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**BUILDING RESILIENCE IN ZIMBABWE:**

***TOWARDS A RESILIENCE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK***

**DRAFT**

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# INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, Zimbabwe has experienced unprecedented economic decline and political crises. A sharp drop in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), hyper-inflation, de-industrialization, closure of industries, large scale lay-off of employees, and disruption of public service delivery has contributed to whole-scale migration of much of Zimbabwe’s highly-skilled working-age adult population and their families. Poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, and environmental degradation are serious challenges in many parts of Zimbabwe, particularly rural areas. Natural disasters such as frequent droughts and floods have exacerbated the economic situation for families and heightened overall community vulnerability.

Given the global expansion of interest in the concept of resilience among humanitarian and development actors over the past 5-10 years, there are more and more funding opportunities for programming that builds resilience (e.g., DFID, the European Commission, USAID, IFAD, Rockefeller Foundation). In addition, widespread interest in resilience has spurred tremendous interest in and opportunity for collaborations and partnerships between donors and governments that support linking humanitarian and development efforts (e.g., the Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee (RIASCO)).

Years of protracted food aid programming have created a sense of dependence within Zimbabwe, especially in drier and more shock-prone areas (e.g., Matabeleland North and South, Masvingo, western Manicaland and southern Midlands).[[1]](#footnote-1) Thus, households and communities have become trapped in poverty and food insecurity resulting from a shift in thinking that perceives food aid as a viable livelihood strategy. Interest in resilience building strategies to counter the crippling effects of food aid dependence in Zimbabwe is timely, both in terms of the pressing needs and opportunities for funding.

# DEFINING RESILIENCE

Building the resilience of vulnerable populations so they can respond positively to potential shocks requires helping people cope with current change, adapt their livelihoods, and improve governance systems and ecosystem health so they are better able to avoid problems in the future. This means not only helping people through direct implementation of assistance programmes at multiple levels, but also facilitating change through promotion of improved policies and adaptive practices. The starting point for reversing the downward spiral of chronic vulnerability lies in understanding that while the frequency and severity of shocks and stressors are likely to increase as a result of climate-related change, this trend exacerbates – and is exacerbated by – other underlying factors such as poverty, degraded ecosystems, inadequate physical infrastructure, conflict and ineffective governance.

Under the auspices of the Food Security Information Network (FSIN), the Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group has defined resilience as:

*“The capacity that ensures adverse stressors and shocks do not have long-lasting adverse development consequences.”[[2]](#footnote-2)*

Recent consultations in Zimbabwe that brought together government departments and ministries, UN agencies, NGOs/CSOs, academics and donors resulted in articulation of a more “unpacking” working definition of resilience as:

*“The ability of at risk individuals, households, communities and systems to anticipate, cushion, adapt, bounce back better and move on from the effects of shocks and hazards in a manner that protects livelihoods and recovery gains, and supports sustainable transformation.”*

# TOWARD A RESILIENCE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ZIMBABWE

Resilience building approaches are more than reworked development interventions, the distinctiveness of which is highlighted by a set of five principles:[[3]](#footnote-3)

* **Focus on shock dynamics:** Resilience is a capacity that is exercised both in preparation of and in response to a disturbance. This includes large scale disturbances (covariate shocks) such as catastrophic weather events, geologic events, pests that threaten crops, and epidemic diseases, as well as more localized or individual events (idiosyncratic shocks). Building resilience requires detailed knowledge of shocks and stressors; how a household, community, institution, higher-level system or process (e.g., market access by farmers groups) is able to respond to a shock requires not only a thorough analysis of the type of shock but also the effects of the shock (both objective and subjective). The timing of a shock or stressor with respect to a critical event (e.g., planting, growing, harvesting) is important as is the duration of the shock.
* **Resilience as a multidimensional capacity:** Resilience capacity draws on a wide array of resources including human, social, economic, physical, programmatic (e.g., safety nets), and ecological resources. As a multidimensional capacity, building resilience requires an understanding of the optimal set of absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities used for a given shock at different levels of aggregation, in a given context, and for particular target populations.
* **Resilience functions:** Resilience is a capacity enacted in connection with a particular type of disturbance or configuration of disturbances that may facilitate different types of resilience, including absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities, to prepare for and respond to disturbances. The capacity to withstand the effect of a shock (i.e., absorptive capacity) is often the only option available, and may be essential for survival.
* **Outcome-indexed capacities:** Resilience capacity should be indexed to a given well-being outcome and the specific capacities drawn upon may vary depending on the outcome of interest. The outcome of interest would typically include, for example, some dimension of well-being such as basic health, food security, or poverty status.
* **Multi-level and systems-based:** Resilience capacity is often observed at a given level (e.g., household, community) but is understood as a multi-level construct. This means that interventions should be sensitive to nested dependencies between, for example, households and communities or communities and regions. Dependencies that involve higher level features such as macro-economic policies implemented at the national level should also be considered.

These five principles can help guide design of interventions or programmes using a resilience perspective to address the challenges of poverty, food and nutrition security, health or other well-being outcomes in Zimbabwe.

A resilience conceptual framework helps users understand how households and communities respond to shocks and stresses, how shocks and stresses affect livelihood outcomes and household well-being, and helps in identification of the key leverage points to be used in developing a theory of change, which in turn informs programming designed to enhance resilience. Ultimately, a conceptual framework for resilience assessment can help determine whether households, communities, and higher-level systems (e.g., national, regional, global) are on a trajectory toward greater vulnerability or greater resilience.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Figure 1. Resilience conceptual framework.



Building resilience requires an integrated approach and a long-term commitment to improving three critical capacities: absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity, and transformative capacity.[[5]](#footnote-5)

* **Absorptive capacity:** The ability to minimize exposure to shocks and stresses through preventative measures and appropriate coping strategies to recover quickly and avoid permanent, negative impacts. Disaster risk reduction/management (DRR/DRM) supports improved absorptive capacity by helping households and communities reduce risk and absorb the impacts of shocks without permanent, negative impacts to their livelihoods.
* **Adaptive capacity:** Making proactive and informed choices about alternative livelihood strategies based on an understanding of changing conditions. Improved adaptive capacity results from livelihoods diversification, asset accumulation, and improved social and human capital.
* **Transformative capacity:** The governance mechanisms, policies/regulations, infrastructure, community networks, and formal and informal social protection mechanisms that constitute the enabling environment necessary for systemic change. Transformative capacity refers to system-level changes that enable more lasting resilience and often challenge the status quo in a substantial way. Resilience building approaches for improving transformative capacity in Zimbabwe must align with and support relevant policy frameworks, including: the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Food and Nutrition Policy, National Gender Policy, National Labour/Employment Policy, Traditional Leaders Act, Environmental Act, Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, Disaster Risk Management Framework-Climate Change Policy, and the House and Social Amenities Policy among others.

These three capacities are not mutually exclusive and each exists at individual, household, community, state, and ecosystem levels.

# BACKGROUND

Zimbabwe has been affected by numerous shocks and stressors in the last several decades, many of which have had long-lasting impacts. Economic and political crises led to a steep decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), industry closures, de-industrialization, large scale lay-off of employees, and disruption of public services.[[6]](#footnote-6) Frequent natural disasters such as droughts and floods have further exacerbated poverty levels, especially because the predominant economic activity, rain-fed agriculture, is vulnerable to climatic variability. Zimbabwe is now ranked 156th out of 187 countries on the 2014 Human Development Index.[[7]](#footnote-7) Challenges affecting Zimbabwe include limited economic opportunities and access to markets, climate change, and political instability, which together have resulted in very low resilience capacity among millions of Zimbabweans.

As of 2011, 62.6% of Zimbabweans were living in poverty with 16.2% living in extreme poverty.[[8]](#footnote-8) Rural areas have higher poverty rates than urban areas (76% compared to 38.2%, respectively),[[9]](#footnote-9) and rural poverty is most prevalent in communal areas (79.4%) and resettlement areas (76.4%),[[10]](#footnote-10) where over half the country’s population lives.[[11]](#footnote-11) The provinces with the highest poverty rates are Matabeleland North (81.7%), Mashonaland West (72.4%) and Mashonaland Central (75.4%).[[12]](#footnote-12) People in these three provinces also have the least access to water and sanitation.[[13]](#footnote-13)

The most important economic sector in Zimbabwe, agriculture, provides about 70% of the employment and contributes 13% of the annual GDP.[[14]](#footnote-14) However, recent productivity has been volatile or decreasing, particularly for small grains and maize crops. Controlled prices of maize and wheat have led commercial farmers to switch to non-price controlled cash crops, such as tobacco and cotton[[15]](#footnote-15) (i.e., not food). A number of factors (e.g., lack of support services, credit, and inputs like seeds and fertilizer) result in low agricultural productivity,[[16]](#footnote-16) and agriculture is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and drought, which occur regularly and are expected to increase due to climate change.

Drought, the most common natural disaster affecting Zimbabwe, caused six of the ten biggest natural disasters between 1991 and 2013.[[17]](#footnote-17) Countrywide droughts occur bi-annually. Much of Zimbabwe is comprised of semi-arid agro-ecological regions IV and V, characterised by “low and erratic rainfalls and poor soils,”[[18]](#footnote-18) (i.e., frequent dry spells). Given Zimbabwe’s heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture and livestock, drought has serious implications for food security and the agriculture-based economy. Drought also impacts water availability for domestic and industrial use and power generation affecting cities and non-agriculture sectors.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Floods occur more frequently, usually every year and often as a result of cyclones.[[20]](#footnote-20) Recent records also show an increase in violent storms, with hail and strong winds which damage infrastructure, property and crops and cause loss of life (i.e., human and livestock). Floods tend to occur in the southern and northern low lying areas of Zimbabwe, paths of cyclones, in between river confluences, and downstream of major dams.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Other environmental threats include deforestation, unsustainable land use and planning,[[22]](#footnote-22) conflict over natural resources such as diamonds,[[23]](#footnote-23) invasive species, and over-utilization of arable land.[[24]](#footnote-24) Deforestation stems mainly from uncontrolled forest fires as well as the high percentage of rural households relying on wood as their main energy source (over 90%).[[25]](#footnote-25) Dependence on wood also increases people’s vulnerability to climate change, environmental degradation, and individual health due to indoor pollution. Over-utilization of land can lead to erosion and decreased soil quality and productivity, posing a serious threat to agriculture-based livelihoods.

Over the last few decades, Zimbabwe has experienced hotter days and increasingly variable rainfall, with little change in annual rainfall but with more extreme events (i.e., longer, more frequent dry spells and fewer, more intense rain days).[[26]](#footnote-26) Studies have found that climate change has caused some regional shifts to drier agro-ecological zones,[[27]](#footnote-27) which could impact livelihoods, especially where people have limited resources and information with which to adapt to new conditions. Small-scale farmers have already been affected by changing climate conditions over the last few decades, and these climate trends are predicted to continue.[[28]](#footnote-28),[[29]](#footnote-29) Policies such as Zimbabwe Agriculture Investment Plan (2013-2017) are designed to increase “production, productivity and competitiveness of Zimbabwean agriculture.”[[30]](#footnote-30) However barriers such as limited resources, technical capacity, and access to information have to-date constrained Zimbabwe’s ability to implement climate change adaptation measures, which may be essential to creating long-term sustainability in agriculture and food security.[[31]](#footnote-31)

The Government of Zimbabwe has, over the years, made progress toward some MDGs, and in the 1980s and 1990s, Zimbabwe was on track to attain Middle Income Status. Political and economic crises in the late 1990s, though, led to a decade of economic decline and then hyperinflation between 2007 and 2009,[[32]](#footnote-32) causing major set-backs. A brief period of recovery was followed by another economic “downward spiral” after the 2013 elections.[[33]](#footnote-33) Ongoing political uncertainty and accusations of corrupt elections and assassination plots,[[34]](#footnote-34),[[35]](#footnote-35) conflict related to natural resource rights (e.g., diamond mining) and land reform,[[36]](#footnote-36) low levels of foreign investment and limited access to development finance due to escalating national debt[[37]](#footnote-37) have seriously undermined the enabling environment.

Since the economic crisis of the 1990s, about 2-3 million Zimbabweans have fled the country.[[38]](#footnote-38) Those who emigrated were largely highly skilled working-age adults including teachers, scientists, about one-half of the country’s doctors, and 60% of state-registered nurses.[[39]](#footnote-39) Thus, migration resulted in the whole-scale loss of Zimbabwe’s most economically-active and skilled population, which slowed provision of public services and led to a decline of government institutional capacity and budget to address development goals,[[40]](#footnote-40) a loss of private sector investment and tax revenue, and very slow economic recovery.

A number of policies were enacted in 2009 that helped reverse a decade of economic decline (e.g., a multi-currency system) and have resulted in some measure of stability in the public service sector and recovery of basic goods and services delivery (e.g., health, education, water and sanitation).[[41]](#footnote-41) Additionally, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIM ASSET) promotes creation of the enabling environments required for sustainable economic growth, including infrastructure and utilities. However, challenges for the private sector remain, including liquidity and deteriorated industrial infrastructure, which reduces Zimbabwe’s competitiveness in regional and international markets.[[42]](#footnote-42) This in turn creates cash flow problems, which ultimately hurts investment in public sector infrastructure and services. A recent World Bank report assessed business regulations and other factors that affect how easy or difficult it is for local entrepreneurs to open and run a small- to medium-sized business (e.g., permits, registering property, paying taxes). [[43]](#footnote-43) Zimbabwe ranked near the bottom at 171 out of 189 countries.

Recent economic growth through 2012 has not resulted in job growth or poverty reduction.[[44]](#footnote-44) Rather, formal employment rates and wages remain very low, and the majority of the population depends on agriculture and livestock for their primary livelihoods. Youth (ages 15-34) have high rates of under-employment and often work low-paying informal sector jobs, which keep them poor.[[45]](#footnote-45) In 2011, urban youth had higher average rates of unemployment, 34%, compared to only 5% average rural unemployment. Ten percent of children ages 5 to 14 years work to supplement low household income.[[46]](#footnote-46) Lack of economic opportunity has led some youth to search for work in urban areas, creating unmet demand for housing,[[47]](#footnote-47) or in other countries, depriving Zimbabwe of a skilled and productive labour force.[[48]](#footnote-48)

As another result of the diaspora that resulted from the economic crises of the late 1990’s, public services were essentially gutted in Zimbabwe, including social protection and health care. Zimbabwe implements a variety of social protection measures (e.g., pensions, school fee waivers, cash transfers, public works) to reduce poverty and exposure to risks. However, programmes are limited by factors such as insufficient and inconsistent funding, poor targeting, and lack of coordination across programmes.[[49]](#footnote-49) The Public Assistance cash transfer programme reaches only about 3% of extremely poor households, and one programme which replaces it, harmonized social cash transfer programme (HSCT), reaches 55,000 beneficiaries, which in 2013, was still only 11% of extremely poor households.[[50]](#footnote-50) Targeting could be improved through community validation. Most social protection programmes target food-insecure rural areas, to the exclusion of urban poor.

With thousands of health-care professionals living abroad, Zimbabwe was severely under-resourced to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The HIV incidence reached a peak of 26.5% in 1997, and has declined since then, but as of 2014, Zimbabwe still has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world at 15%.[[51]](#footnote-51) Prevalence of HIV is slightly higher in urban areas compared to rural areas, and among people ages 15-24, HIV prevalence is 1.5 times higher among women than men. Over 1.2 million adults and children were living with HIV/AIDS in 2011, and HIV-related deaths have led to 25% of children being vulnerable or orphaned.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Other diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria and cholera are also prevalent in Zimbabwe and are exacerbated by HIV/AIDS, climate change, and lack of access to safe water and sanitation services. Between 2009 and 2014 overall access to improved sources of drinking water increased from 72.8% to 76.1%,[[53]](#footnote-53) but in several rural provinces, access to improved sources of drinking water remains below 70% (Masvingo, Matabeleland North, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central). In 2012, across the country, 24% of households had no toilet facility[[54]](#footnote-54) but stark inequalities exist between urban and rural areas. Only 1% of urban areas lacked access to a toilet facility, compared to 44% of rural households.[[55]](#footnote-55) Limited access to water and sanitation facilities, in combination with other factors, are associated with higher child mortality rates.[[56]](#footnote-56)

One MDG that Zimbabwe will be unlike to meet is the goal to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.[[57]](#footnote-57) Chronic malnutrition affects about 30% of the population, which has remained relatively constant over the last decade.[[58]](#footnote-58) Between 1.1 and 2.2 million Zimbabweans have been food insecure between January and March in the last five years,[[59]](#footnote-59) and according to a 2014 report, eight out of ten provinces were projected to experience crisis level food insecurity, in part due to low household income levels and high staple cereal prices, especially in the southern provinces.[[60]](#footnote-60) The prevalence of stunting among children aged 0-59 months has declined in the last ten years, but, at 27.6% in 2014, is still high. Stunting is more prevalent among boys (31.1%) than girls (24.1%) and higher in rural areas (30%) compared to urban areas (20%).[[61]](#footnote-61)

# TARGETING

The factors underlying chronic vulnerability and the nature of shocks and stresses will vary from region to region and among different livelihood groups. The identification of potential programme areas should follow a process.

Programming for resilience is highly context-specific. Those areas where high levels of chronic vulnerability and frequent shocks and stresses occur together provide the starting point for identifying where to target resilience-building interventions. These are chronically vulnerable areas that have suffered significant losses due to recurrent disasters, and that have often received repeated rounds of humanitarian assistance. Targeting can be further refined by layering areas with stronger enabling environments, and that possess comparative advantages in terms of development assistance programmes. Targeting methods should rely on a convergence of evidence from different sources, both quantitative and qualitative.

|  |
| --- |
| ProgramAreaEnablingEnvironmentComparativeAdvantageShocks and StressesRecurrent CrisisChronicVulnerability |

Identifying programme areas requires bringing together information on the humanitarian situation, chronic poverty, existing capacities and resources, and development interventions across a wide range of sectors. There are several criteria that can be used for the initial targeting of programme areas, and additional characteristics can be added based on each context. Some of the characteristics to consider in the targeting categories include:[[62]](#footnote-62)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chronic Vulnerability** | * High incidence of persistent poverty
 |
|  | * High rates of stunting and chronic malnutrition
 |
|  | * Exposure to human and animal disease
 |
|  | * Pressure on natural resources and environmental degradation
 |
|  |  |
| **Shocks and Stresses**  | * Frequent shocks and stresses due to natural causes
 |
|  | * Vulnerability to economic shocks
 |
|  | * Risk of conflict
 |
|  | * High exposure to natural hazards
 |
|  | * Level of humanitarian need
 |
|  |  |
| **Enabling Environment** | * Government institutional services and safety nets
 |
|  | * Engaged and responsive leadership at all levels
 |
|  | * Community willingness to engage
 |
|  | * Strong partnerships
 |
|  |  |
| **Comparative Advantage** | * Capacities of local communities and local government
 |
|  | * Infrastructure
 |
|  | * Presence of development partners and resources
 |

There are several methods that can be used to identify chronically vulnerable areas. One method to identify CVAs is the Alkire-Foster method, which captures the non-income multi-dimensional aspects of poverty based on 10 indicators through a deprivation score computed as an equation. The Alkire-Foster method can be used to derive a Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for each district which will guide specific targeting. Data at the ward level is needed in order to derive an MPI and the UN should work with ZimSTAT to obtain this data and to develop a targeting methodology using this approach. The data should be complemented with more specific qualitative information on poverty, vulnerability, and capacities obtained through field surveys before targeting is finalized.

Another approach that can be used to identify CVAs is the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) method, which is already in use in Zimbabwe. The IPC brings all stakeholders together and using different data sets, enables stakeholders to agree on the most vulnerable areas. Information from both the Alkire-Foster method and the IPC can be used to identify the initial target areas.

# RESILIENCE PRINCIPLES

In order to harmonize resilience building efforts with Zimbabwe’s existing national development plans and strategies, in particular the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET), it is important that development and humanitarian actors operate under a common set of resilience operating principles and create synergies based on their individual competitive advantages. Building on discussions from the Zimbabwe Expert Workshop on Resilience in September 2014, the following principles have been adapted from various resilience frameworks (e.g., UNDP, Mercy Corps, DFID, USAID, EU) and represent the set of core principles that will guide operationalization of the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Funding Mechanism.

***Comprehensive multi-stakeholder risk analysis:*** Designing interventions to improve the absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities that underlie resilience capacity requires good programme design, which depends on a theory of change (TOC) that correctly identifies the underlying problems and appropriate leverage points needed to affect desired change.[[63]](#footnote-63) Development of such a TOC depends on a thorough multi-hazard, multi-sector assessment of all the contextual factors that affect the system(s) under study. Analysis begins with a comprehensive understanding of risk and vulnerability – the environmental, political, social, economic, historical, demographic, religious, conflict, and policy conditions that affect, and are affected by, how households, communities, and governments prevent, cope with, and recover from shocks and stresses. A comprehensive assessment is necessary to fully understand the constantly changing relationship between risk and vulnerability on the one hand and livelihood outcomes and resilience on the other.

Comprehensive and holistic risk analysis must involve a multi-stakeholder participatory process that brings together different perspectives to identify the problems and potential solutions for dealing with shocks and stressors. Stakeholders should include implementing agencies, members of the target population, community and local government officials, interested citizens, community-based organisations and NGOs, and other entities (e.g., schools, research institutions, private sector, and universities) from relevant sectors. In particular, a participatory process helps ensure community-level input into identifying the problem(s) from the community’s perspective as well as what they perceive to be their assets, capacities and existing community approaches for addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability to shocks and stressors. Community input contributes to a sense of community ownership and increases the likelihood of success and long-term sustainability of the programme. Working with and enhancing existing local institutions will also help ensure programme continuity and facilitate exit later in the programme cycle.

***Integrated and holistic programming approaches:*** Resilience building relies on integrated programming—a cross-sectoral approach with a long-term commitment to improving the three critical resilience capacities: absorptive capacity (disaster risk management), adaptive capacity (longer-term livelihood investments) and transformative capacity (improved governance and enabling conditions).[[64]](#footnote-64) Programmes with an integrated approach ensure that partners and sectors work together to address key leverage points and adopt complementary, synergistic strategies to promote resilience. However, simply combining cross-sectoral interventions in either time or space (i.e., integration) does not necessarily result in the synergistic effects expected when interventions in one sector actually interact with—and enhance—those in another sector in order to affect desired change outcomes.[[65]](#footnote-65) Cross-sectoral programming supports and protects a core programming focus (e.g., food security, poverty, peace-building) through strengthened resilience at household, community or higher-system levels.

***Strengthening social capital:*** Previous research demonstrates that the extent and application of social capital is an important element in determining the nature of resilience, particularly at the community level[[66]](#footnote-66) and initiatives to build resilience in Zimbabwe should include strengthening social capital in the design of their programmes. Project activities encourage collective action, collaboration, and self-organization, such as VSLA activities, which promote self-sufficiency, enhance decision-making, and increase asset bases, and facilitating inter-clan social relationships that broaden the networks from which communities may draw in order to cope with complex shocks.[[67]](#footnote-67)

***Long-term commitment:*** Building resilience is a long-term process that requires the sustained commitment of all relevant actors. International partners should support governments in developing comprehensive national plans and align their support behind those plans in a coordinated manner and according to their comparative advantage. Plans need to be flexible enough to react quickly to deteriorating situations and be supported by strategic and flexible financing from both humanitarian and development mechanisms. The Government of Zimbabwe’s ZimAsset plan for economic growth and wealth creation supports a longer-term commitment to resilience building in Zimbabwe.

***Regional approach:*** A regional approach may enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of resilience capacity-building programming in Zimbabwe by allowing stakeholders (e.g., government, NGOs, UN agencies, donors) to align resources, build staff capacity, and address cross-country themes that require systems thinking and approaches (e.g., cross-border conflicts, large-scale natural disasters, trans-boundary migration). A regional approach may allow for better contextualization of a defined area, which is required for good problem analysis (particularly at a systems level) and programming. Because many different actors often implement similar programme initiatives within a single region, a regional approach provides significant opportunities for cross-learning and enhanced knowledge management (i.e., identifying and addressing critical knowledge gaps, making programme-based knowledge available in a timely fashion and reader-friendly format, linking information back into iterative programming).

There are, however, limits to what should constitute a region, which might be constrained by physical or political boundaries, agro-ecological zones, culture, language, etc. Thus, regional approaches need to consider contextual factors unique to each region. A regional approach may also contribute to more coordinated strategic planning around resilience, which would help ensure that relevant stakeholders are on the same page in terms of understanding the risks and anticipating probable humanitarian needs.

***Iterative and flexible process that allows for real-time changes in programming:*** Context is dynamic rather than static and is constantly changing based on how individuals, households or communities deal with and respond to risks and shocks (Alinovi et al. 2010). Thus, new contextual factors may need to be incorporated into resilience-building approaches as circumstances change (either positively or negatively). Interventions must be designed in a way that allows for real-time changes and improvements to programming through regular feed-back and shared learning. Programme designs must include a flexible and iterative monitoring system that also allows for more timely and efficient procurement of resources (e.g., crisis modifiers) that facilitates a quick transition from development to emergency activities based on early warning trigger indicators.

***Build national and local capacity:*** Ultimately, resilience building should be led by national governments wherever possible, particularly in providing the enabling environment (e.g., functional institutions, good governance, productive infrastructure, healthy natural resource base) necessary for improving the absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities of households, communities and higher-level systems. Given Zimbabwe’s recent political and economic crises, resilience building must include strong programming elements for building capacity at all levels of government, but particularly at the national level, that can lead to systemic changes in the structural constraints (e.g., ecological, political, economic, social structures) contributing to food and livelihood insecurity in Zimbabwe.

*Multi-track approach that combines humanitarian and development interventions:* A linear, phased approach to relief, recovery and development has had limited long-term success in preventing recurrent emergencies in regions of chronic vulnerability or in making sustained improvements in protracted emergencies. A multi-track approach is needed that builds strong linkages between short-, medium-, and long-term programme interventions that span emergency (short-term track) as well as development responses (medium and longer-term tracks) (Figure 2). Tracks should complement each other and be coherent. They may be initiated simultaneously, sequenced over time, and/or layered , depending on need. This calls for joint or mutually-informed project designs and procurements to enable the layering, integrating or sequencing of humanitarian and development assistance.

Figure 2. Linking short-, medium- and long-term approaches to building resilience in Zimbabwe.



***Anchored in national and local actors’ realities and contexts:*** Building resilience is context-specific, i.e., it is defined by the type of shock or stressor experienced, as well as by the social, economic, environmental, and political context in which the shock occurred and in which household or community response decisions are made. Understanding local perceptions of the challenges and priorities, and tailoring programmes to strengthen or improve limiting contextual factors is an important component of resilience building at the individual, household and community levels.

***Build strategic partnerships and dynamic relationships that are transformative:*** Building resilience requires a diverse range of actors with complementary capacities and skills. Programming initiatives should engage the most vulnerable to the most powerful stakeholders, and maintain awareness of the incentives, motivations and power dynamics that define relationships. Strategic partnerships between government entities, NGOs/CBOs, donors and others (e.g., private sector, UN agencies) can drive formulation of new ideas and solutions, support identification and promotion of shared interests, help clarify programming priorities, and capture important lessons learned from complementary sectoral interventions. Strategic partnerships are also important for joint risk analysis and multi-sectoral approaches to building resilience. By forging mutually advantageous partnerships, development and humanitarian actors can strengthen the ability of vulnerable populations to adapt to change, improve their well-being, and contribute to and benefit from social development and economic growth.

# THEORY OF CHANGE FOR PROMOTING RESILIENCE IN ZIMBABWE

Taking the local context into consideration, there are a number of investments that could contribute to building the absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities of individuals, households, communities and systems in the programme areas. Which of these investments would be prioritized will depend on the comprehensive assessment that would take place. Figure 3 presents a TOC for resilience in Zimbabwe.

For improving absorptive capacity, interventions should focus on the ability of households, communities and systems to manage shocks and stresses in the short-term through cash savings, informal safety nets, disposal of liquid assets that are accumulated in non-shock years, disaster risk reduction strategies, hazard insurance, and reliance on bonding social capital. People’s perceptions regarding their ability to recover from shocks would also be important. For improving adaptive capacity, investments would be made to enable people and systems to proactively adapt to changing conditions through better access to information, diversifying livelihoods into different risk profiles, reliance on bridging and linking social capital, accumulating assets, access to financial services, investment in human capital for better access to skills, and increased confidence to adapt. For transformative capacity, investments would be geared towards improved governance, access to formal safety nets, access to market, access to basic services, access to agricultural services, natural resource access, access to infrastructure, reliance on bridging and linking social capital, and empowering women, children, the elderly and the disabled.

In the face of various shocks and stresses, individuals, households, communities and systems are able to use these capacities to appropriately respond in such a way that well-being indicators are not adversely affected and maintain a positive trajectory in the long term.

Figure 3. Theory of Change for building resilience in Zimbabwe.

**Local Context**

Economic Social Political Environmental Historic Demographic Religious Policy Conflict

Improved Well Being

Food Security Nutrition Income

Improved Response to Shocks

Individual, HH, Community Systems

Shocks and Stresses

Absorptive Capacity

Adaptive Capacity

Transformative Capacity

DRR

Cash Savings

HH perceived ability to recover from shocks

Social Capital (bonding)

Access to informal community safety nets

Asset Ownership

Hazard Insurance

HH Aspirations \*

confidence to adapt

Access to Information

Human Capital

Social Capital

(bridging & linking)

Diversity of

Livelihoods

Asset Ownership

Access to

Financial Services

Governance

Empowerment of

women, children & elderly

Availability of formal

safety nets

Social Capital

(bridging & linking)

Access to:

Infrastructure

Basic services

 Ag Services

Natural resources

Markets

When designing resilience building strategies, programme design and analysis must consider existing programmes, including the Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (LFSP) and Harmonised Cash Transfer Programme (HCT) funded by DFID, the Integrated Programme for Sustainable Food Security and the ACP-EU Water Facility funded by the EU as well as programmes implemented by Sweden, Denmark, USAID, Swiss and other donors.

#

# PROGRAMME APPROACHES FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE IN ZIMBABWE

As the government’s primary strategy for promoting accelerated economic growth, Zim Asset seeks sustainable development and social equity through the “judicious exploitation of the country’s human and natural resources.”[[68]](#footnote-68) Four strategic clusters comprise the strategy: a) Food Security and Nutrition; b) Social Services and Poverty Eradication; c) Infrastructure and Utilities; and d) Value Addition and Beneficiation. Aligned with the Zim Asset agenda, a proposed Zimbabwe Resilience Building Funding Mechanism (ZRBF) anticipates complementing and supporting ongoing efforts in pro-poor growth, food security, women’s empowerment, the environment, livelihoods, basic service delivery (e.g., WASH), and Disaster Risk Management (DRM).[[69]](#footnote-69) In the long term, the following key outcomes are expected as a result of the ZRBF: [[70]](#footnote-70)

* Improved food and nutrition security, sustainable livelihoods (e.g., secure incomes), strengthened adaptive capacities to manage risks, and sustainable inclusive growth and development at local, subnational and national levels. However, the main focus will be at the community level with systems support at district/provincial and national levels, where required.
* An improved and healthy productive sector that provides more economic opportunities, access to jobs/employment, diversified nutrition-sensitive livelihoods, and increasing incomes, all of which helps the vulnerable transition out of poverty and away from food insecurity.
* Increased access to sustainable, quality and adaptive social/basic services focused on education, health (including HIV&AIDS), safe water, and sanitation (WASH).
* Social protection including social safety nets, community empowerment, and transparent and responsive governance.
* Improved policy consistency for mainstreaming of resilience in relevant sector policies as well as in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA).

Building resilience capacity in Zimbabwe will require a long-term commitment to strengthening the absorptive, adaptive and transformational capacities that help individuals, households, communities, governments, and ecosystems adapt and respond to shocks and stressors. Specific programme interventions are based on a comprehensive understanding of the particular shocks faced by communities, their absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities, how they respond to the shock or stressor, and their well-being outcomes (e.g., poverty, health, food security). Although programme interventions will vary depending on the specific relationships identified between various shocks, capacities, responses and outcomes, certain strategic areas of focus are critical for building resilience in the Zimbabwe context.

* **Access to markets and financial services**

Support for increased production and alternate livelihood opportunities need to be linked to improved access to financial services. Coordination between agencies, government, and private sector is needed to provide access to financial services such as credit and insurance along with improved access to agricultural inputs. Savings are a critical element for being able to engage in markets. Support to voluntary savings and loan organisations will provide a way for the very poor to gain access to capital.

Access to, and participation in well-functioning markets is also important for improving absorptive and adaptive capacities, as this helps ensure that farmers have consistent access to agricultural inputs and markets, and ultimately to diverse streams of income. Improving market access requires not only creation of market infrastructure (e.g., roads, market facilities) but also access to credit, price information, and innovative technologies. Savings are also a critical element for being able to engage in markets and can be promoted through voluntary savings and loan organisations. In areas with highly mobile populations, livelihood diversification and participation in markets are also dependent on government policies that support education and skills training and encourage and regulate (rather than restrict) cross-border trade. Finally, governments, donors and implementing agencies can directly contribute to greater adaptive capacity at the household and community levels by providing access to and creating incentives for adoption of innovative technologies.

Overall, building resilience in Zimbabwe includes promoting increased engagement of farmers in marketsby enabling greater access to financial services, market information, market infrastructure, and trade associations.

* **Enhanced livelihoods and productivity**

Promotion of livelihood diversification in general – and reducing dependence on low-potential agricultural livelihoods in particular – is critical for improving the adaptive capacity of rural households in Zimbabwe.[[71]](#footnote-71) The same is true for accumulation and diversification of productive assets. Household accumulation of a diverse set of productive assets reduces vulnerability to shocks. Improved adaptive capacity results from the ability of households and communities to access and utilize these key assets in a way that allows them to respond to changing circumstances. Promoting livelihood diversification among vulnerable populations dependent on agriculture will also require attention to issues related to ecosystem health, collective management of natural resources (e.g., land, water, forests) and legal rights governing access to them (e.g., land tenure, water allocation, harvest/kill quotas). Given the pressure that climate change places on rural livelihoods, governments, donors, and implementing agencies should continue to seek ways of enhancing income through increased production, improved productivity (e.g., value-addition) and promoting ‘off-farm’ income generating opportunities.

Livelihoods diversification includes promoting livelihoods with different risk profiles. For example, crop production involves risk of drought, regardless of how many different crops are grown or their degree of drought tolerance. Thus, diversification through adoption of livelihoods strategies that are not subject to the same risk profile (e.g., drought) are critical for building resilience to certain shocks and stressors.

Resilience-building programming to enhance livelihoods, increase productivity, and encourage economic empowerment might include:

* Policy work to create/enhance the enabling environment for food production and alternative livelihoods at the local level (e.g., DRR, community preparedness strategies/plans).
* Developing, implementing and testing innovative approaches to local economic development, and livelihoods and food security for both the rural and urban poor that are based on a clear understanding of the nexus between food security, agricultural production and poverty in Zimbabwe – including rural-urban migration.
* Promoting climate smart agriculture to improve livelihoods and increase production and productivity at the community and household levels, such as diversified livelihoods strategies, use of drought-tolerant crop varieties and livestock breeds, high-value crops, value-addition, reducing pre- and post-harvest losses, and grain storage improvements.
* Strengthening local economic empowerment for women and youths in the formal and informal sectors with a focus on employment and sustainable livelihoods.
* Rehabilitation of irrigation equipment, adoption of low-cost mechanization programmes, and promotion of integrated agricultural water management (AWM), such as smallholder irrigation schemes, micro-irrigation systems, rainwater harvesting and management strategies, and improved on-farm water-use efficiency.
* Reducing risk through risk financingmechanisms including weather-indexed crop and livestock insurance.
* **Natural resource management/conservation**

Enhancing resilience among poor, rural populations – most of whom are dependent upon small-scale agriculture and livestock rearing – requires acknowledgement of the critical nature of healthy ecosystems.[[72]](#footnote-72) Degradation of land, water and biodiversity from deforestation, overgrazing, over-exploitation of natural resources, and poor land management practices reduces the capacity of the natural environment to provide livelihood resources and ecosystem services to rural populations that depend on them.

As in many countries in southern Africa, use of natural resources forms the primary livelihoods base for the majority of rural households in Zimbabwe, where they are used to produce food and other goods for consumption or sale. These include land, forests, rivers, clay, and various types of animal and plant species for farming, forestry, fishing, production of non-timber forest products, food processing, handicrafts and other forms of rural livelihoods. Access to such resources is a key element of livelihoods security in rural areas of Zimbabwe. Conservation and sustainable management of Zimbabwe’s natural resources will help ensure longer-term sustainability of otherwise vulnerable livelihoods.

Traditional management systems are often less damaging to the environment[[73]](#footnote-73) and should be considered along with non-traditional systems to improve ecosystem health in resilience-building programming. Development actors can complement proven traditional resource management practices through promotion of integrated watershed management, farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR), drought-tolerant crop and livestock systems, integrated pest management, conservation and utilization of local genetic resources, breeding (crops and livestock) for local adaptation, and other climate smart agricultural practices.[[74]](#footnote-74) Ecosystem-based planning, including payment for ecosystem services (PES),[[75]](#footnote-75) can also help rehabilitate degraded natural resources and ensure the environmental sustainability of livelihood activities reliant on agriculture or other natural resources. Policies can support achievement of greater resilience by promoting development of feasible financial incentives for engagement of communities in environmental remediation efforts.[[76]](#footnote-76) Improved health and security of the natural resource base can also be facilitated by securing clear rights of ownership (and management) of land and water resources by communities and representative traditional institutions.[[77]](#footnote-77)

It should be noted that environmental degradation is not only exacerbated by extreme weather events (e.g., drought, flood, high temperatures) but also by increasing population pressure, both of which affect the carrying capacity of an ecosystem.[[78]](#footnote-78) Burgeoning population growth – and its impact on access to and availability of natural resources – represents a potentially slow onset shock that should not be ignored in resilience planning. Zimbabwe’s population is currently highly skewed; two-thirds of the total population is below the age of 25, and two-thirds lives in rural areas, though urbanisation is an emerging issue.[[79]](#footnote-79) A long-term perspective will be required to minimize any potential negative impact a future population explosion might have on Zimbabwe’s natural resources.

Interventions that contribute to resilience might include:

* Use of ecosystem-based planningthat enables improved access to and management of the natural resources upon which people depend. This may require regional approaches to address cross-border issues and ensure coexistence of livestock and wildlife, where relevant.
* Compensating communities for conserving landscapes and ecosystem services(e.g., biodiversity, water catchments, soil protection and wildlife)
* Use of natural resource management approaches, including in extractive industries, for food security, jobs and livelihoods.
* **Governance/political leadership**

Governance can be defined as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”,[[80]](#footnote-80) and includes a wide range of public, private, formal, and informal organizations, policies and processes that function at local, national and international levels.[[81]](#footnote-81) Good governance involves ensuring delivery of core functions (e.g., providing public services), fighting corruption, and ensuring accountability and transparency. Representative, responsive, transparent and accountable governanceis critical for enabling households and communities to exercise their rights, benefit from equitable laws and policies, attain sustainable food and livelihood security, and achieve greater resilience capacity in the face of potential shocks. Ineffectual governance (e.g., inefficient and/or inappropriate policies) poses a clear constraint to achieving greater household and community resilience. Common outcomes of policy and governance failures include conflict over natural resources, insecure land rights, and inadequate provision of services and infrastructure.

Creating the enabling conditions for effective governance is critical for resilience-building initiatives in that these structures and processes determine household and community access to resources, skills, technology, services, markets and information. Policies that strengthen existing local institutions, advocate for decentralized and participatory decision-making (including women), strengthen linkages between various levels of governance, and seek to address existing imbalances in power relations will enhance the adaptive capacity of communities by helping them anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from shocks and stresses.

Enhancing resilience in Zimbabwe through governance initiatives might also involve policy work aimed at bridging divisions between formal and informal governance systems and promoting complementary approaches to resource management, resolution of conflicts, adjudication and social development.

Reform of governance and institutional transformation is a long-term – and often difficult – process that may require many years of coordinated and concentrated effort by a range of diverse stakeholders.[[82]](#footnote-82) States that will not or cannot deliver core functions to its people, including the poor, present special challenges, especially to donors. Many funding mechanisms do not adequately address governance issues that result in structural food insecurity and vulnerability. Thus, increased donor assistance is not likely to improve such challenges until and unless appropriate changes in governance are made that can deal with the root causes of recurring crises. Through the ZRBF, donors can help facilitate political will, build strong state institutions and promote good governance to prevent recurrent humanitarian crises. Broadly, potential interventions might focus on:

* Building capacity for coordination and leadership of resilience building initiatives within Zimbabwe.
* Promoting decentralized and participatory decision-making.
* Strengthening links between local, district and national levels of government.
* Promoting integrated approaches to livelihoods security, DRR and CCA.
* Addressing underlying structural causes of food insecurity and poverty.
* **Peace building/conflict resolution**

Amidongoing political uncertainty and accusations of corrupt elections and assassination plots,[[83]](#footnote-83),[[84]](#footnote-84) Zimbabwe has also experienced conflict related to natural resource rights (e.g., diamond mining) and land reform.[[85]](#footnote-85) To bolster national peace infrastructure, the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) was established in 2013. UNDP has also trained over 5000 Zimbabweans in negotiation and conflict management.[[86]](#footnote-86) Climate change and other stressors may continue to negatively affect availability of and access to natural resources, which is likely to contribute to continued conflict and migration. Integrated peace building and disaster risk reduction efforts have been shown to increase resilience capacity of vulnerable populations by ensuring access to productive resources needed for maintaining livelihood security.[[87]](#footnote-87) In Zimbabwe, peace building and reconciliation efforts have helped promote a “cohesive and resilient society” through collaborations between communities, the government, private sector, CSOs and others.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Programming approaches for building resilience in Zimbabwe should prioritize creating and/or maintaining the enabling conditions required for peace building over the longer-term and may involve strengthening the institutional, structural, administrative and operational systems and processes comprising electoral capacity, provision of infrastructure (e.g., roads, markets, schools, communications) and basic services (e.g., health, education, security), investments in human capital, development of livelihood alternatives (particularly for the disenfranchised), and strengthening government, local/traditional authorities and the public sector in social services delivery, respect for and advocacy of human rights, equal representation of men and women in decision-making processes at all levels of governance, access to and delivery of justice (e.g., legal aid services), and institutional accountability.

* **Government capacity strengthening**

Effective and sustained engagement by government (and other actors) will require building their capacity to develop, implement, coordinate and monitor resilience-building initiatives, including technical capacity in climate change adaptation, peace building/conflict mitigation, DRR/DRM, and livelihoods diversification. In light of recurring shocks and crises, governments must have not only the political will but also the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to early warning systems, which must in turn be based on quality data collected at community, sub-national and national levels. Government capacity to collect and analyse data is also critical to building and maintaining resilience capacity over the long term.

* **Climate Change Adaptation/Disaster Risk Reduction**

Climate change adaptation (CCA) refers to the ability to anticipate and respond to the effects of climate change. CCA can be both protective in nature (e.g., preventing or minimizing negative effects of predicted climate change) or opportunistic (e.g., taking advantage of opportunities that arise from predicted climate change). Early adoption of well planned adaptation strategies can save money and lives.[[89]](#footnote-89)

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) or disaster risk management (DRM) strategies help people prepare for and respond to shocks, i.e., reduce their vulnerability to, and increase their adaptive capacity for dealing with, shocks.[[90]](#footnote-90) DRR/DRM strategies are preventive in nature and are therefore implemented *ex ante* – before a shock or stress occurs (e.g., crop diversification, use of drought-tolerant crops/livestock, weather-indexed insurance). However, mitigation and coping strategies are employed *ex post* – after a shock has occurred – in order to minimize its immediate and longer-term impacts. Common disaster mitigation strategies include use of household savings, labour migration, and reliance on community contingency plans. Unfortunately, vulnerable households incapable of meeting basic needs in the wake of a shock or stressor often employ negative coping strategies (e.g., sale of productive assets, reduction in quantity and quality of meals, over-exploitation of natural resources) that are detrimental to livelihood strategies and reduce household adaptive capacity and ultimately, resilience capacity.

DRR/DRM interventions should emphasize capacity building of DRR/DRM institutional frameworks at local and national levels and should support identification of effective risk reduction and adaptation strategies, comprehensive risk assessments, and development of community-based early warning systems and disaster-preparedness plans, with special consideration of CCA.

In Zimbabwe, programming aimed at enhancing resilience through improved CCA and DRR/DRM in vulnerable communities might involve the following:

* Building local and national capacity to analyse risks, shocks, and stressors (e.g., trends), particularly related to climate change.
* Strengthening the capacity of communities to take collective action to mitigate the effects of shocks and stressors (i.e., improved absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities), particularly through community-managed disaster risk reduction (CMDRR) approaches. CMDRR involves drawing on communities’ existing knowledge and skills to identify and plan responses to the range of potential hazards they may face, culminating in development of community action plans that reduce their vulnerability to shocks and stressors,[[91]](#footnote-91) as well as community-based contingency and emergency plans.
* Reduce risks through use of weather-indexed insurance instruments and community-based savings associations, which can be instrumental in helping vulnerable households – particularly those headed by women – cope with the impacts of shocks. [[92]](#footnote-92)
* Increasing local and national early warning capacity and systems, including in data collection and analysis.
* Promoting informed decision-making by addressing gaps in knowledge about adaptation and developing CCA platforms as 'one-stop shops' for Zimbabwe-specific information on appropriate adaptation strategies.
* **Access to basic services**

Application of a resilience lens to programming that seeks to improve well-being outcomes (e.g., food security, poverty, health) typically involves both demand- and supply-side approaches. Ten years of economic decline, coupled with a mass exodus of Zimbabwe’s highly-skilled and educated citizens (e.g., doctors), have significantly compromised the government’s ability to deliver many basic services (e.g., health care, education, sanitation services, roads, markets, communications systems). Lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation services is associated with common diseases such as diarhhea, as well as disease outbreaks such as cholera. Zimbabwe is off target to reach the MDG of halving the proportion of people without access to improved sources of water. Stark inequalities between urban and rural areas remain in terms of access to improved sanitation. Roads and transportation services are critical for moving products to markets. Thus, economic growth depends on the quantity and quality of basic services being delivered by the government (or other providers). Thus, resilience-building initiatives should strengthen government capacity to deliver basic public services, for example, support development and promotion of improved local and institutional capacity in WASH, health, education and other basic service delivery mechanisms. At the policy level, programmes should support the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies into local systems and policies, such as early warning systems.

* **Social protection**

Social protection programmes are typically targeted at chronically vulnerable populations and attempt to address both immediate and longer-term needs, typically through cash or food transfers in exchange for creation of physical, human, and financial assets at the household and community levels.[[93]](#footnote-93) They play an important role in enhancing resilience to shocks by effectively linking humanitarian and longer-term development outcomes and providing guaranteed support that allows households to increase their adaptive capacity (through asset accumulation or livelihoods diversification) during times of non-stress conditions while cushioning households from destitution during times of stress or emergency.

Transfers of cash or vouchers – either in place of or in combination with food assistance – have in many cases proven an effective means of addressing food insecurity while helping beneficiaries enhance livelihood activities and prepare for potential shock in the future. The reliability of cash and food transfers provided through social protection schemes provides poor households with more flexibility in the use of limited financial and food resources. Cash and vouchers can counteract erosion of traditional/informal safety nets and help stimulate local economies.Coordinated social protection schemes can also create economic opportunities for vulnerable households by linking safety net interventions with efforts to increase access to agricultural inputs, credit, skills training and other strategies for helping the poor accumulate, diversify and invest in assets.

Table 1. How social protection programmes help promote adaptation.[[94]](#footnote-94)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Social Protection Category**  | **Social Protection Instruments**  | **Adaptation and DRR Benefits**  |
| *Protective* (coping strategies)  | - social service provision - social transfers (food/cash), including safety nets - social pension schemes - public works programmes  | - protection of those most vulnerable to climate risks, with low levels of adaptive capacity  |
| *Preventive* (coping strategies)  | - social transfers - livelihood diversification - weather-indexed crop insurance - social insurance  | - prevents damaging coping strategies as a result of risks to weather-dependent livelihoods  |
| *Promotive* (building adaptive capacity)  | - social transfers - access to credit - asset transfers or protection - starter packs (drought/flood-resistant) - access to common property resources - public works programmes  | - promotes resilience through livelihood diversification and security to withstand climate related shocks - promotes opportunities arising from climate change  |
| *Transformative* (building adaptive capacity)  | - promotion of minority rights - Equality campaigns - social funds - proactively challenging discriminatory behaviour  | - transforms social relations to combat underlying social and political vulnerability  |

The effectiveness of using cash/vouchers versus in-kind food assistance varies. Food assistance can have greater impact on food security and livelihood recovery than cash in situations characterized by rapid currency devaluation and/or food price inflation.[[95]](#footnote-95) While social protection mechanisms are typically coordinated through national governments, civil society organizations and donors can contribute to greater resilience of vulnerable populations by complementing social protection schemes where they exist, or advocating strongly for their establishment where they do not.

Informal safety nets at the community level have traditionally been critical to smoothing food consumption and protecting assets among disaster-affected households.[[96]](#footnote-96) Unfortunately, many informal safety nets – particularly in disaster-prone regions – have continually deteriorated while the number of chronically vulnerable households continues to increase. Most communities have some access to informal safety nets provided by religious groups, social clubs, traditional authorities, and savings and credit associations. Informal safety nets are often more effective in dealing with idiosyncratic shocks (those affecting individual households) due to the fact that they incorporate community-specific knowledge and account for cultural, physical and economic differences among affective communities. They tend to be less effective than government-supported formal safety nets in dealing with covariate shocks (those that affect all members of the community).

Programming activities for building resilience should include:

* Development of social protection strategies and policies that ensure protection for the most vulnerable based on a clear understanding of existing biases regarding gender, age, and people with disabilities (including HIV/AIDS).
* Support for institutions engaged in social protection activities and for improving operationalization and implementation of systems-based approaches.
* Development and implementation of mechanisms and systems that develop and ensure social protection in times of stress and emergency.
* **Empowering women, youths, the elderly and disabled**

Women play a critical and potentially transformative role in social and economic processes at the household and community levels. Despite their potential, women continue to face cultural, political and economic obstacles limiting their ability to make decisions about agricultural production, their access to and decision-making power over productive resources, their control over use of income, leadership opportunities within their communities, use of their time, and most importantly, to control their reproductive health decisions (e.g., birth spacing, family planning).

Shocks and stresses contribute to or reinforce existing gender inequalities. Female-headed households cope differently to shocks and stresses than male-headed households. Building resilience capacity in the Zimbabwe context involves challenging the deep-rooted social inequalities that exist between men and women and ensuring that women’s voices are represented in decision-making over the long term. Gender-sensitive programming begins with a thorough analysis of the challenges, strengths and opportunities for change as perceived by men and by women independently. Addressing gender-disparity is a long-term process involving efforts at multiple levels, including implementation of gender-sensitive policies and programming at local, subnational, and national levels. A commitment to addressing gender inequality at multiple levels will be critical for all programmes seeking to improve long-term resilience of vulnerable populations in Zimbabwe.

Although progress has been made toward Millennium Development Goal on *Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women*, more work is needed, particularly ensuring inclusion of women in decision-making processes and reducing gender-based violence, which remains high in Zimbabwe. Although the government continues to advance work on incorporating gender issues into national development processes, implementation and enforcement of gender policies remain a challenge. Resilience-building efforts in Zimbabwe should help strengthen national efforts to introduce “gender-sensitive budgeting, legislative reform and increasing gender awareness that focuses both on women’s rights and women’s economic empowerment.”[[97]](#footnote-97)

Resilience-building programmes should also address gender and economic empowerment issues by focusing on the provision of skills training and greater employment/income-generating opportunities for the most vulnerable (e.g., women, asset-poor youths, displaced, the elderly, the disabled). Programming might also:

* Seek to ensure active and meaningful participation of marginalised groups and promote gender equality and social inclusion through, for example, establishment of platforms for participation of marginalized and disenfranchised groups, as well as engaging the media to help influence public opinion.
* Promote greater inclusion of women in community-based decision-making processes (e.g., water committees, community action plans).
* Support policy work to strengthen and improve enforcement of legislation on women’s rights and access to property.
* Supporting gender mainstreaming at both a macroeconomic and finance policy level as well as helping local authorities in the mainstreaming of gender into delivery of services at the local level.
* Building capacity of duty bearers to deliver on and protect women’s rights.
* Support capacity building for national gender mainstreaming and development of a national gender M&E system, including the capacity to collect and analyse relevant data.

# MEASURING RESILIENCE

To measure improvements in resilience in Zimbabwe, there is a need for **empirical evidence of what factors contribute to resilience, under what contexts, and for what types of shocks.** The ability to measure the relationship represented by resilience (i.e., the relationship be­tween shocks, responses, and future states of well-being) depends on the analysis of a number of substantive dimensions and structural features. Substantive features highlight the specific indicators considered and data collected so that insights related to resilience dynamics can be measured.

Causal frameworks are useful because they focus measurement activities and because they provide a

potential link between the logic of interventions and the organization of data analysis that follows measurement. *The Resilience Causal Framework* presented here provides a further organizational scheme in which the task of developingresilience measures can be conceptualized and implemented (Figure 4).[[98]](#footnote-98)

Figure 4. Resilience measurement integrated framework.



Substantive features comprise initial- and end-state measures, disturbance measures, and capacity measures. The indicators required to measure resilience fall under the following components: i) ex ante component (i.e., Initial states and capacities), ii) disturbance component, which represents shocks and stresses, and iii) ex post component that represents subsequent states and trajectories. Resilience measurement will be focusing on multiple scales (e.g., individuals, households, community, district/provincial, national and systems).

There are four key factors to consider in measuring resilience:

* Identify the well-being outcomes to be achieved and measure resilience in relation to these outcomes.
* Identify the shocks and stresses that individuals, households, communities and systems are exposed to and the and the severity and duration of these shocks and stresses.
* Measure the absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities in relation to these shocks and stresses at different levels.
* Identify the responses of individuals, households, communities and systems to these shocks and stresses and trajectory of well-being outcomes.

The following categories of indicators will be measured:

***Ex ante component:*** resilience capacity; initial wellbeing outcomes; and, initial vulnerability.

***Disturbance component:*** natural disasters; pest/disease outbreaks; political conflicts; and economic shocks/stresses.

***Ex post component:*** resilience capacity; wellbeing outcomes; and vulnerability

All three components must be understood in relation to contextual factors. The categories of contextual indicators include political factors, agro-ecological factors; and Cultural factors.

Structural and methodological fea­tures highlight the way in which data will be collected.[[99]](#footnote-99) Structural-methodological features introduce questions about the scale, timing, and types of measure­ment employed to measure resilience. How these dimensions of measurement interact is illustrated by the table below.

| Table 2. Analysis of resilience measurement practices |
| --- |
| **Orienting Questions** | **Potential Dimensions** | **Examples of Measurement Dimensions** |
| **Substantive Features of Resilience Measurement** |
| **Initial & subsequent state measures**What is the outcome of interest? | * Dimensions of well-being
* Contextual factors
* Systems
 | * Poverty, food security, health, social connectedness
* The contexts and systems that enable attainment of targeted outcomes
 |
| **Disturbance measures**To what set of conditions is resilience a response? | * Covariate shocks
* Idiosyncratic shocks
* Stresses
* Cumulative effects of stresses
 | * Catastrophic events, climate change, socio-political events, health events, agricultural events, economic events
 |
| **Capacities measures**What resources and responses are included as measures of resilience capacities? | Resources * Human-social
* Economic-financial
* Political-institutional
* Material-physical
* Agro-ecological
* Ecological
 | * Individual capacity, social cohesion, asset holdings and productive assets, markets, stability of government and institutions, physical infrastructure (e.g., roads, electricity), resources to support agricultural production, natural resources
 |
| **Structural-Methodological Features of Resilience Measurement** |
| **Scale of measurement**For whom and/or for what entities will the capacity for resilience be examined? | * Individuals
* Households
* Communities
* Institutions & governments
* National economies
 | * Individual demographic sub-categories (e.g., women, children, displaced persons, community), geographic sub-categories (e.g., urban, peri-urban, rural), institutional functioning, component of national economy (e.g., trade)
 |
| **Temporal aspects of measurement**At what points in time will data be collected? | * Frequency
* Specific timing
* Duration
 | * Quasi-arbitrary points (e.g., baseline, mid- line, endline), developmentally-sensitive, episodically-determined (e.g., occurrence of a shock event)
 |
| **Type of measurement**What type of data are included as part of resilience measurement? | * Objective and subjective
* Qualitative and quantitative
 | * Factual records of shocks
* Perceptual data on well-being
* Projective data on future states
* Rating scales, interviews, ethnographic observations
 |

Multiple methods will be used to collect the data, which will include quantitative, qualitative, objective and subjective data. In Zimbabwe, the following specific indicators are needed to measure resilience capacity:[[100]](#footnote-100)

* + **Economic Resources** (assets market access, supply chain efficiency).
	+ **Livelihood Strategies** (diversity across risk profiles, climate smart).
	+ **Risk Management Strategies** (risk exposure and perception, decision making and planning).
	+ **Human Capital** (education, skills and abilities, health and wellness).
	+ **Social Capital** (bonding, bridging, linking).
	+ **Technology and Innovation** (Agriculture, Tele-communication).
* **Service Infrastructure** (Roads and transportation, access to markets, water and sanitation, vet services, medical services, security).
* **Institutions and Governance** (coverage, structural integrity, effectiveness, conflict mitigation mechanisms).
* **Social protection** (focus and type, strategic aim, integration and duration).
* **Agro-ecological** (soils and water resources, natural resource management, cropping and grazing practices).

Other Indicators that can affect observed resilience dynamics are: gender, ethnic group, cultural identity, agro-ecological zones, livelihood groups, geography, and other spatial factors that affect shock exposure. These variables can help explain why resilience capacity varies contextually, theoretically and programmatically, and should be taken into consideration during analysis.

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