

Shock proof

Building community resilience to recurrent crises





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This report was authored by Megan Williams and Christine Lindell

For further information regarding this report and World Vision Australia's work on building community resilience, contact:

Megan Williams
Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor
Megan.Williams@worldvision.com.au

Front cover: Members of a Farmer's Group in Bahr el Ghazal region, South Sudan, are growing tomatoes and chilli supported by the EU funded 'Food Security Thematic Programme Addressing Food Security for the Poor and Vulnerable in Fragile Situations. Nick Ralph/World Vision.

This page: A woman waters her okra plantation using the watering cans provided by the FEED project. Lambert Coleman/World Vision.

Introduction

Humanitarian funding is increasingly directed to contexts and crises that are lasting longer and affecting more people. This is one of the trends that has become the hallmark of international humanitarian assistance in the 21st century.

The most recent Global Humanitarian Overview notes that the average length of humanitarian response plans has increased from 5.2 years in 2014 to 9.3 years in 2018. In the same period, the number of people targeted to receive assistance under these plans grew from 77 million to 101 million.¹ While humanitarian funding to support people in crises also continues to grow (although not at the same pace) it is designed to be short-term², providing life-saving interventions to people in crises. As the average length of crises continues to rise, this mode of assistance is increasingly drawn upon to provide short-term interventions for extended periods of time. Short-term aid is forced to act as a substitute for development programs that are generally better equipped to address underlying conditions of vulnerability and need. Identifying a better way of working in these contexts is a pressing challenge for all actors.

The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit was convened in part to address this challenge. The Secretary General's report to the summit notes millions of people are "trapped in dependency on short-term aid that keeps them alive but falls short of ensuring their safety, dignity and ability to thrive and be self-reliant over

the long term."³ The Grand Bargain adopted at the summit's completion committed donors, including Australia, to among other things enhancing engagement between humanitarian and development actors – addressing the humanitarian-development nexus.⁴ Signatories sought to bridge the gap between the two approaches, actors, funding and ways of working, and not to replace development work with humanitarian assistance in addressing the root causes of crises. Grand Bargain signatories also committed to increasing collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding which, it was recognised, "lowers administrative costs and catalyses more responsive programming, notably where humanitarian needs are protracted or recurrent and where livelihood needs and local markets can be analysed and monitored".⁵ For the millions of people in situations of recurrent or protracted crises, progress on these commitments has never been more important.

This analysis explores the impact of World Vision's long-term, resilience-focused programs in situations of recurrent or protracted crises – contexts where we have sought to bridge the humanitarian-development nexus. This paper explores World Vision's work in three contexts highly dependent on humanitarian assistance and where communities face recurrent crises – Somalia, South Sudan and Afghanistan.

- In Somalia, World Vision leads the Somalia Resilience a consortium of seven organisations (Action

Contre Le Faim, ADRA, CARE, COOPI, Danish Refugee Council and Oxfam).

- In South Sudan, World Vision has had three recent projects focused on building resilience and food security:
 - FEED – a partnership between the Government of Canada, World Vision, Oxfam and CARE;
 - a three-year ANCP project supporting integrated food security and livelihoods; and
 - an EU/EC funded partnership in collaboration with government and THESO, a local South Sudan organisation.
- In Afghanistan, World Vision has been a partner to the Australian Afghanistan Community Resilience Scheme, a six-year project with ActionAid, Aga Khan Foundation and Oxfam⁶, funded by the Australian Government.

World Vision is a multi-mandated organisation which has had a long-term presence in many crisis-affected contexts around the world. Community resilience is improving through our longer-term approaches to supporting communities affected by recurrent crises. This paper explores these stories of resilience building in Somalia, South Sudan and Afghanistan, and identifies some of the key factors that have enabled better food security and resilience outcomes for populations facing recurrent crises.

1 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Global Humanitarian Overview 2019, available at: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHO2019.pdf>, p.18.

2 The standard humanitarian programming cycle runs for 12 months, although this is dependent on context and can either be shorter or longer.

3 UN Secretary General, One humanity: shared responsibility, Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit (A/70/709), 2 February 2016, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/one-humanity-shared-responsibility-report-secretary-general-world-humanitarian-summit>, p.29.

4 Grand Bargain commitment #10 sought to "enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors". This workstream was closed in 2018 due to duplication with other external mechanisms and fora discussing this issue, including the World Bank and OECD-DAC.

5 Grand Bargain commitment #7 sought to increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding.

6 CARE Australia was a partner for Phase 1 of the AACRS program between 2014 and 2018.

Snapshots of change

Building resilience in Somalia

Natural hazards are endemic to Somalia. Trends show droughts occurring regularly, at intervals of 2-3 years, in the Deyr (October-December) season and 8-10 years in consecutive Deyr and Gu (April-June) seasons.⁷ In the last 25 years, hundreds of thousands of people have died and many more have been displaced due to protracted drought and famine.⁸ Given Somalia's heavy reliance on its natural resource base, droughts and environmental degradation have a significant impact on food security. Combined with years of conflict, Somalia faces large-scale migration, with 2.6 million people relocated from their homes and an additional 1 million living in neighbouring countries.⁹ In this context, the Somalia Resilience Programme (SomRep) is designed to address the challenge of recurrent droughts and chronic vulnerability. It seeks to increase the resilience of vulnerable Somali people, households, communities and systems to climate shocks and other related risks.¹⁰

During the 2016 drought in Somalia, people who participated in SomRep activities demonstrated better coping strategies and were less food insecure than those who had not participated. A 2016 endline evaluation of a three-year



Hassan is the 'FMNR Champion' of the farmers group in Odweyne district, Somaliland. He uses his knowledge to influence farmers to help protect the natural environment. Nick Ralph/World Vision.

DFAT-funded project found that while food consumption scores for SomRep participants had declined, they had not dropped back to the levels when the projects began.¹¹ The percentage of households with more than one member contributing income had increased, providing a protective function for households against shocks. Furthermore, the negative coping strategies of SomRep participants, as measured by the reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) (where lower scores indicate better coping strategies¹²), dropped

from 16.57 in 2015 to 11.4 at the end of the evaluation in 2017. For non-SomRep participants across this same period, the reliance on negative coping strategies increased from 18.9 to 21.6, confirming that SomRep participants were demonstrating better coping strategies.¹³ These positive signs of coping, combined with anecdotal reports from program staff, indicated that SomRep's long-term resilience focused approach was yielding success in building the resilience of households and communities to drought.

7 Government of Somalia, *Somalia Drought Impact & Needs Assessment: Volume 1 Synthesis Report*, April 2018, available at: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/somalia/docs/key-documents/GSURR_Somalia%20DINA%20Report_Volume%20I_180116_Lowres.pdf, p.18.

8 Government of Somalia, *Somalia Drought Impact & Needs Assessment: Volume 1 Synthesis Report*, April 2018, available at: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/somalia/docs/key-documents/GSURR_Somalia%20DINA%20Report_Volume%20I_180116_Lowres.pdf, p.18.

9 UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*, June 2019, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>, pp.36, 73.

10 Further information on SomRep is available at: <https://somrep.org/>.

11 While the percentage of people with acceptable food consumption scores at endline saw only a slight increase (54.1) to the baseline score (53), and a drop from the midline (63), the percentage of people with borderline food consumption scores increased from 23 (baseline) to 28 (midline) to 35.4 at endline. SomRep, *SomRep Annual Resilience Measurement Report: Endline Survey Results, September 2017*, available at: <https://somrep.org/resources/>.

12 The Reduced Coping Strategy Index asks a series of questions about the behaviours a household has employed in the past seven days to cope with food insecurity. A heightened rCSI score corresponds with increased reliance on extreme coping measures to deal with food insecurity. The coping strategies measured by the rCSI are: reliance on less preferred and less expensive foods, borrowing food or relying on help from friends or relatives, limiting portion size at mealtimes, restricting adult food consumption to allow small children to eat, and reducing the number of meals eaten in a day. SomRep, *Positive Deviance in Somalia: Why are some households more resilient than others*, September 2018, available at: <https://somrep.org/resources/>, p. 75.

13 SomRep, *SomRep Annual Resilience Measurement Report: Endline Survey Results, September 2017*, available at: <https://somrep.org/resources/>, p.10.

Strengthening food security in South Sudan

Since gaining independence in 2011, South Sudan has been affected by civil war, which has killed an estimated 400,000 people, displaced over 4 million people internally and to neighbouring countries, and in early 2017, pushed two counties into famine.¹⁴ Countrywide insecurity, compounded by the pressures of decreasing rainfall and political and macro-economic instability, has repeatedly brought the country to the brink of famine.¹⁵ As the conflict persists over US\$9.5 billion has been spent on humanitarian aid, yet the number of people who are in a stressed (IPC Phase 2) or higher state of food security has more than tripled in six years.¹⁶

Across three different projects, World Vision has seen a substantial increase in food security in targeted communities.

In three years across Greater Bahr el Ghazal, Lakes and Warrap states, and the Equatorias, year-round access to sufficient food increased from 21.3 percent to 31.4 percent and positive perceptions about women's ability to take on decision-making roles increased significantly.¹⁷ In only 18 months in Juba and Tonj Noth counties, another project saw a substantial increase in the percentage of households with a sufficient diet (from 23.2 percent to 84.2 percent) and a reduction in the number of months of food shortage (from five to three).¹⁸ Furthermore, the monthly household income of targeted farmers increased from US\$4.34 to \$30.37, and project



Akec is a member of a local farmers' group in Bahr el Ghazal region, South Sudan. With the profits from selling vegetables he was able to buy bulls and goats, enabling him to support his family. Nick Ralph/World Vision.

participants reported an increase in crop productivity and profitability of their vegetable business¹⁹. In the former Warrap state, another three-year project seeking to improve food and nutrition security saw a drop in the number of food deficient months (from 4.33 to 3.09) and a significant increase in the proportion of households with improved dietary diversity (from 46 percent to 76 percent). The project also saw over 80 percent of participating farmers adopt improved farming practices at the project's completion, including implementing strategies for reducing risk to disasters and climate change.²⁰ In a challenging place to operate, these changes demonstrate a significant impact on improving food and nutrition security among vulnerable communities.

Helping build resilient communities in Afghanistan

Afghanistan hosts one of the world's most complex and protracted crises. Decades of armed conflict and ongoing hostilities across large parts of the country have caused extreme levels of physical and psychological harm. Afghanistan's dry climate and mountainous landscape render it prone to natural hazards and an estimated 59 percent of the population is affected by climate shocks.²¹ Afghanistan is particularly vulnerable to climate change due to the extensive presence of snow-fed and glacial water sources. In 2018, drought and flooding affected more than two-thirds of Afghanistan, leaving 4 million people in need of assistance.²²

14 UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*, June 2019, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>, p.127.

15 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, *Climate Change Profile: South Sudan*, April 2018, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South%2BSudan.pdf>, p.3.

16 FAO, *Crisis in South Sudan – Population in IPC Phases (Table)*, 2019 [accessed 7 August 2019], available at: <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/crisis/south-sudan/en/>; Financial Tracking Service, *Republic of South Sudan 2018 (Humanitarian response plan) – Funding trends inside and outside the response plan/appeal (Table)*, [accessed 7 August 2019], available at: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/646/summary>.

17 From 54.5 percent to 70 percent. feed, *Empowering farmers: Building Resilience*, March 2018 [internal document].

18 *Fact Sheet: Mid-Term Evaluation of South Sudan Integrated Food Security and Livelihood Project* [internal document].

19 82 percent of farmers answered in the affirmative that profitability of the vegetable business had increased. *Fact Sheet: Mid-Term Evaluation of South Sudan Integrated Food Security and Livelihood Project* [internal document].

20 *Final Evaluation Report of Improving Food and Nutrition Security for Vulnerable Groups in Warrap State through the Adoption of more Productive, sustainable and Resilient Agricultural Livelihood Strategies*, December 2017 [internal document].

21 In contrast, 19 percent of the population suffers security-related shocks. World Bank, *Afghanistan: Multi-hazard risk assessment, 2018*, available at: https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/Afghanistan_MHRA.pdf, p. VII.

22 UN OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2019: Afghanistan*, November 2018, available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/afg_2019_humanitarian_needs_overview.pdf, p.7.



Children holding vegetables grown with a World Vision irrigation system, Afghanistan. World Vision Afghanistan

The situation is compounded by conflict and insecurity. As a result, Afghanistan is one of the world's largest refugee source countries and hosts one of the 10 largest internally displaced persons (IDP) populations in the world.²³ In this context, the Australian Afghan Community Resilience Scheme (AACRS) seeks to improve the livelihoods and resilience of rural Afghan communities.

During and despite the 2018 drought, food security and resilience sharply increased among communities World Vision was working with in Badghis Province. After four years of program support, the number of hunger months that program participants reported experiencing in the previous year halved from 7.53 in 2014 to 2.85 in 2018. The percentage of

households with moderate hunger levels dramatically declined in the same period (from 97 percent to 10.3 percent).²⁴ The mean reduced coping strategy index score (rCSI) of AACRS participants halved from 10.4 to 5.7. Women producers involved in the project reported sales increases from 11.5 percent to 60.8 percent and women in project-supported producer groups were earning an average annual income more than double the provincial average.²⁵ The project also contributed to a significant increase in child wellbeing indicators,²⁶ demonstrating the increased ability of parents to provide their children with food, hygiene, education and clothing. Furthermore, according to IDP registration records, there was a proportionally

lower number of people displaced from AACRS-targeted villages than from villages outside project areas. Anecdotal evidence also suggested a reduction in the number of youth in project villages joining armed groups. Even when reviewed during a serious drought, World Vision programs were able to assist in increasing food security and resilience among communities, with significant flow-on effects for the rest of the community.

23 Only overshadowed by Syria's 6.3 million refugees. UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*, June 2019, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>.

24 *Strengthening Communities to Build Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods in Badghis: Australian Afghanistan Community Resilience Scheme Project (AACRS) – End of Phase I report*, January 2019 [internal document].

25 A\$131 for AACRS supported producers compared to the provincial average of A\$56.

26 Child wellbeing was measured as the perceived ability of the household to provide various items to their children.

Enabling resilience in complex contexts

A sustained commitment to investment and program integration

World Vision's sustained presence in these countries – in Sudan and now South Sudan since 1989, Somalia since 1992 and Afghanistan since 2001 – has been key to supporting community resilience. It allowed us to take a multi-year approach, provided us with a nuanced perspective on the needs of people in crises, and assisted us in building trust and respect with communities and leaders. In Afghanistan, World Vision's robust relationship with communities and community leaders, including local Imams, enabled a smooth implementation of project activities. In challenging contexts, it allowed World Vision staff to call upon community members for information about development and security-related issues that affected project implementation.²⁷ In South Sudan, multi-year development-focused grants helped sustain the investment in community relationships and supported empowerment of local communities as decision-makers.²⁸

Beyond our sustained organisational presence, the longer-term program approach of each example discussed here was critical to supporting the positive resilience outcomes outlined above. Each program ran for a minimum of two years, with the Afghanistan Resilience project running the longest (four years, with a two-year extension). In contrast to short-term

(6-12 month) standard humanitarian program funding, this multi-year approach has enabled greater focus on resilience and food security initiatives. These include supporting resilience-building activities, such as access to irrigation water, access to markets and environmental protections that cannot be addressed in short-term programs. Resilience is, by definition, a long-term process. Supporting resilience strategies prior to any shock occurring is essential for supporting communities to positively cope with that shock, as evidenced in the examples from Somalia and Afghanistan noted above. **The World Bank's Pathways for Peace report notes that the best way to prevent a communities' descent into crises "is to ensure that they are resilient through investment in inclusive and sustainable development".**²⁹ Long-term programming approaches that can build a bridge between humanitarian and development approaches are a more effective means of supporting communities facing recurrent crises. They assist in building the foundations for sustainable development, thus bridging the nexus between humanitarian and development programs.

Working together under a resilience framework

Underlying a multi-year programming approach, a resilience-focused theory of change further enables program impact. In Afghanistan, AACRS

partners shared a unified, four-year program-level theory of change that aligned with the Government of Afghanistan's National Priority Programs and Dry Land Farming strategy. In Somalia, SomRep partners carry out independent programs in line with SomRep's theory of change: a 10-year commitment to building the absorptive, adaptive and transformative resilience capacities of communities.³⁰ This long-term plan enables partner organisations to implement a mix of short- and longer-term projects (as funding allows) that contribute to SomRep's immediate, intermediate and long-term goals. For example, SomRep programs currently use cash for work to restore local environments through farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR)³¹ and rangeland reseeding – meeting SomRep's intended outcomes on improving both short-term absorptive capacity and long-term transformative capacity. Communities participating in a positive deviance analysis of SomRep programs confirmed that long-term transformative goals, such as environmental restoration and governance strengthening work, were relevant to supporting resilience. This long-term strategic approach, coupled with shorter-term livelihood support, is critical for achieving sustainable change.

A long-term strategic framework also helps mitigate a key challenge for SomRep programs: the sustainability of short-term programs. Cash-for-work programs are reliant on external

27 *Strengthening Communities to Build Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods in Badghis: Australian Afghanistan Community Resilience Scheme Project (AACRS) – End of Phase I report*, January 2019 [internal document] p.23.

28 World Vision International, *Multi-Year Planning and Funding – Implementer Perspectives*, February 2018, available at: <https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/MYPF%20-%20Implementers%20Perspectives.pdf>, p.7.

29 World Bank, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, 2018, available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/28337>, p. xviii.

30 Absorptive capacity refers to a stable foundation of productive livelihood activities and assets needed and from which improvements can be made. Adaptive capacity refers to the enhanced risk awareness, mitigation and management of the target households and communities through community-based disaster risk reduction activities and linking these to the creation or strengthening of existing informal safety nets. Transformative capacity refers to the need for good, responsive and accountable governance as essential precursors for ensuring basic services and infrastructure to allow for the development of resilient productive capacities. It also includes the supporting systems to allow people to cope during times of stress and crises. See SomRep Theory of Change for how these objectives are operationalised: SomRep, *SomRep Annual Resilience Measurement Report: Endline Survey Results*, September 2017, available at: <https://somrep.org/resources/>, p.3.

31 Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is a low-cost land restoration technique used to combat poverty and hunger amongst poor subsistence farmers by increasing food and timber production and resilience to climate extremes. In practice, FMNR involves the systematic regrowth and management of trees and shrubs from felled tree stumps, sprouting root systems or seeds. The regrown trees and shrubs – integrated into crops and grazing pastures – help restore soil structure and fertility, inhibit erosion and soil moisture evaporation, rehabilitate springs and the water table, and increase biodiversity. Some tree species also impart nutrients such as nitrogen into the soil.

funding. To succeed, they must be paired with livelihood strengthening and diversification programs that support the transition to mostly independent forms of income generation. At the end of a three-year project in 2016, SomRep participants were just beginning to start businesses using loans from savings groups. **Building resilience takes time, and a long-term strategic approach enables humanitarian and development organisations to both address immediate needs while contributing to long-term community resilience.**

In contrast, World Vision's work in South Sudan has not operated under a broader long-term resilience framework. The Partnership for Recovery and Resilience was launched in Yambio in October 2018 as a joint initiative by donors, the UN, NGOs and local leadership, seeking to reduce vulnerability and dependence on international aid. While this is a promising initiative by the aid community, multi-year donor funding in alignment with this framework is only just now beginning to become available.

Multi-year funding, with flexibility

Long-term presence and strategic frameworks are further enabled by multi-year funding from donors, with flexibility to adapt as contexts change. DFAT committed funds to the AACRS program to support the full duration of the program design. Within this, AACRS's budget-line flexibility has allowed staff to adapt to emerging needs and community requests during implementation. For example, women's markets were not included in the original program design but were soon requested by women participating in the project who could not move freely and safely in existing male-dominated marketplaces. The local government has since agreed to allocate a market space for women



Participants plant pistachios in an AACRS project in Badghis province, Afghanistan. Pistachio trees are resistant to the dry lands of Badghis province. Narges Ghafari/World Vision Afghanistan

in Qala-I-Naw City and a building is under construction with support from Afghanistan's First Lady. While AACRS projects had the flexibility to change activities this flexibility did not extend to allowing the funding of relief activities, limiting the project team's ability to respond quickly and efficiently to emerging humanitarian needs as the drought began.

In contrast, the SomRep design has an in-built crisis-modifier system which is continuously reviewed and strengthened. In the 2016 drought, beneficiaries reported cash for work activities ended too soon and cash influx into communities dried up as the impacts of drought began to intensify. Many of the program gains of the previous two years were lost as a result and savings groups were negatively impacted, with some forced to disband as members could no longer contribute enough income. A targeted injection of funding through SomRep's pre-existing programs at this time would have supported communities to retain the gains they had made. Since this time, SomRep has sought to strengthen its early warning and crisis modifier systems to be more responsive to beneficiary feedback and early warning signs, providing support as early as possible. Now, when a community's pre-existing capacity is overwhelmed, SomRep partners can

request additional resources from a Contingency Pool Fund, reprogram longer-term project funds or appeal for additional funds from donors. Triggers, actions and funding are agreed in advance meaning lead times between warnings and response are significantly cut. **Long-term funding support, and the flexibility for organisations to quickly respond to changing circumstances, is critical to building community resilience in the face of recurrent crises.**

The more complementary programs the better

In World Vision's experience, programs that incorporate multiple interventions have greater impact in building household and community resilience. A 2018 SomRep positive deviance study²² found the households with better food security and who were coping better with the drought were more likely to participate in and benefit from multiple SomRep interventions.³³ For example, program participants reported savings groups were an important aspect of enabling positive coping mechanisms. Savings group loans could be invested in productive or protective assets and the group provided important informal psychosocial support and educational opportunities for participants.

32 To understand the impact of Somrep activities in contributing to household and community resilience, a positive deviance analysis was commissioned amidst the drought in 2018.

33 SomRep, *Positive Deviance in Somalia: Why are some households more resilient than others*, September 2018, available at: <https://somrep.org/resources/>.

However the strongest point of difference between positive deviant households (i.e. those perceived to be coping better in the drought) and non-positive deviant households was the participation in both cash for work and savings groups.³⁴ SomRep's integrated approach encouraged cash for work participants to form savings groups, which nudged households to capture a percentage of the earned cash into savings, where it could both support the maintenance of adequate food consumption year round and work as a local finance base. Linking and layering these interventions also supported poorer households to gain access to a reliable income stream. The multi-layered intervention was found to increase food security and improve coping strategies.

While not analysed to the same extent, results from the South Sudan food security project (FEED) in Greater Bahr el Ghazal, Lakes and Warrap states, and the Equatorias found project activities that happened to coincide with a separate WFP cash for work program achieved stronger endline results. Communities strongly expressed this strengthened their ability to take advantage of FEED project activities. Cash for work can serve as a bridge and enabler for longer-term resilience programming. Layering programs - in particular cash for work - with savings activities is an important and valued bridge to building community resilience.

Supporting and enabling community structures.

A further key enabler of resilience across these programs was the support provided to nurture and enable community support structures. Key to program success in Afghanistan, for example, was establishing producer groups that worked collectively to increase their

bargaining power, which resulted in impressive increases to the average annual incomes of women producers. Additional work to establish and strengthen the Badghis National Trade Union and Water Management Groups provided services to communities and linked in with government and private sector stakeholders to provide better services for communities. For World Vision, a key component of this program was supporting attitudinal and behavioural change to encourage the participation and empowerment of vulnerable households in livelihood generation activities. The 2018 study found a remarkable increase in the percentage of women, landless people and people with a disability who reported being active members of community groups: from 0.5% in 2014, to 36% in 2018. Social connection and resilience are deeply interconnected.

The role of social support networks in building resilience was consistently emphasised through the SomRep Positive Deviance study. Participants emphasised that the groups provided a space to share information, ideas, advice and expertise, as well as to participate in training. One respondent stated that "savings groups are better insurance than clans." Additionally, the social fund component of these groups enabled beneficiaries to help rebuild informal safety nets and support the neediest in the community. In the 2016-17 drought, one group used its fund to pay for an ambulance to take its group leader to a hospital when she was having a difficult labour. As the leader later said: "the group saved my life." **By providing critical psychosocial support, building collective advocacy strength and ensuring the sustainability of projects, strengthened community networks are vital to achieving community resilience**

and they are only possible through long-term presence and programs in communities.

Investing in M&E and shared learning.

Resilience is difficult to measure. As in the case studies explored here resilience programs are being implemented in highly complex contexts that make standard measurement practices (i.e. randomised control groups) inappropriate. Resilience cannot be directly observed and measured but must be inferred from a combination of other concrete variables (e.g. value of assets or food consumption in the last week) and selected, weighed and tested into a resilience metric that is highly contextual. Most critically, it requires a shock to be visible. The evaluations that informed the Afghanistan and Somalia case studies were both undertaken during droughts, providing a valuable context to evaluate community resilience. Yet these evaluations were both conducted according to the standard project evaluation cycle and their timing was more coincidence than intention. SomRep has invested in a dedicated M&E function and in understanding the whole-of-consortium impact, as evidenced by the positive deviance study as well as its annual resilience measurement studies. These help to validate the relevance of multiple past projects and guides future SomRep projects and approaches. As seen in the lessons learned from the **2016 Somalia drought on the need for better shock-responsive programming, high quality M&E can assist organisations adapt programs to ensure they are fit for purpose in responding to community needs. Investing in resilience measurement is a core component of understanding the effectiveness of resilience-building programs.**

34 33% to 12.1%: Positive deviant households were no more likely to be participating in cash for work activities alone, than non-positive deviant households. They were however, more likely to be participating in both cash for work and savings groups. SomRep, *Positive Deviance in Somalia: Why are some households more resilient than others*, September 2018, available at: <https://somrep.org/resources/>.

Conclusion and Recommendations

World Vision's programs in Somalia, South Sudan and Afghanistan help bridge the divide between humanitarian and development action. Multi-year, resilience-focused programs improve community and household resilience, strengthen coping strategies, diversify livelihoods, make agriculture more productive and increase food security. When operating most effectively, these programs are guided by a long-term theory of change and resourced with multi-year funding that is flexible to changing contexts. A multi-layered approach that strengthens community structures is critical to achieving positive change and strengthening the sustainability of programs. High quality M&E is critical to resilience programming, as it facilitates shared learning and enables interventions to be continually improved. At the time of publishing, World Vision is yet again scaling up its work in response to signs of deteriorating food security in the

Southern Africa region. As we learn from and implement better programs to support communities facing recurrent crises, we urge donors and other actors to join us to ensure a more resilient future for all.

Recommendations:

Based on World Vision's work in these contexts, we recommend the Australian Government:

Recommendation 1: Increase Australian Government funding to support five multi-year, community focused, resilience programs in contexts of recurrent, chronic or protracted crises by 2022.

The longer-term funding and program design in Somalia, Afghanistan and South Sudan has played a key role in the emerging successful outcomes outlined above. The Australian Government should increase its investment to a minimum of five multi-year programs

in protracted and recurrent crises. This is in line with commitments made by Australia and other donors in the Grand Bargain. World Vision considers there are opportunities for the Australian Government to support multi-year community-resilience focused programs, particularly in Bangladesh, South Sudan, Somalia and Afghanistan. In designing these programs, we recommend that adequate resourcing is made available for consortium management, monitoring and evaluation and shared learning. Ensuring predictable and adequate funding is essential for progressing localisation as it allows longer-term planning and stability for local partners to build organisational capability and sustainability. When shocks occur in these contexts, we urge the government to direct humanitarian funding through pre-existing programs to provide support and ensure resilience gains are not lost.



Saynab and K.Ahmed are members of the Village Savings and Loan association (VSLA) in Odweyne district Somaliland. With a loan from the VSLA, a camel milk producing group was established. The 'Ceelsame Fresh Milk' store now sells pasteurised fresh camel milk for consumption by locals, as well as being sent for commercial sale. Nick Ralph/World Vision.

**Recommendation 2:
Amend ANCP guidelines to better enable resilience programs in fragile contexts.**

Each case study explored in this analysis has been either partly or wholly funded with DFAT funding, and there is an opportunity for DFAT to leverage its existing programs by increasing their flexibility to scale up their success. ANCP programs, as currently implemented in South Sudan, allow significant flexibility, but do not permit funding humanitarian activities. Considering the greater impact crisis modifiers have for communities facing shock, this is a missed opportunity. We recommend the ANCP guidelines are adjusted to allow humanitarian interventions as temporary crisis modifiers. This would keep ANCP true to its development purposes, while allowing the use of the most efficient activities to protect development gains in fragile contexts.

ANCP funding has also enabled World Vision to test and trial new approaches to supporting communities to develop resilience, contributing to the Somalia and South Sudan results discussed here. Where these programs show impact, DFAT should look for ways to scale up support external to the ANCP budget.

**Recommendation 3:
Establish a DFAT crisis-modifier fund to allow Australian Aid funded projects the capacity to quickly adapt programming in response to early warnings.**

The ability of multi-year resilience programs to help communities respond, adapt and withstand shocks, relies on how they are utilised when a shock occurs. While the AACRS program did not have the flexibility to adapt or alter existing programs to support humanitarian operations in the face of drought warnings, SomRep's in-built crisis-modifier system demonstrates the importance of program flexibility to respond to changing contexts and emerging needs, and in doing so, safeguard livelihoods, maintain dignity and protect development gains.

World Vision recommends that DFAT trial a crisis modifier fund within the Humanitarian Division to allow DFAT to use pre-existing Australian aid funded programs to respond to emerging needs. Eligibility for funding should be based on early warnings or the onset of a humanitarian crises within a pre-existing program, that a timely injection of additional support could help reduce. We propose the fund work as a co-contribution mechanism, enabling matched contributions by the humanitarian division to the same amount that is reprogrammed from an existing DFAT development grant. This would enable a timely response to emerging needs and support an appropriate return to planned programs. Applications to this fund should be eligible for all partners to the Australian aid programs. An initial trial fund could be valued at \$10 million and adjusted over time based on experience and lessons learnt.

**Recommendation 4:
Include an appropriately resourced budget line in all future DFAT funded resilience programs to invest in evidence and communicate the impact of Australian supported resilience interventions.**

Too often stories of impact are anecdotal, and organisations do not engage in more systematic research due to the high cost of data gathering in fragile contexts and the need for in-depth analysis. As noted, resilience is difficult to measure. As part of multi-year funding agreements, we recommend DFAT allocate funding for independent and publicly accessible research that examines the impact of resilience focused interventions and builds the knowledge base on programming for impact in complex contexts. This funding should support research initiatives that are outside of the standard project evaluation cycle. These research programs will make important contributions to improving practice and demonstrating impact, and over time, will build up the evidence of the impact of DFAT's funded work in places of recurrent or protracted crises.

Investing in evidence is also critical to communicating impact to the Australian public. As the examples above demonstrate, World Vision and our partners are helping break the cycle of recurrent crises. For an Australian public that is in danger of growing sceptical about why Australia should invest aid funding in these difficult contexts, communicating this impact has never been more important.



Ajok Ayuel Ring is the chairperson of the VSLA and lead farmer of the local farmers group in Kyachagood village, Bahr el Ghazal region, South Sudan. Nick Ralph/World Vision.

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