



Partners for Resilience: the next phase

Patrick Okello, a beneficiary from Partners for Resilience work in Uganda, tends his pineapple plantation in Otuke. 'CARE helped us identify drought-resistant crops that can survive these harsh conditions,' he says, referring to the 2016-17 drought. 'The weather has not been friendly, but we're sure of earning something...much as the general harvest is not good.' (Photo: Denis Onyodi/Climate Centre)



Introduction: facing down risk

Disasters wipe out development gains and are being exacerbated by climate change, population growth, urbanization, the degradation of ecosystems, and uncontrolled economic development. Poor and marginalized communities are badly affected, with disasters trapping them in a vicious circle of poverty and vulnerability.

One answer to this – a way to stop hazards becoming disasters – is *resilience*.¹ Strong, well-organized communities that can manage

the risks they face will be able to reduce the overall impact of disasters and sustain development.

Central to this idea is the recognition that causes and vulnerabilities are related, and that it's vital to link the humanitarian, development and environmental domains.

Emergency response must and will always be provided unconditionally, in accordance with humanitarian principles. But the need for externally supported interventions can be reduced by working on the drivers of risk.

¹ The UN defines *resilience* as the ability to “resist, absorb, accommodate and recover” from hazards, including restoration of essential structures and functions. Protecting and strengthening livelihoods is central to this.



Key aspects of integrated risk management

- Putting people centre-stage, building on local and traditional resources and knowledge
- Linking humanitarian, development and environmental domains by focusing on livelihoods
- Addressing risk on the larger scale of landscapes
- Managing and restoring ecosystems
- Working on different timescales to ensure adaptive planning
- Linking local realities with global processes
- Integrating disciplines and approaches to encompass different risks
- Partnering with communities, civil society, governments, knowledge centres, the private sector, the media.

'Integrated risk management' and the Partners for Resilience

The Netherlands-based Partners for Resilience (PfR) use 'integrated risk management' in recognition of the importance of ecosystems and a changing climate to livelihoods, and in the belief that risk reduction must *integrate* both timescales (ranging from imminent hazards to risks much further into the future) and geographical scope (assessing disaster risks over the wider landscape). This is essential for assessing the type, frequency and intensity of the hazards facing communities, and for responding accordingly.

The PfR alliance comprises the Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC) as lead agency, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre ('the Climate Centre'),



CARE Nederland, Cordaid and Wetlands International, and their more than 50 local implementing partners worldwide; it is now in its second phase of programming, in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mali, the Philippines, South Sudan and Uganda.²

The PfR agencies argue for ‘global-to-local’ and vice versa: international frameworks³ informing risk reduction, interrelated and supported by governments, have to be configured to fit local realities. Measures should strengthen people’s livelihoods as strong communities are better able to manage the disaster risks they face.

Local realities and experience, meanwhile, should inform global frameworks to make them relevant and appropriate, especially for the most vulnerable populations. In addition, interventions should combine local and scientific knowledge.

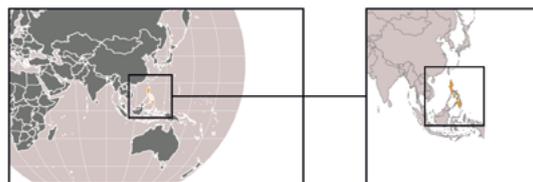
The second phase of PfR centres on support for effective dialogue with stakeholders at all levels: the alliance’s view is that work in communities should be reinforced by a focus on the *institutional* environment – ensuring policy, investment and practice are all moulded to the risk-reduction agenda assisting vulnerable communities.

²The first phase ended in 2015 and the second runs to 2020.

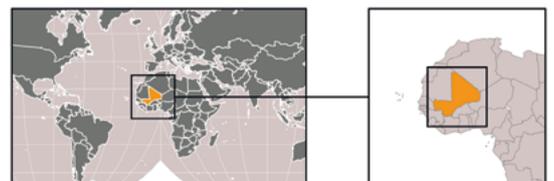
³ Especially the Paris agreement on the global climate, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and the New Urban Agenda.



PfR supports the training of schoolchildren to recognize and act on risks in Surigao del Norte (Photo: Charlotte Floors/NLRC)



The Tullahan river crosses a number of barangays in northern Metro Manila, including PfR programme areas. A major cause of floods is the poor coordination among the barrages and dams along the river system, especially the La Mesa dam. PfR worked closely with other stakeholders to promote better coordination and transmission of flood warnings downstream, allowing for evacuation of people and safeguarding of property. These stakeholders included local officials, the Philippine Meteorological Department, and dam and barrage staff.



Vegetable gardens are one very successful intervention in the Mali programme, especially important for women who traditionally do not own land. Vegetable gardens provide for families’ food security and enable them to buy medicines; they give women new status in their villages.

In this context, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs is both financially supporting PfR and a strategic partner of the alliance.

Making integrated risk management work for communities

Integrated risk management (IRM) involves awareness of the importance of ecosystems and landscapes as buffers against hazards like droughts or floods and as a source of livelihoods, and combines this with community-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate. By integrating climate variability and climate change, IRM also looks not only at current – i.e. *weather*-related risks – but also at hazards that may affect communities further ahead.

This is one part of the ‘integrated’ concept; other key aspects emerge for communities and the civil society organizations that work with them.

Communities can *anticipate* by planning, maintaining stocks, and organizing early

warning; *respond* when disaster strikes with practised actions that enable local systems to survive; *adapt* to changing risks, generating an expanded range of livelihood options, like drought-resistant crops; and *transform* themselves to address the root causes of risk, engaging with governments, the private sector and other stakeholders to find solutions, again with a focus on livelihoods.

Putting communities in the lead role makes PfR’s tailored interventions more effective, at a stroke easing social tensions, migratory pressures, and the need for ongoing external support. Other risk factors also enter the equation: industrial accidents and economic shocks, or even conflict over resources like water.

Finally, by integrating disciplines and approaches and by working in synergy with an array of stakeholders, risks are addressed in a holistic way and interventions also become cost-effective.

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In Nogá, in Mali's Inner Niger Delta, women collectively run vegetable gardens with PfR support, improving the nutritional status of their families and adding to their income (Photo: Raimond Duijsens/NLRC)

Complementing community work with dialogue

Underlying the integrated approach to risk is *humanitarian diplomacy* – coming to the fore in PfR’s second phase – enabling productive dialogue about IRM with governments, the private sector, and potential multilateral donors, from the local level to international arenas.

Such diplomacy, however, requires strong organizations, and the PfR alliance works to enable its implementing partners, and indeed wider civil society, to become full players in the dialogue on IRM.

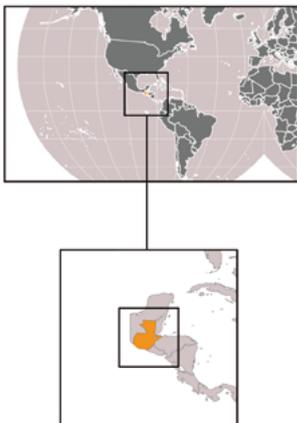
Through dialogue and debate, ideally leading to partnership, governments are key stakeholders in IRM; together with multilateral donors and private-sector entities they can enhance community resilience, especially

What success looks like in PfR

Successful integrated risk management mitigates risks for communities and strengthens their ability to deal with the impacts of disasters. Resilient communities encompass robust livelihoods *and* safe environments; people can shape their own development and set their own priorities.

In their first five years PfR helped set up and strengthen some 550 local risk committees in communities, reaching 640,000 beneficiaries who are now covered by risk plans. Some 75,000 have been trained in ecosystem-based livelihood approaches, and more than 120,000 have adapted their livelihoods.

Nearly 100 working relationships with knowledge and resource institutes have been established and 350 government agencies have been involved in PfR activities.



Women in Santa Cruz del Quiche use fuel-efficient stoves provided by PfR to ease pressure on the environment and ecosystem generated by livelihoods
(Photo: Raimond Duijsens/NLRC)

PfR in Guatemala concluded that building bridges between government agencies could promote holistic risk-management. A formal institutional agenda was agreed among national governing entities in relation to climate, ecosystems and disasters, facilitating concrete actions in the field, such as educational modules on integrated risk management for more than 80 teachers.

after effective mapping of issues and identifying key arguments, and working into legislation and planning.

Links between the various levels of dialogue – global, national, and regional institutions – are important to generate investments that truly incorporate accurate assessment and screening for disaster risk.

To be effective players in the domains of policy, investment and practice, the Netherlands Red Cross, Cordaid and CARE Nederland, for example, use their extensive expertise in and tools for analysing disaster risks at the community level, while the Climate Centre and

Wetlands International contribute knowledge of climate risks, ecosystems and landscapes. A body of training material on IRM is being made available on the PfR website.

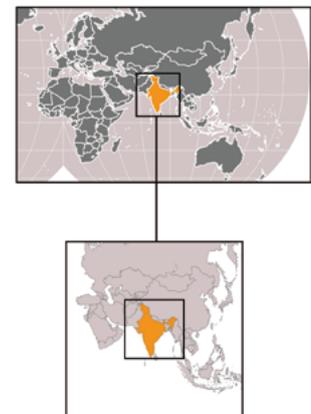
Special risk committees, supported by PfR's local partners, organize the work within communities and seek financial and other support, while participatory monitoring and evaluation enable lessons to be documented and learned.

Finally, to increase effectiveness, potential players from among civil society agencies and knowledge centres are mapped and networked, taking their capacities and level of access into account.

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A woman in the Indian village of Rajnagar demonstrates a community-risk map compiled as part of the PfR programme there
(Photo: Raimond Duijsens/NLRC)



The effectiveness of the community-managed risk reduction promoted by PfR became clear during Cyclone Hudud in 2014. In collaboration with district authorities in Ganjim and Puri, PfR supported disaster-response committees in disseminating early warning messages, stockpiling food, protecting valuables and ensuring timely evacuation.