exception of one project, access to and use of climate information in BRACED was considered to contribute to anticipatory or adaptive capacity, but not both.** The 3As framework argues that long-term climate information is vital for adaptive capacity and that short-term weather forecasts and warnings on impending hazards are important for anticipatory capacity. In their outcome indicators, most projects did not distinguish between these two types of data during BRACED year 1, so drawing conclusions about whether they were referring to the use of climate information for long-term planning or short-term preparedness was not possible. For agriculture-related projects, however, the line between using climate information for adaptive or anticipatory decisions is particularly thin – using climate information to determine when to plant, when to harvest and what crop varieties to plant can enhance both anticipatory and adaptive capacity. Climate and weather information enables farmers to anticipate when short-term climate and weather changes may affect crops, while also informing their longer-term adaptive choices.
- **Access to credit and savings was considered important for both adaptive and absorptive capacity during BRACED year 1.** The 3As framework argues that savings and safety nets are crucial in supporting absorptive capacity because they allow people to access resources to smooth consumption and maintain levels of well-being during difficult periods. Six projects tagged 'access to credit and savings' or participation in voluntary savings and loans groups as an indicator of absorptive capacity, mirroring the guidance in the 3As framework. However, three projects also used the same indicator to track adaptive capacity, stating that savings could be used to invest into businesses and livelihoods. The limited information available from projects so far would suggest that some outcomes (i.e. enhanced savings and access to credit) could enhance more than one capacity, depending on whether the resources were spent on household consumption or investment purposes.
- A growing body of research suggests that **social capital is an important component of resilient communities, and that social relations, networks and common values are vital to functioning after a shock or**

stress (Adger, 2003;²⁷ Woodson et al., 2015)²⁸. Only one project (**Livestock Mobility**) tracks social capital, using a proxy indicator looking at the *'distribution of rights of use within family herds'* to understand the extent to which pastoralists can rely on social networks within their community and with external community groups. The project argues that *'resilience is increased by the ability to negotiate access to resources through strong social networks'*. While Livestock Mobility may be the only project using a direct (albeit project-specific) proxy for social capital, BRACED projects have a strong emphasis on supporting community groups for savings and loans associations, disaster risk reduction planning, and enhancing uptake of climate-smart farming practices. Understanding whether these groups strengthen social networks and enhance reciprocity in the aftermath of a shock or stress would provide insight as to how projects have enhanced absorptive capacity. As it stands, BRACED M&E systems are not designed to monitor this at the outcome level.

There was also evidence of some successes in managing small, localised climate shocks and stresses resulting from BRACED support. In Myanmar, as already mentioned, community members trained in disaster risk management were able to extinguish a fire threatening 60 homes before officials arrived on scene. Previously, these types of small fires had destroyed up to 50 homes. The success was attributed to the provision of equipment, planning, and training supported through BRACED. This case also points to the value of allowing communities to define their resilience priorities – focusing on fire safety had been a participatory choice rather than one prescribed in the project design.

4.2 Achieving transformation

The BRACED theory of change hypothesises that people's capacity to anticipate, absorb and adapt to shocks can be built, enhanced and reshaped through transformational changes. Put differently, BRACED intends to move beyond supporting incremental changes in people's resilience and support a more radical shift in the distribution of vulnerability in BRACED project locations. Within BRACED, transformation is defined as the likelihood of human systems to fundamentally and sustainably improve the resilience of vulnerable citizens to climate impacts. Transformation is a forthcoming area of research for the BRACED KM.

²⁷ Adger, W. N. (2003), Social Capital, Collective Action, and Adaptation to Climate Change. *Economic Geography*, 79: 387–404.

²⁸ Woodson, L., Frankenberger, T., Smith, L., Langworth, M. & Presnall, C. (2016). The Effects of Social Capital on Resilience Capacity: Evidence from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Niger and Burkina Faso. Report prepared by the Technical Consortium, a project of the CGIAR. Technical Report Series No 2: Strengthening the Evidence Base for Resilience in the Horn of Africa. Nairobi, Kenya: A joint International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and TANGO International publication.

“BRACED intends to move beyond supporting incremental changes in people's resilience and support a more radical shift in the distribution of vulnerability in BRACED project locations”

During year 1, potential for catalytic transformation, in which approaches can be replicated and financed by others, was most common in interventions with clear links to local government ministries or that had an explicit aim to institutionalise resilience practices. Some projects were able to achieve clear successes in this regard, with the **WHH** project in Burkina Faso reporting replication of their 'plant clinic' approach by the Ministry of Agriculture in seven additional regions of the country and the **Livestock Mobility** project reporting uptake of its livestock module on trading in West Africa by the World Bank's PRAPS programme in the Sahel. The **DCF** project created a partnership protocol with the Senegalese government to decentralise climate funds, and has been working with the Malian government on accreditation for accessing climate finance. Though the mechanisms are not yet functional, these examples indicate potential overhauls in the scope and scale of resilience-building efforts. Some softer methods of government buy-in were also apparent in BRACED projects, with government ministries agreeing to share costs or provide convening spaces for community groups working on resilience issues. Government recognition that resilience-building is a public good and subsequently directly facilitating these activities is a promising step towards building momentum for higher level policy shifts.

Achieving transformation: emerging themes

Looking across the project annual reports for year 1, there is one emerging theme.

EMERGING THEME 4: EMPOWERING WOMEN AND LINKING UP WITH GOVERNMENT

IPs also reported on transformation in relation to gender relations, with many citing the potentially transformative impacts of involving women in leadership positions in community savings groups, disaster risk management planning and climate-smart agriculture committees. Capturing intangible processes of participation and empowerment is difficult, but moving from ad hoc citizen engagement to more regular inputs to the community and the local government through forums facilitated by BRACED has potential for genuine empowerment. A few projects reported that women's social status was changing as a result of being trained as leaders, such as in the **SUR1M** project. In leadership positions in farming associations, women were able to offer advice on climate-smart agriculture practices and garner prestige within the community. It is likely that these attitudinal and behavioural changes that IPs self-reported will need to continue beyond the lifetime of the BRACED programme. However, projects are demonstrating promising signs of paving the way for empowerment of women in societies with deeply entrenched gender norms.

Through the year 1 reporting, it became apparent that IPs may have felt compelled to over report potential for transformation. Many projects cited small changes related to project outputs as potentially transformative. Though this evidence of change is best understood within the context, there is a possibility that the BRACED programme's strong emphasis on transformation within the conceptual framework puts pressure on IPs to frame all evidence of change as transformative. If BRACED strives to contribute to transformative change, it is important not to dilute this concept.

Lastly, BRACED ambitions around gender empowerment were generally tracked through normal indicators, disaggregating statistics by gender. **SUR1M** and **ANUKULAN** were exceptions to this rule. **ANUKULAN** tracked changes in adaptive capacity by measuring a change in average Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index score. Similarly, **SUR1M** included an ambitious outcome indicator tracking the average proportion of women elected at regular municipality sessions. The project designed trainings to improve women's representation in local politics, and found that the outcome indicator exceeded its target in year 1 (from 15% to 18%). These gender-specific indicators are an interesting method of testing how effective BRACED projects are in supporting women's empowerment, pushing projects to focus on the quality of participation or how that participation translates to increased acceptance of women in decision-making roles.²⁹

4.3 Summary: understanding BRACED outcomes

BRACED projects report on outcome-level changes using the 3As framework: tracking anticipatory, absorptive, and adaptive capacity, as well as the potential for transformation. Generally, projects intended to build absorptive capacity by enhancing access to finance and improving nutrition, and support anticipatory capacity by reinforcing DRR planning and ensuring access to early warning systems. Adaptive capacity outcome indicators were varied, and many of these tracked longer-term livelihood and environmental changes. IPs also reported on transformation, with many projects identifying gender empowerment and the linking of interventions to government strategies as two important avenues for unlocking transformational change. A review of IPs' reports against the 3As and transformation framework reveals that, despite the differing contexts the projects are operating in, there are clear themes that are common across the set of projects:

²⁹ For a review of different approaches to incorporating gender and equality objectives into resilience projects and monitoring gender equality outcomes, see Le Masson, V., Norton, A. and Wilkinson, E. (2016) 'Gender and Resilience'. BRACED Knowledge Manager. Working Paper. London: ODI.

UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE OUTCOMES: LESSONS LEARNT

Anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities and transformative change

- **Theme 1:** Building anticipatory capacity through early warning systems, resilience planning and use of climate information
 - **Theme 2:** Improved nutrition and access to financial resources as key components of absorptive capacity
 - **Theme 3:** Working across longer-time scales to build adaptive capacity
 - **Theme 4:** Empowering women and linking up with government
-

In projects where communities themselves defined resilience priorities, activities were oriented around enhancing anticipatory and absorptive capacity, which were perceived as more tangible than adapting to future risks. Dealing with current risks and threats, particularly in contexts where communities are already witnessing unprecedented climatic extremes, is a logical first step for communities that are highly vulnerable to climate change. As projects provide outcome-level data in years 2 and 3, understanding how resilience capacities interrelate – and revisiting whether adaptive capacity is more challenging to build in the lifespan of a BRACED intervention – will be key insights to inform theories for building community-level resilience on the ground.



5. RESILIENCE IN CONTEXT

Image:
Scott Wallace
(World Bank)

“BRACED monitoring and results reporting efforts pay particular attention to understanding not only how the climatic context affects project's progress but also how the socioeconomic, political and social contexts that projects operate within enable or limit change”

About context in BRACED: The BRACED programme theory of change acknowledges that BRACED is not the only initiative working on strengthening resilience to climate and disaster shocks and stresses. BRACED is located within a wider set of international and national development actions on a variety of issues, including disaster risk management, climate change, economic growth, livelihoods, poverty reduction and governance. BRACED projects are working in places where environmental and climate-related risks also interact with pre-existing social, economic and political stresses, such as poor governance, chronic food insecurity, entrenched grievances and instability. BRACED monitoring and results reporting efforts pay particular attention to understanding not only how the climatic context affects project's progress but also how the socioeconomic, political and social contexts that projects operate within enable or limit change.

Specifically, these are the governance structures, decision-making processes, incentives and relationships between different groups and individuals. This section examines the prevailing contexts of BRACED projects and assesses the extent to which contextual factors have enabled or limited the changes described in the previous sections, during year 1. (More details on the BRACED Evaluative Monitoring approach are available in Note 4 of the BRACED M&E Guidance Notes.)

Summary of key findings

The technical rhetoric around capacity building and the distribution of technologies and agricultural inputs, along with the formation of community groups, sometimes overshadows a more honest narrative of the difficulties faced when building resilience on the ground. During year 1 of BRACED, several IPs accessed and made use of contingency funding to deal with the shocks and stresses affecting their projects. However, annual reports provided a limited narrative about the climatic context projects have been operating in, as well as how activities and strategies implemented by IPs deal with this, and to what extent. Together with IPs, the MRR team need to enhance this element of the reporting system in years 2 and 3. Also, though IPs have been tracking the political and social dynamics, it is important to formalise this process and critique the initial assumptions made in project-level theories of change.

Though it is still too early to assess the impact of such contextual factors on project-level outcomes, it is also clear that the contexts in which projects are operating pose particular challenges and opportunities. During the remainder of BRACED, it will be important to better understand what these challenges and opportunities are and what they might mean for the scaling up of BRACED activities.

Emerging lessons

- **Anticipating and managing crisis is central to resilience-building programmes. Yet, the challenge remains: monitoring and contextualising results in the face of shocks and stresses.** BRACED projects are being implemented in areas with recurrent crises. Yet, to date, it remains unclear how they are not only contributing to strengthening community resilience, but also how they are ensuring flexible and adaptable programming to deal with shocks and crises in ongoing areas of intervention. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of a) progress and results in the face of shocks and stresses and b) the extent to which access

to contingency funding offers an answer to this challenge, and how it complements resilience programming, remains a critical gap for the BRACED programme.

- **Context matters and so do pragmatic project designs.** The contexts in which projects are operating pose particular challenges and opportunities. While a focus on shocks and stresses is a key feature of resilience-building programmes, IP reports reveal that a wide range of contextual factors, including governance, conflict, gender relations, cultural norms and the socio-economic environment impact on project performance. An emphasis on climatic shocks and stresses may overshadow the wider set of dynamics operating in a particular area or country. When thinking about the context projects operate within, there is a tendency to consider such factors as potential *risks to the implementation* of project activities and to 'write away' risks into the assumptions column of a logframe. Without challenge, such risks are deemed inevitable or uncontrollable. This misses important opportunities for considering how the BRACED programme can make advances in a variety of areas, such as: solutions of conflict resolution or peacebuilding; governance strengthening; and considering how links to programmes with these intentions are necessary prerequisites for climate resilience programmes. Acknowledging the complexities of operating in difficult environments requires comprehensive context analysis that fosters open and pragmatic dialogue and discussion about what can be achieved during the lifetime of resilience-building projects.
 - **Learning about processes and progress in building resilience requires realistic expectations and moving beyond 'linear reporting'.** BRACED IPs have identified project assumptions in their project logframes and theories of change to acknowledge the dynamic social and political environment of BRACED projects. This, in turn, introduces uncertainty and requires iterative planning. However, year 1 reports tended to reflect a mechanistic rationale, assuming a 'linear' progression of effects that take place quasi-automatically (i.e. irrespective of the actors involved or contextual conditions). Understanding resilience in context calls for more reflective reporting and an iterative process of questioning project and programme assumptions.
-

How do we monitor changes? BRACED reporting includes Evaluative Monitoring as a critical part of the reflection process. This brings an evaluation lens by situating the data collected within an understanding of the prevailing context. The aim is to shed some light on projects' risks and assumptions and to be explicit about the fact that change occurs as a result of many actors and factors.

5.1 What effect have shocks and stresses had?

The BRACED theory of change situates climate and disaster resilience as an outcome which, in turn, will contribute to the BRACED programme's ultimate goal of improving human well-being. This understanding implies that the main objective of BRACED projects is to build the capacity of poor people to anticipate, absorb and adapt to climate-related shocks and stresses for the achievement of the more fundamental goal of improving human well-being in the *context of shocks and stresses*.³⁰ Understanding how BRACED is contributing to strengthening resilience cannot take place in isolation from the climatic context within which IPs operate.

Context matters: Year 1 BRACED climatic context

During the first year of BRACED, climate and disaster related shocks affected nearly half of the countries in which the projects operate, impacting on project progress.

CLIMATE SHOCKS AND STRESSES	TIMING	REGION/COUNTRY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER
Flooding and landslides	July 2015	Myanmar	Myanmar Alliance
Flooding	July 2015	Niger	PRESENCES, SUR1M, Livestock Mobility
Flooding	August 2015	Burkina Faso	Zaman Lebidi
Flooding	August 2015	Dakar, Senegal	Live With Water
Drought	2014–2016	Myanmar	Myanmar Alliance
Drought	2015–2016	Ethiopia	MAR, CIARE
Flood	October 2015	Ethiopia	MAR, CIARE

The first year of BRACED was climatically characterised by one of the strongest El Niño events on record, beginning in May 2015 and continuing into the next year. El Niño is strongly connected to seasonal climate in East Africa, while having a more tenuous relationship with climate in the Sahel and South Asia.

³⁰ The KM is documenting in real-time what works to strengthen resilience during extreme climate events through its 'Reality of Resilience' initiative.

West Africa

Across the Sahel, there was a weak and delayed start to the rainy season in June, compounding fears that El Niño would cause drought in the region. Instead, the rains picked up in July and remained strong and consistent throughout September, resulting in an above average rainy season for Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, parts of Sudan and Chad. This was beneficial for crops and pastures in much of the region, while some areas experienced localised flooding.

In July, flooding along the Niger River affected 50,000 people, killed 22 and displaced thousands, including in the departments where the **PRESENCES** and **SUR1M** projects were operating. The magnitude of these floods was comparable to average years and much less than that of the extreme floods in 2012.

Burkina Faso also experienced heavy rainfall and a strong wind event in August that affected the **WHH** project area. This event resulted in damage to housing and other structures, as well as crop losses.

In Dakar, Senegal, very heavy rainfall resulted in urban flash flooding in Ben Barak, where the **Live With Water** project piloted urban flood capture infrastructure. Following the August event, a visit to the project site revealed that the infrastructure was able to drain the water quickly, while adjacent streets remained flooded several days later.

East Africa

The February to April (Belg) rains failed or were severely depressed in parts of north-central Ethiopia. This was followed by the late and erratic Kiremt rains (June-September), which were likely driven by the ongoing strong El Niño episode. The resulting drought impacted some BRACED project regions. The Afar Zone, where the **MAR** project operates, was particularly hard hit. This was followed by localised flooding in October, including in the Gamo Gofo zone, where the **MAR** project also operates. These are typical El Niño impacts for the region and consistent with seasonal forecast predictions for the October to December 2015 season.

Much of East Africa, including Kenya and Uganda was predicted to experience above average rainfall during the October to December 2015 season. This did occur, along with some localised flooding; however, the severity of impacts was not as high as in past El Niño years (e.g. 1997 to 1998) and largely did not affect the **PROGRESS** project areas in Wajir and Karamoja.

South Asia

Myanmar experienced very heavy monsoon rainfall that was compounded by cyclone Komen in July, resulting in severe flooding in large swathes of the country along its many river systems. Townships where the **Myanmar Alliance** project was operating in the Ayeyarwady, Yangon, Rakhine and Kayin regions were likely impacted.

Despite this heavy rainfall event, Myanmar received less rainfall over the entire year than average. This was compounded by reduced rainfall in the previous year and high temperatures associated with El Niño leading to dry conditions, particularly in Dry Zone in the centre of the country.

During year 1 of BRACED, several IPs accessed and made use of contingency funding (PHASE)³¹ to deal with shocks and stresses affecting their projects. However, year 1 annual reports have provided a limited narrative about the climatic context that projects operate within, along with how and the extent to which the activities and strategies implemented by IPs deal with this.

During the second half of year 1, the PHASE contingency fund was made available to Sahel-based (Component A) IPs to supplement ongoing BRACED work with the intention of protecting the development gains of BRACED investments in the face of shocks and stresses.³² Four projects accessed this contingency funding during or soon after the year 1 reporting period to deal with emerging humanitarian crises. To gain a fuller picture of the effects of shocks and stresses on project results, we consulted the information IPs provided in their applications to the contingency funding. This was applied for and granted in order to:

- reduce BRACED communities' immediate vulnerability to *'food insecurity caused by failed harvests in 2015 and build their ability through the 2016 planting season to increase their resilience to future shocks'* (**PRESENCES**, January 2016)
- support households in areas affected by particularly poor harvests (caused by both lack of rainfall and pest infestation) and persistent insecurity (**SUR1M**, April 2016)
- provide further support to agro-pastoralist households in Burkina Faso who were facing food insecurity due to the migration of agro-pastoralists and their animals from conflict in the neighbouring Ivory Coast (**Livestock Mobility**, April 2016)
- *'Protect and preserve the livelihoods and productive capacities of vulnerable households during the current crisis [predicted food and nutritional stress], so that they stay engaged with the broader BRACED programme and its longer-term objectives'* (**Zaman Lebidi**, June 2016).

³¹ Through the DFID–ECHO 'Providing Humanitarian Assistance in Sahel Emergencies' (PHASE) programme, BRACED IPs operating in the Sahel are able to apply for contingency funding ahead of or during a crisis in order to protect BRACED resilience gains. A total sum of £1.5 million is available to Sahel-based IPs; this is disbursed through the Fund Manager.

³² There were requests to the FM for contingency funds from non-Sahel countries (Nepal, when the earthquake hit and also Ethiopia, from the drought) that were not successful, as this fund is for Sahel countries only.

The rationale for all of these interventions was to

- ensure the situation of beneficiaries of the ongoing project was not worsened as a result of the shock
- protect the resilience gains made so far (e.g. by avoiding the use of negative coping strategies)
- increase the participation in and benefit from ongoing BRACED project activities (e.g. by reducing the need for migration of beneficiaries away from the project area).

In the case of the **Zaman Lebidi** project, the project had '*factored in a contingency fund sufficient to support approximately 1,000 people in each of the intervention areas*'; however, due to abnormal climate fluctuations and climate unpredictability arising, crop production was being impacted '*beyond what could normally be expected*'.

Engaging communities in situations of recurrent food crises is proving difficult and poses a major risk for the achievement of project outcomes. Furthermore, engaging communities in resilience-building activities has been challenging in projects like **PRESENCES** where, due to the cereal deficit registered in the communities, workers leave to carry out income-generating activities, affecting the number of people available to carry out local resilience-building activities. In a similar vein, the **PROGRESS** project reported that keeping adolescent girls and boys motivated to attend weekly sessions remains a challenge, as some may drop out during the drought period and migrate to towns for work to contribute to household income. In Sudan, the **BRICS** project reported experiencing a lack of collective action at community level (due to weak civil society presence), with this constraining the level of engagement of village development and DRR groups. Proactive action is all the more constrained in periods of bad harvests, when the communities' priority is to cope with immediate emergencies rather than on long-term changes.

With all BRACED projects operating in the context of shocks and stresses, there is a need to ensure project monitoring and results reporting provides sufficient space for detailing, reflecting on and understanding these issues and how projects can deal with them. At the programme level, BRACED is interested in understanding how resilience is being built in the context of shocks and stresses, the effect of these on resilience-building processes and outcomes and how resilience gains made by projects can be protected.³³ The use of contingency funding in BRACED is an area of ongoing evaluation for the BRACED KM in collaboration with IPs (see annex 8 for references).

³³ The KM is undertaking a specific piece of evaluative work on the use of PHASE contingency funding in BRACED to understand the latter.

Drivers and barriers to change in BRACED projects

In addition to an analysis of the climatic context, IPs were asked to reflect on drivers and barriers to change that required them to adapt their change pathways. The list below provides an overview of main contextual factors listed by IPs. Even if reports mostly highlight constraining (risk) factors, some factors are also underscored as potential enablers for the projects' implementation and for changes to happen, in some instances. Such factors are marked in italics in the table (i.e. they may be constraining or enabling, depending on their situation).

Drivers and barriers to change

- Limited access to markets (inputs and outputs).
- Administrative reforms and decentralisation.
- Co-existence of groups (pastoralists/farmers, religious and ethnic groups) and conflict/insecurity.
- Lack of availability of financial services.
- Existence of competing revenue-generating activities (mining).
- Land reforms affecting the management rules of common property resources.
- Exposure to natural hazards and climate events.
- Food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Illiteracy levels.
- Influence of customary authorities and leaders.
- *Interacting/overlapping development initiatives.*
- IPs' experience and knowledge of the target areas.
- Islamic finance rules.
- Land tenure issues.
- Language barriers (including technical jargon).
- Local availability of financial services.
- Low levels of 'women's empowerment' and evidence of values that are detrimental to gender equality.
- Perception of INGOs and external actors.
- *Consideration of local knowledge.*
- Physical access to target areas.
- Political control over activities and information.
- Political instability and forthcoming elections.
- A relief-oriented mind-set and culture of dependency
 - *Pre-existing skills and capacities.*

- The socio-economic situation.
 - Weaknesses in the following areas:
 - civil society organisations
 - governance and policies
 - capacity for climate data generation
 - institutions.
 - *Consistency with the national framework and strategy.*
 - *The willingness of:*
 - *community members to take part in the activities (differentiating paid situations from those in a voluntary context)*
 - *local authorities to support the activities (differentiating situations where staff are being paid from institutional engagements)*
 - *(sub) national institutions to support the activities (differentiating situations where staff are being paid from institutional engagements)*
 - *Existence of local structures that can be relied on.*
 - The willingness of the private sector to collaborate.
-

So far, this section has highlighted the emerging contextual factors hampering project implementation. It is clear that, over the course of the year, BRACED progress has been playing out differently in different projects and countries. The BRACED programme operates in some of the most fragile and food insecure places in the world, so it should not be surprising that progress is not always linear. This affects both the role that BRACED plays in different countries and what IPs actually need to do in order to achieve their project goals. Although BRACED projects operate in 13 countries with different issues, three key themes emerge. (A small number of additional illustrative examples are provided throughout this section with further examples available in [annex 7](#).)

5.2 Resilience in context: emerging themes

EMERGING THEME 1: RESPONDING TO ONGOING CRISIS AND DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

BRACED projects operate in difficult and fragile environments where communities face complex challenges such as conflict and recurrent food crisis, and in states experiencing weak governance and low levels of political will. In addition, a range of socio-economic, political, behavioural and cultural factors affect the viability and sustainability of BRACED projects.

During year 1 of BRACED, there was limited mention of conflict between groups as a result of building resilience, but this observation is nonetheless pertinent for other BRACED projects working in areas with pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and farmer populations. The **Livestock Mobility** project in the Sahel explicitly intends to reduce these conflicts by helping facilitate agreements between

community groups and herders along a key migration corridor, to ensure mobility for transhumants. The project was able to secure agreements along 1,642.25 km of corridors, demonstrating that these stakeholder tensions do not necessarily have to generate conflict or be at odds. However, the project is experiencing resource competition between pastoral and agricultural communities, and passing herders and settled communities.

In addition, insecurity is a core constraining factor in many projects. In Nepal, for example, insecurity diverges priorities in local governance and the **ANUKULAN** project has reported that such a situation may particularly lead to little emphasis on resilience planning at community level. In Mali, for the **DCF** project, insecurity is the main issue (in Mondoro, Diroungani and Dialloubé), limiting the possibility for a full understanding of the local context (i.e. travel to conduct ethnographic research in rural areas is restricted) and the ability to provide training and workshops in those areas. As a result, some areas and communes have had less exposure to the project than planned and will be less able to apply for and access funds for public good investments.

Lastly, political instability due to new elections is also impacting on local governmental stakeholders' incentives on climate change adaptation and DRR, as well as hindering communities' mobilisation, farmers' participation in trainings or other activities, and incentivisation of the private sector actors to make further investments into the remote project areas.

Projects are addressing such complex challenges by implementing activities shaped around the specific needs, challenges and existing capacities of the context in question. For example, due to the insecurity situation in the **RIC4REC** project in Mali, partners there are now operating in three regions (Mopti, Segou and Koulikoro) instead of four. The fourth region of Timbuktu (where 17 villages were potentially selected) was eliminated because of very high security risks leading to the impossibility of properly implementing the project in a safe manner.

Point for reflection: the feasibility of resilience-building projects in difficult environments

Designing and operationalising disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in difficult contexts, specifically post-conflict environments or those with fragile or weak governance structures, brings some notable exceptions. Most DRR and adaptation literature presumes that relatively stable and peaceful environments exist. Moreover, DRR spending in fragile and conflict-affected states by international donors remains piecemeal and marginal, at best; the same can be said for climate change adaptation funding. This limits operational experience from which we can learn and limits research basis from which evidence is drawn.

BRACED is one of the first resilience programmes to deliver adaptation spending at scale, to post-conflict and conflict contexts. As such, a concerted

effort is required to better understand what can be learnt about what works and what does not, to support the nascent body of knowledge in this area.

What we have learnt to date is limited, partly because generating knowledge and evidence takes time and partly because the incentives for addressing fragility or weak governance – or proactively pursuing peacebuilding goals – are missing in the design of the programme. It is therefore hardly surprising that this is viewed as a 'problem' for the normal delivery of climate resilience programmes when escalation of tensions occurs in BRACED contexts.

Conflict and political instability are not built into the design of the projects even when they are clearly highlighted within the project context and are known risks to the operational delivery (recognising that the exact fluctuations of conflict are not). Supporting peacebuilding or the cessation of conflict are not direct intentions of the projects and, as such, are not directly targeted or reported on. In difficult environments, implementation focuses on the delivery of a project's activities, rather than affecting the change of a wider system. It is possible that this goes beyond what can be achieved by a climate resilience programme. IPs and the BRACED KM should develop a better understanding of the risks and trade-offs of such approaches during the remainder of the programme.

As with many climate investments, the ultimate goal here is improvements in well-being, with the intention to support resilience outcomes along the way. Monitoring systems are designed to test progress against climate-related indicators. Whether explicitly or implicitly, dealing with wider contextual challenges – particularly where they relate to longer term governance challenges or to issues of insecurity and fragility – is seen as part of the wider context in which a project has to work. These are not considered as development or humanitarian challenges to be addressed in order to deliver the desired climate resilience impacts. Much debate surrounds the question of whether climate, disaster and peacebuilding goals can or should be combined, but there is a growing international interest in identifying more coherent ways to make progress on 'resilience' as it features across the post-2015 frameworks. This could include addressing climate and disaster risks in fragile and conflict affected states, in linked ways. Here, over time, BRACED will make an important contribution to informing this agenda.

EMERGING THEME 2: ADJUSTING PLANNING PROCESSES IN THE CONTEXT OF DECENTRALISATION

Many IPs are working in countries undergoing a decentralisation process (Niger: **PRESENCES**; Senegal and Mali: **DCF, Livestock Mobility**; Kenya: **PROGRESS**). In these projects, ongoing decentralisation initiatives present both a risk and an opportunity. Looking across the project annual reports for year 1, IPs reported that the institutional arrangements and governance conditions under which project interventions are implemented had implications for effectiveness.³⁴

The **DCF** project is designed to work within the decentralised context. It incorporates an expectation that decentralised governance frameworks in Senegal and Mali will continue to evolve as part of the decentralisation process. The project has devoted most of year 1 to engaging with and applying local knowledge and expertise on government frameworks, in order to match devolved climate fund institutions to the appropriate frameworks. There are risks and opportunities inherent in this approach: the risks are presented if decentralisation processes break down, while positive opportunities occur where decentralised mechanisms effectively function to move climate funds for use at the local level. In either case, the process of planning and implementation requires flexibility and time. Implementation is not expected to be straightforward, as current structures continue to evolve. This is because, in both countries (Mali and Senegal), institutions that would support the DCF approach are either not functioning well or still in the early stages. The project's devolved finance institution building has focused on building capacities at the regional and local levels. There have also been additional efforts to lay the groundwork needed to link local systems and capacities to national ones when appropriate (e.g. to access international climate funds). Going forward, it will be a challenge to integrate and mainstream the design features of the DCF approach into the central government's planning and budget system. This challenge is likely to be political, as reforms encourage national political actors to continue to devolve authority (planning and budgetary) from centralised to decentralised actors.

Similarly, for the **Livestock Mobility** project, decentralisation underway in the Sahel countries it operates in may either enable or constrain the changes initiated within the project. Under the provisions of decentralisation, local government bodies are responsible for delivering the key social and economic services (such as health, water or education and market facilities) for a) conducting agricultural, pastoral and forestry land-use planning and b) raising taxes. As mobile herders remain marginalised and largely excluded from local decision-making processes, specific attention is required when negotiating inter-municipal agreements at the department level to manage agro-pastoral resources – inter-cooperation between municipalities along a corridor is often still fragmented. The anchoring of the project within each country's existing decentralised mechanisms enables it to gain more visibility on the local and

³⁴ The role of governance in resilience-building projects is an area of ongoing research for the BRACED KM in collaboration with IPs.

national scale, as well as promoting the need for inter-municipal agreements to cater for long-distance, trans-border livestock mobility.

For the **PRESENCES** project, the decentralisation process underway in Niger will entail changes in local governance and resources. The government's adoption of this at the Council of Ministers in the Republic of Niger, on 26 January 2016, set the terms to transfer skills and resources from the State to the communes and the Regional Territorial Communities in the areas of education, health, water and the environment (which relate directly to the project's interventions). The project expects that these will enable the communes to enact many prerogatives if the decree is applied successfully. However, the institutional analysis has revealed a lack of skills transferred to the communes, despite the fact that this principle is introduced by decentralisation. Adopting this decree in the Council of Ministers demonstrates the government's commitment to accelerate the transfer of resources and skills to communes. This is a constraint across the Sahel countries undergoing decentralisation.

The **PROGRESS** project is working in Kenya, which has undergone a process of political devolution to county-level since 2012, with new county government institutional structures, policies and plans still under development. In establishing village level resilience and adaptation committees under BRACED, the project has had to operate in a shifting context as new county-level legislation and ward-level administrative arrangements are put in place. By comparison, decentralisation and capacity at district level in Uganda are weak. **PROGRESS** has highlighted a need for technical support to the districts and the Office of the Prime Minister in Karamoja to strengthen planning from the bottom-up.

In Senegal, public institutions at the department level and below are relatively strong. In 2013, a third act for decentralisation to the department level was enacted, creating a more suitable enabling environment for 'anchoring' finance mechanisms, such as the Climate Adaptation Funds implemented by **DCF**. Here, DCF have been able to work closely with communes and departments in establishing Adaptation Planning Committees at both the local level and with the national Ministry for Decentralisation in implementing the Climate Adaptation Funds. In Mali, on the other hand, decentralised institutions are generally weaker, posing challenges for implementing decentralised funds, for example. Local elections in November 2016 have further constrained planning and establishment of new structures at this time, making it necessary to work through national government structures. The legal framework is perhaps more supportive of cooperation through inter-commune or inter-municipality level arrangements, as opposed to strengthening commune-level conditions for managing both risk and finance. This is the approach taken by **Livestock Mobility** in anchoring project activities in local institutions across Niger, Mali and Senegal. The risks and constraints perceived by **DCF**, **PRESENCES** and other IPs operating in Mali and Niger (such as **RIC4REC**, in providing grants to fund local resilience plans) could perhaps be addressed through a similar approach to grouping administrative units for the purposes of project implementation. Governance and decentralisation in the context of BRACED is an area of ongoing research for the BRACED KM (see [annex 8](#) for references).

EMERGING THEME 3: JOINING FORCES WITH SIMILAR EFFORTS

Even if IP reports mostly highlight constraining (risk) factors, some factors are also underscored as potential enablers for a project's implementation and changes to happen (6 projects). The possibility of relying on existing structures or initiatives is a key enabler, as well as (more generally) the willingness of stakeholders to engage. Alignment with national policies is particularly interesting in countries where key frameworks are under definition (changes in processes potentially enabling or constraining). Included here would be decentralisation processes in Sahel countries, the climate change and DRR policy framework in Myanmar and the administrative reform that is merging village development committees into new municipalities in Nepal.

“Even if IP reports mostly highlight constraining (risk) factors, some factors are also underscored as potential enablers for a project's implementation and changes to happen”

IPs are looking at opportunities to maximise results and effectiveness. For example, **PRESENCES** reported that the project relations already established with the regional technical services and departments and communes under previous initiatives on food security issues in the project area are easing the implementation and ownership of the programme by local authorities. Similarly, the **Myanmar Alliance** project can lean on achievements of previous projects – those implemented in the last eight years by some of the Alliance members (e.g. World Vision) – to ensure that results of the resilience assessment can be properly validated. This can especially be achieved through the use of DRR assessments.

The **BRICS** project has built on existing knowledge and previous experiences. Typically, the difference in exclusive breastfeeding rates between the villages where BRICS has been working for a year (in Chad) is partly attributed to previous work initiated under a previous project (Community Resilience to Acute Malnutrition – CRAM). Also, regarding the engagement of Environmental Committees in supporting communities to manage forest and woodland resources (e.g. regeneration of woodland through farmer-managed natural regeneration), the process builds on previous work initiated in 2014.

Under the **RIC4REC** project, there are ongoing talks with several major development projects for coordination and information sharing. These include the Near East Foundation (NEF), Mali Climate Change Adaptation Activity (MCCAA), Swiss Contact, GIS, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Livestock for Growth (L4G), the Climate Change Adaptation Project (USAID), national forums and other food security and energy and climate-related projects. A common platform will be decided with willing stakeholders and some interventions will be co-supported (RIC4REC and Swiss Contact).

Under the **PROGRESS** project, a partnership with the GIS-led Interest Group on Grazing Land helped to share efforts on initial assessments and communication, more particularly in relation to a) mapping grazing areas and corridors, cattle movement routes and their calendar and b) supporting informed meetings between leaders and pastoralists and subsequent decisions around rangeland management and budgeting for pastoralists, including the co-funding of research work.

The **BRICS** project promotes exchange and shared learning on resilience research in Darfur through joint meetings between BRICS and a sister DFID project in Sudan called SHARP, with the Tufts Research Director currently involved in both projects. BRICS and SHARP national research teams work together, which helps build bridges between these communities (involving different stakeholders) and opens the way for a resilience interest group or network at the national scale.

The **Livestock Mobility** project uses ACF-I data on biomass levels in the Sahel to support the identification of zones in biomass deficit (forecasts of rainfall and levels of biomass available across the region are needed to assess the access of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists to fodder and water during the dry season).

5.3 Summary: resilience in context

Project progress to date is in line with programme-level expectations. However, a review of the context that projects operate within highlights that climate shocks and stresses are one factor among many having an impact on progress to date. BRACED projects operate in a complex interplay of social, cultural, environmental, political and economic factors that shape development processes. Though BRACED projects are operating in different contexts, there are a number of themes that are common across them in relation to how those contexts are enabling and, in particular, constraining changes in resilience:

RESILIENCE IN CONTEXT

Contextual factors that enable or constrain change

- **Theme 1:** Responding to ongoing crises and difficult situations.
 - **Theme 2:** Adjusting planning processes in the context of decentralisation.
 - **Theme 3:** Joining forces with similar efforts.
-

During year 1 of BRACED, several IPs accessed and made use of contingency funding to deal with shocks and stresses affecting their projects. However, year 1 annual reports provide a limited narrative about the climatic context of projects, and how and the extent to which activities and strategies implemented by IPs deal with this. With all BRACED projects operating in the context of shocks and stresses, there is a need to ensure that project monitoring and results reporting provides sufficient space for detailing, reflecting on and understanding these issues and how projects can deal with them. At the programme level, BRACED is interested in understanding how resilience is being built in the context of shocks

and stresses, the effect of these on resilience-building processes and outcomes and how the resilience gains made by projects can be protected.

There is a real danger that BRACED projects may not incorporate the 'real life' dynamics of resilience-building. Although it is too early in the programme to demonstrate tangible results in terms of improved resilience outcomes, a review of IPs' reports reveals that projects may have set ambitious outcome-level objectives. Building resilience into climate extremes and events is a complex and long-term process. This means there is a risk that substantial outcome-level changes may not be detectable by the end of the programme.



6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Image:
Olivier Girard,
(CIFOR)

6.1 Concluding comments: what has changed?

The BRACED programme aims to improve the lives of up to 5 million vulnerable people facing climate extremes and disasters. It is expected that, over three years, this will be achieved through the efforts of 15 major consortia operating across the Sahel, East Africa and Asia. In preceding sections, we have presented a synthesis of key findings, emerging themes and lessons from year 1 project reports and presented these against the three specific components of the BRACED M&E framework and theory of change.³⁵ A summary of lessons identified to date is presented in [annex 9](#).

This analysis has focused on understanding and addressing the question: *How are BRACED projects building resilience to climate extremes and disasters?* Addressing this, requires an understanding of the factors that make a resilience-building project or programme unique, and therefore goes beyond summarising progress to date. The Monitoring Results and Reporting team have consulted and worked

³⁵ Resilience pathways (Areas of Change), understanding resilience outcomes (3As and Transformation) and resilience in context (Evaluative Monitoring).

with the research function of the BRACED KM to further unpack the analysis of the data and findings.

Despite the concerns and limitations highlighted in this report, progress to date is in line with programme-level expectations in terms of the processes and activities implemented. BRACED has had an incredibly busy first year, initiating a very large number of activities in separate locations across different countries. Efforts to date have concentrated on establishing project-level baselines and implementing participatory analysis, along with assessments of climate vulnerability and capacity and the selection, design and initial implementation of resilience-building activities through a wide range of strategic partnerships.

A review of the projects' pathways to change reveals that IPs' resilience-building journey starts with:

- deepening knowledge about climatic risk
- establishing community-level structures and community groups for the implementation of project activities
- working with new partnerships and stakeholder networks
- acting as knowledge brokers to facilitate new information to government and citizens
- improving the links between civil society and government
- supporting inclusive decision-making that considers the priorities and needs of the most vulnerable.

Despite progress made to date, it is too early in the programme to demonstrate outcome-level results in terms of improved resilience capacities. Evidence suggests that now the building blocks have been established, more tangible results will start to be seen during years 2 and 3. However, the authors would suggest that BRACED projects may have set ambitious outcome-level objectives, as the 'real life' dynamics of resilience-building may not have been incorporated into project design and implementation. Although BRACED is right to be ambitious, the time frame of the programme may mean that in some areas only marginal changes will be achieved. Given the complexity and long-term challenges that BRACED aims to address, there is a risk that substantial outcome-level changes may not be detectable by the end of the programme.

It is also important to highlight that the BRACED programme theory of change is based on a bottom-up and top-down assumption. The bottom-up element is the field-based projects that are the focus of this report. The assumption was that while the project-level community-based approaches will achieve and deliver sustained outcomes and impact on people's resilience to climate extremes, successful practices and approaches would be replicated and scaled up through the (separate) top-down provision of national policy and capacity support and policy influence. The delays in the design and implementation of this complementary top-down work may hinder impact of the overall BRACED programme. Based on the findings of this report, the BRACED KM will identify

any implications for the pathways and assumptions about how change happens and revise the programme-level theory of change accordingly, in conjunction with DFID, the BRACED FM and the project IPs.

BRACED is a unique programme – the biggest global effort to build resilience locally, in highly vulnerable places, yet at scale. With IPs' work firmly rooted in practice, we hope that the findings and lessons emerging from this report will constitute a ground-breaking contribution to knowledge and evidence generation efforts in the field of climate and disaster resilience programmes and accompanying monitoring and results reporting efforts.

Key messages and recommendations

Based on the findings of this report, six key messages with related recommendations for both IPs and the KM have been identified. Together, these will improve the BRACED programme's ongoing efforts to build knowledge and evidence on what works to strengthen resilience.

It is important to note that BRACED is nearly two years into its three-year implementation timeframe. There are therefore some limitations to what can be adapted and achieved in the remainder of the programme. That said, many of the recommendations proposed are in line with – and further build upon – existing research, monitoring and learning work, particularly of the KM, creating scope for their application. The recommendations are not prescriptive; it is suggested that IPs consider them in the context of their projects. The key messages and recommendations might also be relevant for those designing and implementing other resilience-building projects and programmes. A forthcoming publication from the KM will distil the messages and recommendations further for audiences external to BRACED.

Key message 1: Accessing and using weather and climate information is a critical element in building anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities.

To be successful, projects need to overcome potential challenges and bias towards prioritising localised short-term climate information. More support should be offered to IPs and communities in building bridges between the seemingly easier use of near-term information and the more challenging use of longer-term information.

Recommendations: BRACED presents a unique opportunity to integrate climate services into resilience programming. To achieve this, IPs and the KM should further explore:

- **The incentives and motivations behind the observed focus on near-term climate information.** Is this driven by supply constraints (e.g. lack of available data or capacity) or by a lack of demand (e.g. stakeholders not asking for longer term projections)? If it is the former, the KM should support IPs in addressing these constraints (e.g. through its Climate and Weather Helpdesk).

- **The new roles that IPs are playing as intermediaries/advisors between formal climate services and communities.** How are these advisory functions perceived by the targeted users over time? (There is KM research specifically looking at this.)
 - **The extent to which the limited reference to historical data or longer-term (decadal to multi-decadal) projections limits the adaptation components of BRACED projects.**
-

Key message 2: Achieving meaningful resilience outcomes requires knowledge, skills and capacities that go beyond the expertise of a particular IP. Effective partnerships are a critical component of resilience-building programmes in order to draw on each other's expertise, knowledge, experience and resources and to join forces for common goals as much as possible. Identifying the 'right' combination of partners is as important as the design and implementation of project activities. Even when knowledge, financial means and a supportive (governance) environment are often still lacking, IPs can sometimes produce creative, affordable and applicable technologies and solutions through networking and partnerships.

Recommendations: Partnerships that have the potential to provide effective approaches to resilience-building are vital for the BRACED projects to yield maximum impact. During the remainder of BRACED, IPs and the KM should develop a better understanding about the following:

- **The role of partnerships in resilience-building, and how best to ensure that partnerships are greater than the sum of their parts.** There is a need to better understand how inter-organisational learning across partners translates into longer-term, positive impacts to increase community resilience.
 - **Establishing a means of credibly measuring, reviewing and documenting partnerships, in terms of both results and processes.**
-

Key message 3: The starting point for enhancing individuals' resilience is recognising and addressing social exclusion and gender inequality. While improvements in women's participation in projects' activities and access to resources are fundamental steps to take, they do not in themselves change power relations, and therefore may not translate into inclusive decision-making.

Recommendations: In order to build a better understanding of how social exclusion and inequality can be addressed, IPs and the KM should:

- **Pay closer attention to the sociocultural aspects underpinning anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities.** This includes improving the analysis between transforming gender relations and the project's theory of change for resilience-building.
- **Document cases where inclusive decision-making takes place,** in particular, examples illustrating the links between participation, voice and power.
- **Further investigate and document the specific types of activities and strategies that should be integrated in resilience programming to support inclusive decision-making.**

Key message 4: Building anticipatory and absorptive capacity to deal with current risks and threats is the first step for communities that are highly vulnerable to climate change. As BRACED projects continue in years 2 and 3, it will be important to think about how anticipatory and absorptive capacities can be developed in ways that provide a solid foundation for building adaptive capacity in the longer term. Understanding how resilience capacities interrelate – and revisiting whether it is more challenging to build adaptive capacity in the lifespan of a BRACED project – will be a key insight to inform theories for building community-level resilience on the ground.

Recommendations: To build a comprehensive understanding of resilience outcomes and inform future resilience theory, programme design and implementation, IPs and the KM should consider the following in the remainder of BRACED:

- **In places where communities are prioritising enhancing anticipatory and absorptive capacity, investigate how these capacities are being built** in ways that provide a solid foundation for building adaptive capacity in the longer term.
 - **As shocks and stresses occur, document if and how people and communities are learning from these,** and whether they rebuild in ways that reduce their future vulnerability.
 - **Investigate the role that community groups play in enhancing social capital,** and thus enabling communities to cope with disaster events and strengthen their absorptive capacity.
 - **Document the level of integration, layering, timing and sequencing of the different capacity-building activities** needed to improve absorptive, adaptive and anticipatory capacities.
-

Key message 5: While resilience-building interventions have building capacity to manage shocks and stresses as a primary objective, addressing and dealing with the socioeconomic and political dimensions of resilience-building are equally important. Writing operational risks away into an assumption column is not enough. The operational challenges of working in complex settings not only call for more pragmatic project designs and time frames, but also for exploring how links to other programmes addressing issues, such as peacebuilding and governance reforms, are necessary prerequisites for climate resilience programmes.

Recommendations: Improving programme design and implementation begins with the recognition and addressing of the 'real-life' challenges involved in implementing resilience-building projects and programmes. IPs and the KM should work closely together to develop an evidence base and better understanding of:

- **The role of contingency fund mechanisms in resilience-building programmes, along with the extent to which they can support protecting resilience gains** both a) in advance of and b) in the face of shocks and stresses during the project cycle. The KM is already working with recipient IPs of the PHASE funding, on an evaluative learning piece with this as its focus.
 - **The opportunities and trade-offs of integrating climate disaster and peacebuilding goals as prerequisite criteria for resilience-building interventions**, by engaging conflict experts.
 - **How to better integrate context analysis, beyond merely listing risks and assumptions, in programme design and M&E.** The design and implementation of resilience-building programmes should include not only technical aspects, but also the sociocultural factors that influence attitudes, behaviour and practice.
-

Key message 6: While resilience-building projects focus on building anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacity to shocks and stresses, in practice resilience-building programmes seem to be, at their core, 'good' development projects with 'tweaks'. BRACED has come a long way in conceptualising and operationalising resilience in practice. IPs have also developed tailored indices and established baselines in order to measure progress and achievements. Understanding the factors that constitute the resilience of particular households is the starting point for devising, deploying and implementing resilience-building strategies. Evidence and emerging lessons to date highlights that BRACED routes to resilience are underpinned by development programming that explicitly takes climate shocks and stresses into account and builds stakeholders' capacity to manage climate and disaster risk. While there is evidence that

such approaches require in-depth assessments and analysis of stakeholders' vulnerabilities and capacities, it is difficult to identify – from year 1 reports – how such approaches translate into a 'different' set of activities that go beyond 'good' development work and risk management approaches.

Recommendations: There is a risk that BRACED may look like 'old wine in new bottles'. In order to support effective project and programme design, implementation, M&E and future funding by the end of the programme, the **KM along with IPs should identify and develop a set of criteria that identifies what makes resilience-building different in practice.**

The companion report, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED', has recommendations that focus on the MRR team's experiences of establishing and rolling out the BRACED M&E framework and undertaking the first year's project to programme-level reporting.

6.2 Questions for further reflection, debate and learning

With the aim of contributing to ongoing learning about resilience programming, the authors wish to engage project IPs, the KM, DFID and wider audiences in considering two critical questions that arise as a result of the findings of this report. Emerging insights shed some light for initiating discussion; however, the BRACED programme should continue to answer the following questions throughout its lifetime:

What is BRACED doing differently? The question that arises in practice is: what 'tweaks' should we expect to see in projects that otherwise draw heavily from good 'simple' local development? Emerging evidence to date suggests that, at the community level, integrated disaster risk management with development approaches is one way of enhancing resilience. Put differently, the BRACED projects show that resilience is built through good development with 'tweaks' that support communities to deal with shocks and stresses. At the programming and organisational level, however, resilience-building approaches require working in different partnerships, using different kinds of information and being much more flexible in planning and spending. To some extent, that may not alter the content of the interventions at the household level, but it certainly changes the way the implementing partner has to plan and deliver interventions.

What is a realistic time frame in which to strengthen resilience and build a solid evidence base? Evidence to date suggests that two key factors question the achievability of the overall programme. First, at the project level, setting up the structures and partnerships required to implement project activities (that is, the foundations for resilience-building activities) takes longer than originally

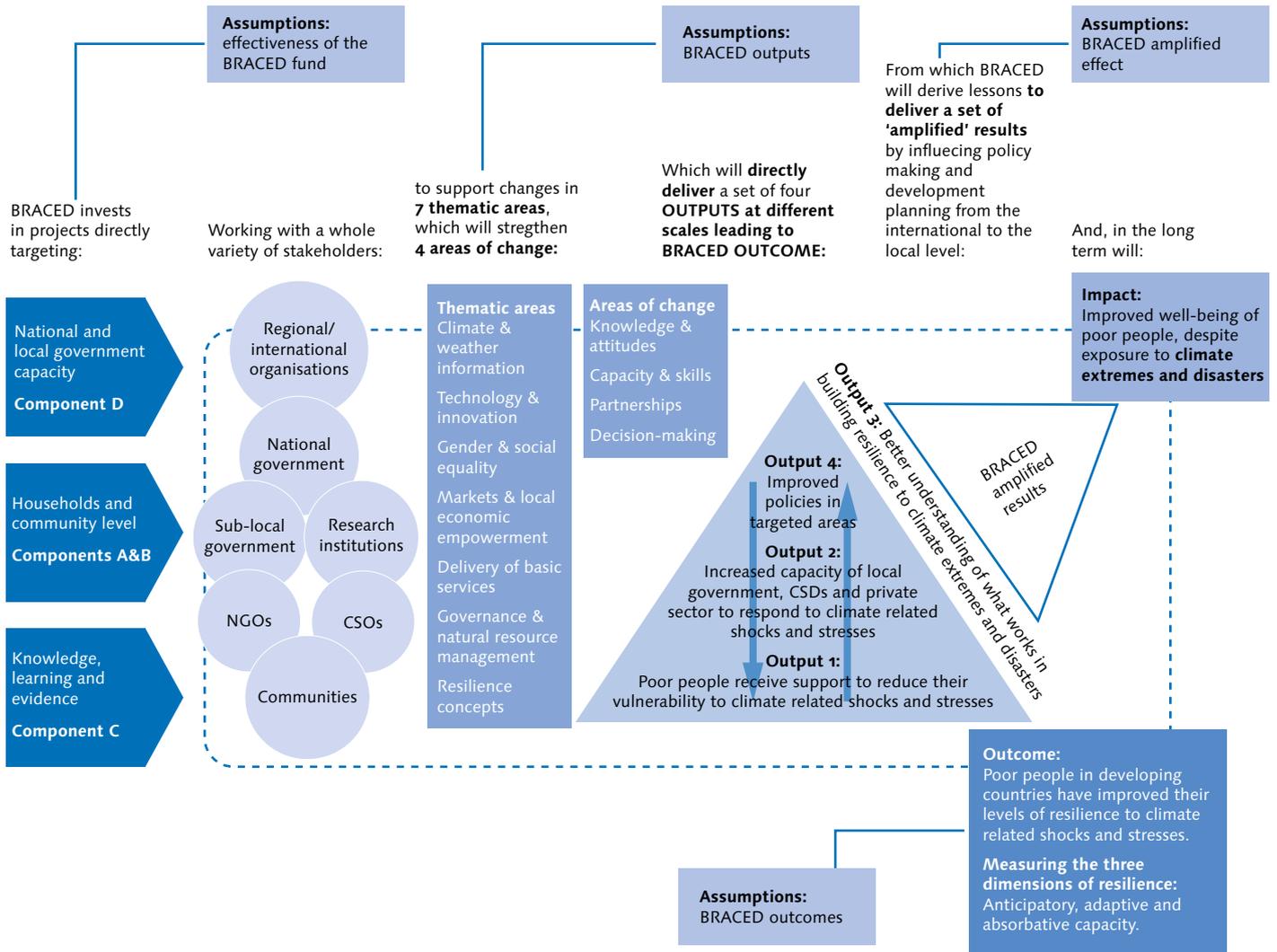
envisaged. Second, even if objectives are met, it is questionable whether it is possible to generate the evidence to demonstrate that resilience has been built within the time frame of the projects. This is because building resilience requires attitudinal, behavioural and capacity changes, all of which take time. IPs and the KM may have set goals that are too ambitious, both in terms of achieving objectives and generating evidence and lessons on what works and what does not in building resilience to climate extremes and disasters. A three-year programme such as BRACED should not expect ultimate lessons on 'what works best' to build resilience but, rather, to generate emerging guidance in terms of tweaks to good development and promising ways of working to build and evaluate anticipatory, absorptive and adaptive capacities.

Annex 1: Components of the BRACED programme

The BRACED programme comprises four components:

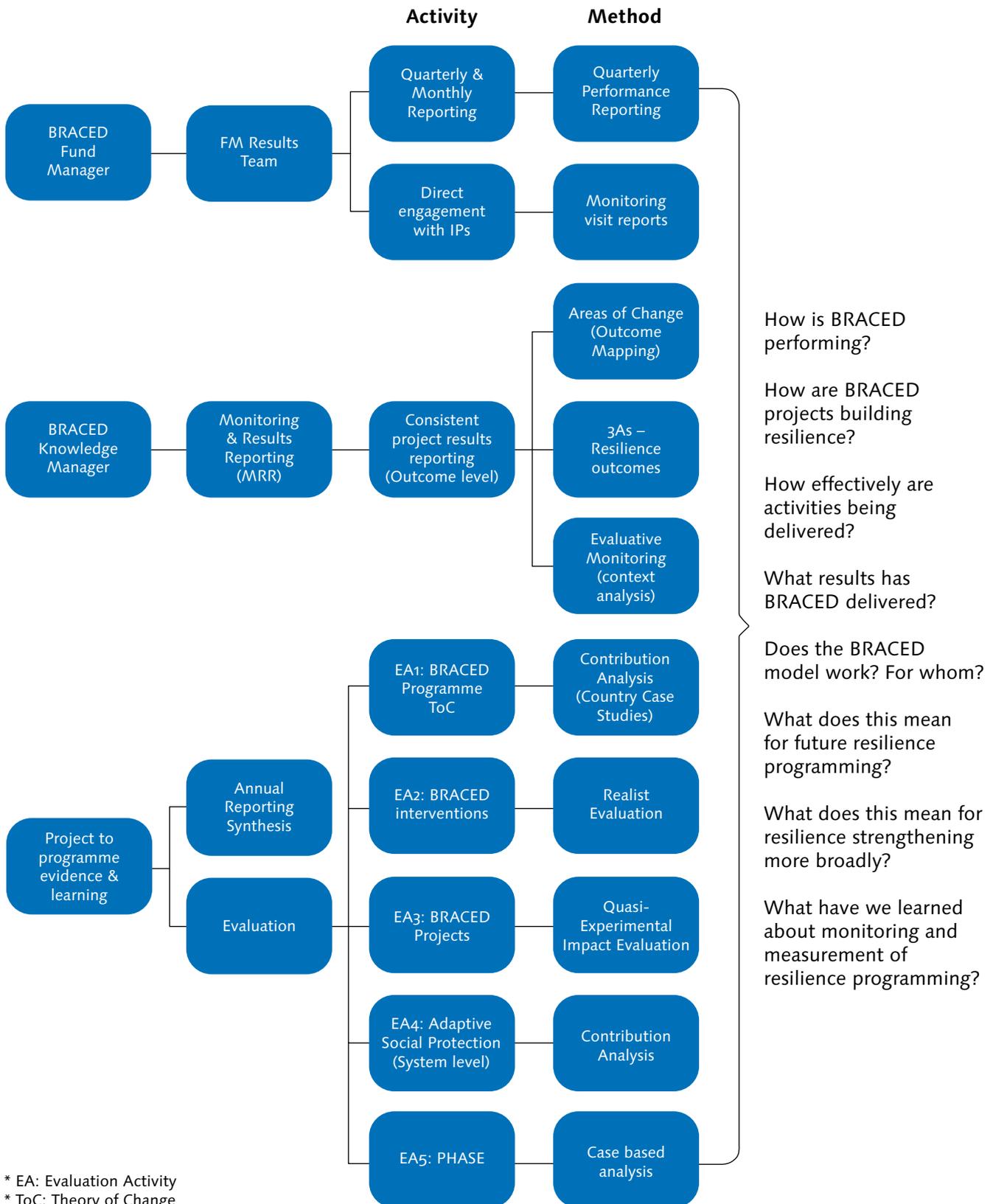
- Components A and B are field-based resilience-building projects in the Sahel and East Africa/ Asia respectively. These 15 three-year projects are being run concurrently, usually in one or two of the 13 BRACED countries. Each BRACED project is unique in its design, target beneficiaries, activities and operating context, and is delivered by a BRACED Implementing Partner (IP). Implementing Partners are typically multi-organisation consortia who have come together to design and deliver a resilience-building project under BRACED. Annex 4 provides a list of the IPs and their projects. A Fund Manager (FM) manages the performance of the 15 projects.
- Component C aims to develop a better understanding of what works in building resilience to climate extremes and disasters. To this end, DFID is also supporting a 'Knowledge Manager' (KM). The BRACED KM is a consortium of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), research, learning, communications and regional organisations. Working alongside the 15 project IPs, the KM is building a knowledge and evidence base of what works to strengthen resilience. The KM networks internally and externally to put that knowledge and evidence into use within and beyond BRACED countries.
- Component D (which is still subject to approval) aims to build the capability and capacity of developing countries and regional organisations to prepare and plan for the expected increases in the frequency and severity of climate extremes and disasters.

Annex 2: BRACED Theory of Change



See Note 2 of the [BRACED M&E Guidance Notes](#) for a full narrative of the Theory of Change.

Annex 3: BRACED M&E 'infrastructure'



* EA: Evaluation Activity
 * ToC: Theory of Change

Annex 4: The BRACED projects

Each BRACED project is using different intervention strategies and being implemented in different climatic and operating contexts. Table 9 below provides a brief synopsis of the location and focus of each of the 14³⁶ projects considered in this report, along with the name/abbreviation by which they are referred to throughout the report:³⁷

³⁶ One of the fifteen BRACED projects did not complete a project report for year 1 due to delays in starting implementation.

³⁷ For more information about BRACED projects, visit www.braced.org

Table 9: Synopsis of BRACED projects

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT ABBREVIATION	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT FOCUS
ANUKULAN	ANUKULAN	Nepal	Driving small farmer investment in climate-smart technologies
Building Resilience in Chad and Sudan	BRICS	Chad, Sudan	Strategies and technologies to build resilience against droughts and floods, including climate-smart agriculture, improved irrigation and early warning systems
Climate Information and Assets for Resilience in Ethiopia	CIARE	Ethiopia	Improving access to reliable climate information and increasing local communities' capacity to respond to climate threats
Decentralising Climate Funds	DCF	Mali, Senegal	Decentralising climate funds in Mali and Senegal
Improving Resilience to Climate Change in South Sudan	IRISS	South Sudan	Strategies and technologies to build resilience against droughts and floods
Livestock Mobility	Livestock Mobility	Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal	Strengthening the resilience of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, through trans-border livestock mobility
Market Approaches to Resilience	MAR	Ethiopia	Financial models and economic opportunities adaptable to climate extremes
Myanmar Alliance	Myanmar Alliance	Myanmar	Improving access to climate risk information and community disaster preparedness and approaches
Projet de la Résilience face aux Chocs Environnementaux et Sociaux au Niger	PRESENCES	Niger	Natural resource management and governance, climate-resilient livelihoods and improved climate information
	PROGRESS	Kenya, Uganda	Building resilient governance, markets and social systems
Renforcement des Initiatives Communautaires pour la Résilience aux Extrêmes Climatiques	RIC4REC	Mali	Strengthening communities' initiatives for resilience to climate extremes
Scaling up Resilience to Climate Extremes for over 1 Million People	SUR1M	Niger, Mali	Intelligent agriculture, saving circles and radio messaging for resilience in the Niger River basin
Welthungerhilfe (name of lead IP agency)	WHH	Burkina Faso	Changing farming practices to prepare for heavy rain and high temperatures
Zaman Lebidi	Zaman Lebidi	Burkina Faso	Improving access to reliable climate information and increasing local communities' capacity to respond to climate threats

Annex 5: Project-level screening grid

<p>BRACED M&E FRAMEWORK</p>	<p>HOW ARE BRACED COMPONENTS A AND B BUILDING RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE EXTREMES?</p>
<p>Pathways to resilience</p>	<p>Categorising changes along the four Areas of Change</p> <hr/> <p>Who are the main actors (boundary partners)?</p> <hr/> <p>What activities have been undertaken and where?</p> <hr/> <p>What are the main achievements/changes?</p> <hr/> <p>What level of change has been seen?</p> <hr/> <p>What are the main challenges? How is the project addressing them?</p> <hr/> <p>Are there any unexpected results?</p> <hr/> <p>Are there any links of change processes to outcome-level change?</p> <hr/> <p>What is the level of evidence shown on how project activities have contributed to change?</p>
<p>Understanding resilience outcomes</p>	<p>Categorising outcome-level changes</p> <hr/> <p>Who are the direct/indirect beneficiaries and how have they benefited?</p> <hr/> <p>What are the main capacities being built?</p> <hr/> <p>What evidence is there that building adaptive, anticipatory and absorptive capacities has reduced the impact of shocks and stresses?</p> <hr/> <p>Do any project activities/initiatives help enhance more than one capacity at a time?</p> <hr/> <p>Are there any trade-offs in initiatives to enhance adaptive, anticipatory and absorptive capacity, where enhancing one capacity may result in the erosion of another?</p> <hr/> <p>In what ways is the project lagging behind or no longer relevant?</p>
<p>Contextualising resilience</p>	<p>Categorising contextual dynamics</p> <hr/> <p>What are the main constrainers/enablers related to the local, sub-national or national levels?</p> <hr/> <p>How are these contextual factors constraining or enabling change from the project?</p> <hr/> <p>Have they contributed to any unexpected outputs or outcomes?</p> <hr/> <p>Are these contextual factors within or beyond the project's area of control?</p> <hr/> <p>What are the main challenges?</p> <hr/> <p>How is the project addressing those challenges?</p>

Annex 6: Mapping of project activities and approaches and recurrent themes

A comparative analysis of the project-level syntheses was conducted against the core question of this report. Content analysis led to the identification and mapping of recurring themes at the programme level, guided by expert knowledge and interpretation of the MRR team (based on their intimate knowledge of the programme):

Area of Change 1: Knowledge and attitudes

Themes:

1. COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

2. ACCESSING AND USING CLIMATE AND WEATHER INFORMATION

	ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITY PLANNING	FORMATION OF VILLAGE COMMITTEES/PLANNING COMMITTEES	GENERATING, FACILITATING ACCESS TO CLIMATE INFORMATION
1	Alliance Myanmar	•	•	•
2	ANUKULAN	• (LAPAs)	•	•
3	CIARE	• (BRAPA)	•	•
4	IRISS	•	•	•
5	Livestock Mobility	<i>Public debates/ social agreements</i>		•
6	PRESENCES	• (CAAP)	•	•
7	Zaman Lebidi	• (BRAPA)	•	•
8	BRICS		• (support groups)	•
9	PROGRESS	•	• (RACs)	•
10	RIC4REC	• (CBDRM plans)	•	•
11	SUR1M	•	•	•
12	WHH			•
13	MAR	•	•	•
14	DCF	Resilience Assessments (local government)	Adaptation committees (within government)	•

Area of Change 2: strengthening capacity and skills

Themes:

1. BUILDING FARMERS' AND PASTORALISTS' CAPACITY

2. BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND TECHNICAL SERVICES, WITHIN AND ACROSS SECTORS

	ACTIVITIES	ACCESS TO FINANCE/ FINANCIAL SERVICES	ACCESS TO MARKETS	AGRICULTURAL/ FARMING PRACTICES	SPECIFIC GENDER FOCUS	PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (TARGETING GOVERNMENT AND/OR TECHNICAL DEPARTMENTS)
1	Alliance Myanmar	•		•	•	•
2	ANUKULAN	•	•	•	•	•
3	CIARE	•	•	•	•	
4	IRISS	•		•	•	
5	Livestock Mobility		•	•	•	•
6	PRESENCES	•	•		•	•
7	Zaman Lebidi			•	•	•
8	BRICS		•	•	•	•
9	PROGRESS	•	•	•	•	•
10	RIC4REC	• (community resilience grants)	•	•		•
11	SUR1M	• (SILC)		•	•	•
12	WHH		•		•	
13	MAR	•	•			
14	DCF	• (access to finance by local government)		•	•	•

Area of Change 3: Partnerships

Themes:

1. WORKING TOGETHER – LEVERAGING RESOURCES AND CAPACITIES

2. STRENGTHENING NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

	ACTIVITIES	PARTNERING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CSOs	PARTNERING WITH PRIVATE SECTOR	PARTNERING WITH THE MEDIA – DISSEMINATION OF CLIMATE INFORMATION	PARTNERING SUB-NATIONAL AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
1	Alliance Myanmar	•		•	•
2	ANUKULAN	•	• (service providers)		•
3	CIARE	•		•	•
4	IRISS	•			•
5	Livestock Mobility	•	• (service providers)		•
6	PRESENCES	•	• (financial institutions)	•	•
7	Zaman Lebidi	•		•	•
8	BRICS	•			•
9	PROGRESS	•	• (financial institutions)	•	•
10	RIC4REC	•	• (dissemination of climate info)		•
11	SUR1M	•	• (financial institutions; distribution of inputs)		•
12	WHH	•	• (distribution of inputs)	•	•
13	MAR	•	• (financial institutions)		•
14	DCF	•		•	

Area of Change 4: Inclusive decision-making*

Theme:

FOSTERING REPRESENTATION, PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP OF THE MOST VULNERABLE

		REPRESENTATION/PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING, DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES	PARTICIPATION/LEADING PROJECT ACTIVITIES	TRAINING ON ADDRESSING GENDER-SPECIFIC ISSUES
1	Alliance Myanmar	•	•	
2	ANUKULAN	•	•	
3	CIARE		•	
4	IRISS	•	•	•
5	Livestock Mobility	•		
6	PRESENCES	•	•	
7	Zaman Lebidi	•	•	
8	BRICS		•	•
9	PROGRESS	•	•	• (gender responsive budgeting)
10	RIC4REC	•		
11	SUR1M	•	•	• (training on citizen participation to CSOs)
12	WHH	•	•	
13	MAR			
14	DCF	•		

* Limited data available – clustering of activities.

Resilience in context

The table below reflects the reports that explicitly mentioned those themes as key challenges in project implementation:

THEMES		1. BRACED IN DIFFICULT ENVIRONMENTS: THE CHALLENGES OF RESPONDING TO ONGOING CRISIS	2. BRACED IN DECENTRALISED OR DECENTRALISING COUNTRIES – ADJUSTING PLANNING PROCESSES TO WEAK GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	3. JOINING FORCES WITH OTHER ONGOING INITIATIVES
1	Alliance Myanmar	•		•
2	ANUKULAN	•		
3	CIARE	•		
4	IRISS	•	•	
5	Livestock Mobility	•	•	
6	PRESENCES	•	•	•
7	Zaman Lebidi	•		•
8	BRICS	•	•	•
9	PROGRESS	•	•	•
10	RIC4REC	•	•	•
11	SUR1M	•		
12	WHH	•		
13	MAR	•		
14	DCF	•	•	

Annex 7: Further illustrative examples

This annex provides some supplementary illustrative examples from projects of the findings presented in the main text.

Examples to supplement section 3.2: Strengthening capacities and skills

- **WHH:** The project promoted local farmers' adoption of new techniques and methods, including:
 - (a) the adoption of land and natural resource management methods, such as Zai, Halfmoons and intercropping (altogether adopted by 48.4% of the beneficiary population).
 - (b) the adoption of certified improved seeds coupled with the use of organic fertiliser (adopted by 73% of the beneficiaries as compared to 36% of non-beneficiaries).

Significant changes can also be seen in the diversification of agricultural production methods (market gardens, cassava, rice and poultry production). These results seem to suggest that changes, such as adoption of new techniques and methods, can happen even in relatively short periods of time (i.e. seven months of direct support to targeted farmers). A network of seed producers is under construction (training of lead farmers, sites-inspections and certification). Tree nurseries have been established to improve access to certified seeds in all communes of the project area and provide input to tree seedlings. Producers have been encouraged to sell part of their produce to local markets, in order to gain income. As a result, changes have been observed in terms of increases in frequency and volumes of sales. In turn, this has led to improved profit margins for farmers. The share of beneficiaries who reported having (improved) access to markets in year 1 was more than twice as high as for non-beneficiaries (35% versus 16%).

- In Chad, the CLAs (Committee Locale Action) are the official district-level institution in charge of monitoring early warning information and ensuring a coordinated response in the case of an event. The **BRICS** project has been facilitating monthly coordination meetings, leading to positive results in terms of the involvement of CLAs in data gathering on issues such as food security, access to clean water, child diseases and malnutrition. BRICS has also established good links with CLAs and provides regular support. CLA interest and engagement is critical for the support and implementation of improved early warning processes.
- In Niger and Mali, the **SUR1M** project has trained communal-level early warning groups on climate data collection. Local warning structures have been established/revitalised, which has led to an increase in commune capabilities for vulnerability analysis and data transmission. Early warning groups now collect and transmit data on a monthly basis in both countries.

All 19 communes compile community data and send it to the next higher level (district and circle). SUR1M has reported particularly positive results in Mali, where the establishment of early warning groups in 89 villages of the project area has contributed to improving vulnerability analysis (i.e. assessment of the agricultural campaign results and determination of the number of food insecure people in the region of Gao). Since the start of the agricultural campaign in 2015/2016, early warning group members have alerted technical services and project staff, suggesting that the agricultural campaign would not serve the community well. This has allowed the local government to make arrangements to ensure food availability for the most vulnerable households.

Examples to supplement section 3.4: Working in partnership

- The **SUR1M** project addresses challenges in the distribution of inputs to remote rural areas (e.g. weak links along the value chain between farmers and agro-dealers and buyers for crops, and a lack of transparent communication and sharing). The connections between lead farmers and agro-dealers are being encouraged to promote the development of new markets (agricultural inputs) through partnerships with suppliers. In Niger, the project has assisted a private certified seed multiplication and distribution system through a partnership with the Manoma Company, which supports the expansion of their distribution network (certified seeds) to the project zone. In Mali, lobbying encouraged by the project and undertaken by Gao regional agriculture officials has led to renewed interest from agro-dealers, despite the delay in the establishment of seed producers. Changes in the supply chain have started to emerge. Farmers previously had to walk at least 30 kilometres to buy agricultural inputs, but Manoma now sells seeds and other agricultural inputs via local salespeople directly in villages in the project intervention zone. Evidence of success can be seen in the fact that producers in project communes are now developing partnerships with various seed companies/agro-dealers for the next campaign.
- The **PROGRESS** project has facilitated the establishment of links between beneficiaries and service providers. Opportunities for business development along the agricultural value chain are also being discussed through multi-stakeholder platforms. The project has become a member of Wajir Value Chain Actors, which includes value chain relevant bodies that deliberate on matters concerning selected value chains in the county. Changes have started to emerge as a result of BRACED work in this area. Among these changes is an improved availability of products (mainly energy-efficient stoves) through the active engagement of producers and distributors within the project – including demonstrations of products organised by suppliers. This improvement helps to address the increase in demand for such products (as a result of awareness-raising interventions on resilience and natural resources management).
- Within the **PRESENCES** project, microfinance institutions have engaged with communities to implement grain banks and warrantage systems, mainly

to address the cereal deficit during the hunger gap. The 'Lingué' Téra Fund is engaged in financing warrantage in the zone and contacts have been established with communities. The PRESENCES report highlights that such an arrangement is already an indication of change, as MFIs were initially reluctant about the idea of developing an effective collaboration with community organisations. Communes have strengthened the capacities of 20 cereal banks in 13 communities through warrantage in collaboration with MFIs. It is expected that cereal banks will help communities to meet the needs of populations during the hunger gap.

- Through the **ANUKULAN** project, iDE and IWMI, in collaboration with other stakeholders, organised a multiple use water system (MUS) International Workshop in February 2016, which mobilised over 180 participants including MUS communities, government, academic institutions, donors, international centres, development organisations and other stakeholders. The workshop played a key role in promoting MUS as a tool to address climate resilience in Nepal. A key outcome of the workshop was the formation of the Nepal MUS network, which aims to share knowledge and information on different approaches for MUS and promote MUS across the water sector in Nepal. An MUS Guideline has now been developed by the Ministry of Population and Environment for the institutionalisation of MUS and is in the process of endorsement. MUS are now recognised as a climate change adaptation mechanism by both district- and national-level stakeholders.
- Collaboration with regional and international institutions has also been key to enhancing the visibility of the **Livestock Mobility** project's interventions and findings. Project partners are involved in the preparation for PRAPS (Projet Régional d'Appui au Pastoralisme au Sahel) at the request of the World Bank. Alongside this initiative, project partners have lobbied together for the rights of pastoralists through the development of a PRAPS for coastal countries (PRIDEC). It is expected that this initiative will be co-funded by the World Bank and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Examples to supplement section 5.2: Resilience in context

- The **PROGRESS** project is working in Kenya, which has undergone a process of political devolution to county-level since 2012, with new county government institutional structures, policies and plans still under development. In establishing village level resilience and adaptation committees under BRACED, the project has had to operate in a shifting context as new county-level legislation and ward-level administrative arrangements are put in place. By comparison, decentralisation and capacity at district level in Uganda are weak. PROGRESS has highlighted a need for technical support to the districts and the Office of the Prime Minister in Karamoja to strengthen planning from the bottom-up.
- Similarly, for the **Livestock Mobility** project, decentralisation underway in the Sahel countries it operates in may either enable or constrain the changes initiated within the project. Under the provisions of decentralisation, local

government bodies are responsible for delivering key social and economic services (such as health, water or education and market facilities) for conducting agricultural, pastoral and forestry land-use planning and for raising taxes. As mobile herders remain marginalised and largely excluded from local decision-making processes, specific attention is required when negotiating inter-municipal agreements at the department level to manage agro-pastoral resources – inter-cooperation between municipalities along a corridor is often still fragmented. The anchoring of the project within each country's existing decentralised mechanisms enables the project to gain more visibility on the local and national scale, as well as promoting the need for inter-municipal agreements between municipalities to cater for long-distance, trans-border livestock mobility.

- For the **PRESENCES** project, the decentralisation process underway in Niger will entail changes in local governance and resources. The adoption by the government at the Council of Ministers on 26 January 2016 in the Republic of Niger set the terms to transfer skills and resources from the State to the communes and the Regional Territorial Communities in the areas of education, health, water and the environment. These relate directly to the project's interventions. The project expects that these will enable the communes to enact many prerogatives if the decree is applied successfully, but the institutional analysis has revealed a lack of skills transferred to the communes, despite the fact that this principle is introduced by decentralisation. Adopting this decree in the Council of Ministers demonstrates the government's commitment to accelerate the transfer of resources and skills to communes. This is a constraint across the Sahel countries undergoing decentralisation.

Annex 8: BRACED research outputs

Outlined below are some of the outputs from the KM's ongoing research work that has taken place in collaboration with the IPs. (For all BRACED publications, see the braced.org website.)

Resilience pathways

CLIMATE AND WEATHER INFORMATION

Wilkinson, E., Budimir, M., Ahmed, A. K. and Ouma, G. (2015) 'Climate Information and services in BRACED countries'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

Jones, L., Harvey, B. and Godfrey-Woods, R. (2016) 'The changing role of NGOs in supporting climate services'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Haworth A., Frandon-Martinez C., Fayolle, V. and Simonet, C. (2016) 'Climate resilience and financial services: Lessons from Ethiopia, Mali and Myanmar'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

Haworth, A., Frandon-Martinez, C., Fayolle, V. and Wilkinson, E. (2016) 'Banking on resilience: building capacities through financial service inclusion'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Policy Brief. London: Acclimatise.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Ulrichs, M. (2016) 'Increasing people's resilience to shocks through social protection'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

Ulrichs, M. and Slater, R. (2016) 'How can social protection build resilience? Insights from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Working Paper. London: ODI.

RESILIENT RISK GOVERNANCE

Carabine, E., Chesterman, S. and Wilkinson, E. (2016) 'Resilient risk governance: experience from the Sahel and Horn of Africa'. BRACED Knowledge Manager Resilience Intel. London: ODI.

GENDER AND RESILIENCE

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Resilience in context

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Annex 9: Summary of lessons learnt

The table below sets out the lessons identified in this report across BRACED projects, in terms of resilience pathways, resilience outcomes and resilience contexts:

Resilience pathways	
Changes in resilience knowledge and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cultural and political dimension of changing attitudes and behaviour should not be underestimated • The challenge remains: from easy use of near-term information and the more challenging use of longer-term information
Strengthening capacities and skills to manage climate and disaster risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building capacity to manage the risk of climate extremes and disasters goes beyond technical skills • It is not about one type of capacity, but a combination of capacities • Joined-up programming and complementary activities are essential if they are to support women's empowerment
Building partnerships to deliver interventions for resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building resilience to climate and disasters starts with finding the right partners • Understanding each partner's capacity is critical • Evaluating partnerships that are greater than the sum of its parts take time
Improving decision-making through inclusive resilience-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social exclusion and gender inequalities cannot be addressed with quick fixes in a one-off project • The goal of fostering social equality and inclusion begins with changing attitudes and building the capacities of project staff • Monitoring and documenting cases where inclusive decision-making takes place is critical
Understanding resilience outcomes: lessons learnt	
Absorptive anticipatory and Adaptive Capacities and Transformative change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When communities define resilience priorities, activities are oriented around enhancing anticipatory and absorptive capacity • For some outcomes, project-level reporting differs from the conceptual understanding of resilience capacities described in the 3As framework • The BRACED programme may generate more achievements in building anticipatory and absorptive capacity than adaptive capacity (or transformation)
Resilience in context	
Contextual factors that enable or constrain change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipating and managing crisis is central to resilience-building programmes. Yet, the challenge remains: monitoring and contextualising results in the face of shocks and stresses • Context matters and so do pragmatic project designs • Learning about processes and progress in building resilience requires realistic expectations and moving beyond 'linear reporting'

The companion report, 'Routes to resilience: lessons from monitoring BRACED' has details on the lessons identified based on the MRR team's experiences of a) establishing and rolling out the BRACED M&E framework and b) undertaking the first year's project- to programme-level reporting.

BRACED aims to build the resilience of up to 5 million vulnerable people against climate extremes and disasters. It does so through a three year, UK Government funded programme, which supports 108 organisations, working in 15 consortiums, across 13 countries in East Africa, the Sahel and Southeast Asia. Uniquely, BRACED also has a Knowledge Manager consortium.

The Knowledge Manager consortium is led by the Overseas Development Institute and includes the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, ENDA Energie, Itad and Thomson Reuters Foundation.

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The BRACED Knowledge Manager generates evidence and learning on resilience and adaptation in partnership with the BRACED projects and the wider resilience community. It gathers robust evidence of what works to strengthen resilience to climate extremes and disasters, and initiates and supports processes to ensure that evidence is put into use in policy and programmes. The Knowledge Manager also fosters partnerships to amplify the impact of new evidence and learning, in order to significantly improve levels of resilience in poor and vulnerable countries and communities around the world.

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