

Rapid review and stakeholder
consultation on the potential of
NGOs to build resilience to climate
extremes and disasters in the
Sahel



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SECTION 1

Introduction

This summary reflects headline messages from a report commissioned through the Evidence on Demand facility, which provided a rapid review of current and planned resilience-building activities of major international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), with a special focus on the Sahel region. While the report provides an overview of the current situation based on information provided by selected NGOs and DFID advisors¹, a second, more detailed phase of work will be required that examines a greater sample of NGOs. This will enable DFID to determine an accurate picture of success and scalability of activities that are building resilience to climate extremes and disasters in the Sahel and in other vulnerable countries.

The results of the rapid review indicate that there is a strong demand for support in the NGO resilience community for the scale-up of resilience-building initiatives in the Sahel. There are also tried and tested programmes being implemented elsewhere in Africa, which could be replicated in the countries of Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mauritania or Chad if support became available.


Which NGOs are potential partners in the 5 programme countries in the Sahel and what constraints do they face in scaling up their programmes?

Each of the five NGOs interviewed (Action Aid, Care International, Concern Worldwide, Save the Children and Tearfund) present opportunities for potential partnerships to be developed. From desk-based research, other potential partners may include Christian Aid, World Vision, Plan International, Islamic Relief and Oxfam as well as Practical Action and SOS Sahel International. A second consultation is recommended to explore more potential options including the range of NGOs and the type of activities that could possibly be funded.

These NGOs have achieved results for adaptation and poverty reduction through their activities. Examples include assistance to families in Burkina Faso to improve farming techniques (Action Aid), emergency assistance to reduce vulnerability in Eastern Chad (Concern Worldwide), and support for community based adaptation activities in Niger, ranging from activities that support livelihood diversification (Care International), literacy training (Tearfund) and improved child nutrition (Save the Children).

Despite the achievements of NGO activities for adaptation and poverty reduction, results are limited by poor governance, corruption, high insecurity, weak infrastructure and political circumstances in the focal countries. Recurrent drought, high food prices and low agricultural output as well as the conflict in Mali has exacerbated vulnerability. Subsequent competition

¹ More than ten International NGOs were invited by email, on 29th May 2013, to participate in the consultations. These included Action Aid, CAFOD, CARE International UK, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Oxfam, Practical Action, Save the Children, Tearfund, World Vision and WWF UK. This group was selected based on their membership of the BOND Development and Environment (Resilience) NGO forum (confirmed with Kate Munro, national coordinator) which was recommended by DFID as a good indication of their potential capacity to support the BRACED programme. In total, five NGOs, three DFID advisors and the coordinator of the BOND resilience-group of NGOs contributed by telephone; two additional NGOs contributed by email; four were unable to contribute.



over basic services, intensified by the high numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs), is affecting the capacity of some NGOs to work in affected areas of Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad.

What types of activities are these partners likely to implement if DFID funding were available?

The funding that may become available through DFID would offer different opportunities to different NGOs. While further research is required some potential activities that could be funded include:

- International Food Security Network (IFSN): Action Aid requires funding to engage a greater number of countries in IFSN and other resilience-building dialogues. This could be achieved through strengthening the capacity of partners in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Chad.
- Adaptation Learning Programme (ALP): Care International uses the ALP to enhance knowledge on resilience-building from on-the-ground research and activities in Niger, Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique. From 2013, CARE will be ready to scale-up activities in Ghana and Niger (absorptive capacity totalling £1 million per country) and use the ALP model to enhance adaptation in at least one other vulnerable country in the Sahel (£2 million over the period 2014 – 2016).
- Early Warning Systems: Concern has supported civil society collect data for EWS in Niger. Concern requires funding to strengthen two-way flows of information to enable local institutions from all sectors to interpret and act on EWS information on the ground.
- Roots to Resilience (R2RS) programme: Save the Children require funding for a new programme in Niger, Burkina Faso and Northern Nigeria. From June 2013 – 2019, R2RS will deliver knowledge exchanges, leveraging of existing regional leadership structures, research work and enhanced partnerships with the private sector, among other activities. It has an estimated 220,000 direct beneficiaries and a total budget of £48.5million².
- Resilience Building Crisis Relief project: Tearfund require funding to reach out to 1,100 households (11,000 individuals) at 24 sites in Niger. The project brings together emergency response and long-term resilience-building activities and is estimated to cost £1,552,660 over three years (2013– 2016).

Summary


Operational research by potential NGO partners demonstrates the effectiveness of early action and a fresh approach to resilience building – ‘integrated resilience building’³. This has been demonstrated through new conceptual frameworks including the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA) Local Adaptive Capacity Framework (LAC)⁴, which is now enhancing the effectiveness of adaptation, DRR and resilience programming. The Sahel Working Group and Regional Learning and Advocacy Programme (REGLAP) for Vulnerable Dryland Communities represent other specialist consortiums that are supporting integrated resilience approaches and their focus on all sectors and levels of government⁵.

² Save the Children (2013) Transforming Childhood in West Africa, R2RS Brussels Presentation (internal document).

³ Turnbull, M., Sterrett, C., Hilleboe, A., 2013. Toward Resilience: A guide to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation <http://reliefweb.int/report/world/toward-resilience-guide-disaster-risk-reduction-and-climate-change-adaptation>

⁴ Oxfam GB (2013). The Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/our-work/climate-change-drr/accra>

⁵ REGLAP (2013) Regional Learning and Advocacy Programme (REGLAP) for Vulnerable Dryland Communities. <http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/east-central-africa/reglap/>



Albeit insecurity challenges in Mali and its borders, the year 2013 has been relatively stable so far (following better rains and harvests towards the end of 2012). Thus, many potential partner NGOs are preparing or finalising plans to either replicate, scale-up or continue programmes trialled and tested in West and/or East Africa to enhance the resilience agenda in the Sahel⁶.

There is a clear and present funding need for NGO partners to scale-up resilience-building, adaptation and DRR activities in the Sahel. If DFID were to provide grants of between £1m and £10m to NGOs (the levels of funding indicated as possible to absorb) there would be a significant increase in the number of people supported to cope with the impacts of climate change.

A second phase of work in close collaboration with NGO stakeholders should be implemented to verify the total number of beneficiaries after the pipeline activities and funding gaps have been confirmed.

⁶ UN OCHA, 2013. Sahel: Millions need long-term support. 29 May 2013
<http://www.unocha.org/niger/top-stories/sahel-millions-need-long-term-support>