

Strengthened Resilience Among People and Systems

U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy Activity Design Guidance

This is one of several Activity Design Guidance documents for implementing the U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy. The full set of documents is at www.feedthefuture.gov and www.agrilinks.org.

Introduction

Resilience Integration in the U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS)

The U.S. Government elevated resilience to a core objective of the GFSS in 2016, driven by large-scale, acute food and nutrition emergencies and compounded shocks caused by large-scale climate change and conflict-related shocks and protracted crises, and increasing humanitarian need primarily in the Sahel and East Africa. Since then, the heightened risk environment required us to expand the focus on resilience to all GFSS priority countries and program areas, with continued emphasis on areas of recurring crises and large-scale humanitarian interventions. The GFSS 2022–2026 further enhances and integrates resilience across the strategy. As one of the three objectives, Strengthened Resilience among People and Systems is essential to achieving the GFSS objectives. Resilience approaches will need to be incorporated into GFSS Country Plans and layered and integrated into activities on the ground. It will need to be considered during GFSS program development, activity design, and implementation in a variety of contexts. This guidance document includes overarching principles, recommended approaches, and examples of crosscutting interventions associated with GFSS Intermediate Results (IRs) 5 and 6. Several programming practices are highlighted, followed by additional terminology and resources.

Terminology and Context

The GFSS is guided by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) definition of resilience: **“the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.”** Put simply, resilience is the ability to manage through adversity and change, without compromising well-being and losing productive assets and human capital. The concept of resilience is not specific to any sector, and this guidance takes the approach of integrating the concept of resilience and proven approaches into assessment, design, and implementation of the GFSS and related activities to improve outcomes. As outlined in Strategic Objective (SO) 2 of the GFSS, the resilience theory of change outlines a framework and illustrative activities for strengthening resilience within integrated food systems and nutrition programming to achieve and sustain the GFSS high-level objectives.

All Feed the Future countries are affected by some level of shocks and stresses, including major threat multipliers interrupting development progress. Building resilience is integral to achieving the GFSS goals of reducing poverty and hunger and sustaining positive development outcomes, and it is applicable in a variety of contexts in all Feed the Future countries. There is a heightened need for resilience programming to reduce the reliance on humanitarian assistance (HA) in countries and regions that are vulnerable to recurrent crises.

These include, but are not limited to, countries that USAID has designated as resilience focus countries (RFCs). (There are 10 Feed the Future target countries that are also RFCs. These include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, and Uganda.) Posts are encouraged to take the initial steps of understanding the risk environment and context to develop an integrated, cross-sectoral portfolio tailored to the local context.

Strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion is paramount to building resilience. Throughout the program cycle, posts should consider specific needs and capacities of poor households and communities, marginalized groups (especially women and girls), youth, and fragile geographies and contexts. To foster social inclusion and strengthen the resilience of all groups, design teams must understand how different groups experience shocks and stresses in different ways, what their capacities are, and how this impacts the system as a whole. Additionally, posts are encouraged to consider how conflict, violence, and fragility affect the context and current and potential future impacts on specific groups. Designers should consider intervention strategies that facilitate unlocking opportunity and building sources of resilience specific to the needs of these groups and geographies so that appropriate initiatives and measures can be integrated into programming, so these groups and influential actors can be engaged.

Please consult the following resources for additional technical guidance on resilience and terminology:

- The [USAID 2012 Resilience Policy](#) (a revised Resilience Policy will be published in 2023)
- [Resilience in Activity Design and Implementation Discussion Note](#) for detailed design guidance aligned with the program cycle (internal to USAID)
- [Programming Considerations for Humanitarian-Development-Peace Coherence: A Note for USAID's Implementing Partners](#)
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Conflict Integration will support the new crosscutting IR (CCIR) 9 in the GFSS
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Social Protection
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Integrating a Market Systems Approach in Programming
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Diversifying Livelihoods, Resilience, and Pathways Out of Poverty
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Climate Smart Agriculture
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Increased Sustainable Agricultural Productivity
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Investing in Livestock and Animal Source Food Systems
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Natural Resource Management
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Improved Water Resources Management for Agricultural Systems
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Finance: Unlocking Capital Flows
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Youth Empowerment and Livelihoods in Food Systems
- [ResilienceLinks](#) Training for a series of [online training](#) that provides an overview of resilience concepts and building blocks, and more advanced training on resilience monitoring, evaluation, and learning; sustainable poverty escapes; disaster risk finance; resilience and agriculture; and more. [ResilienceLinks](#), [ClimateLinks](#), [Agrilinks](#), and the [FSN Network](#) house the majority of USAID's resilience-related case studies, literature, and other knowledge management and learning materials

The Resilience Conceptual Framework

The Resilience Conceptual Framework (see Figure 1) shows the relationship among risk, sources of resilience, and well-being outcomes that guide program design and measurement. The starting point is a thorough understanding of the risk context, including the frequency and severity of shocks and stresses related to climate, conflict, economic conditions, and other factors, as well as who is vulnerable to those risks. Sources of resilience are what people, households, communities, systems, and/or countries employ and lean on when experiencing shocks and stresses. These sources of resilience can be strengthened through policy and programming and measured individually or as a group. The unit in question (e.g., household or system) is deemed resilient if well-being outcomes, such as food security or nutritional status, remain the same, recover, or even improve during and following a crisis.

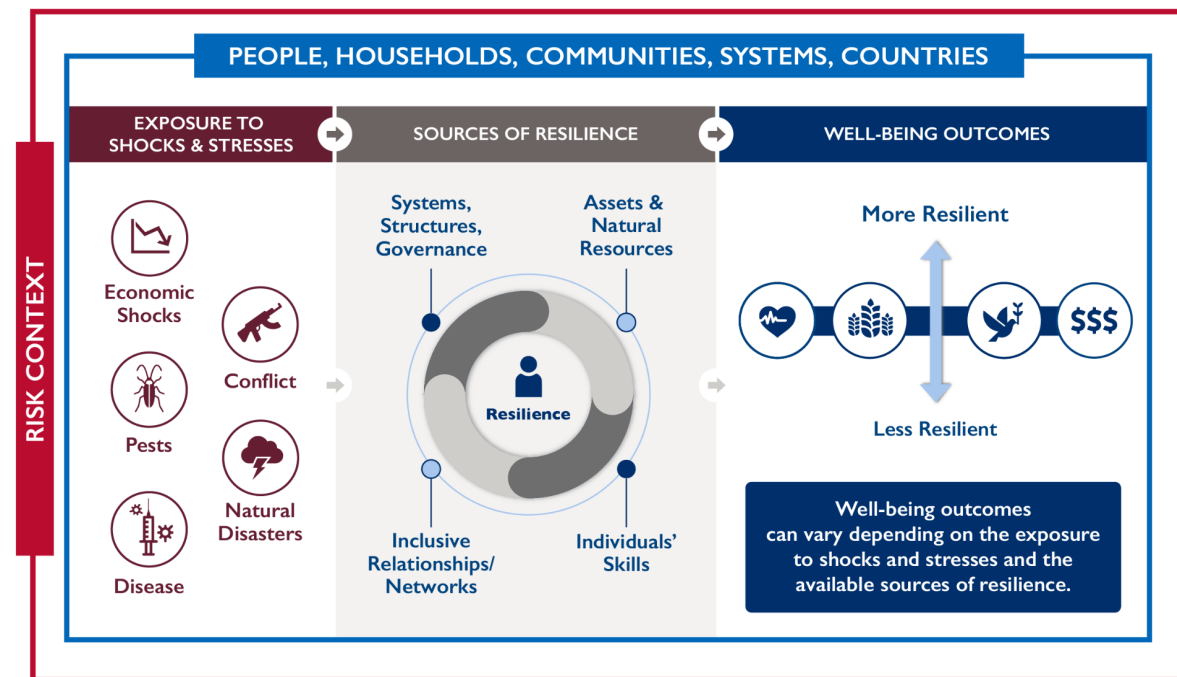


Figure 1. The Resilience Conceptual Framework (adapted from [TANGO International](#)).

Designing Activities

Using this Guidance for GFSS Country Plans and Other Planning Initiatives

Designing GFSS interventions to strengthen resilience is critical to sustainably reducing poverty, hunger, and malnutrition in the complex risk environments in which Feed the Future is being implemented. This section discusses the resilience approach to designing USAID activities. For more specific and detailed step-by-step guidance, posts are encouraged to refer to the [USAID Resilience in Activity Design and Implementation Discussion Note](#) (internal to USAID). Links to additional technical and operational resources are also mentioned throughout this document.

Strengthening resilience requires a multisectoral approach that cuts across all three GFSS objectives and CCIRs. The key building blocks of resilience and illustrative activities that may be added to other sector-specific or multisectoral program designs are outlined in IR 5: Improved proactive risk reduction, mitigation, and management, IR 6: Improved recovery from shocks and stresses, and long-term, systems-level adaptation strategies. Additionally, IR 4: Increased sustainable productivity, directly maps to SO 1 and SO 2. There is also a bidirectional relationship between resilience and nutrition and links to

natural resource management, climate resilience as summarized in CCIR 4, and governance and civil society. Posts may also consider how resilience is integrated in the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and aligned with other interagency-level planning documents, such as the USAID Climate Strategy, the Global Water Strategy, activity design, and support for locally led, resilience-related strategies, climate strategies, or other relevant initiatives.

Common Resilience Principles and Approaches

Our global resilience evidence base points us to a set of principles and approaches that are common to most successful resilience programming. Posts should consider these at a strategic level and in activity design:

- **Risk and resilience assessment.** Understanding risk and capacities is essential for resilience design, and can help practitioners better identify factors that influence resilience to shocks and stresses (See the [Risk and Resilience Assessment Guidance Note](#)).
- **Cross-sectoral approaches.** Multisectoral programs involving sequencing, layering, and integration are most successful in building resilience to diverse risk.
- **Operationalize Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) coherence.** In areas of recurrent crises, coherence at the HDP nexus is essential to foster transitions out of poverty toward sustainable and productive livelihoods and reductions in humanitarian need. See [Programming Considerations for Humanitarian-Development-Peace Coherence](#) for details.
- **Strengthen systems to build resilience and resilience of systems themselves.** Systems (e.g., governments, civil society, the private sector, universities, and individual citizens) and structures (e.g., policies, laws, social norms, and social protection systems) are essential to achieving, scaling, and protecting development outcomes.
- **Shock-responsive programming.** Posts should consider all available options for integrating shock-responsive mechanisms into program design, such as crisis modifiers, incremental funding, and adaptive management approaches. See guidance on [Approaches and Tools: Shock Responsive Programming and Adaptive Mechanisms](#).

IR 5: Improved Proactive Risk Reduction, Mitigation, and Management

Risk and Resilience Assessment Additional Considerations

- **Assess the local risk context and the mix of shocks and stresses** that can affect sustainable development outcomes. Consider the types, frequency, and severity of shocks and stresses, and how they are compounded. Examples of shocks include climate and weather hazards, conflict, crop and zoonotic pests and diseases, human diseases, and economic shocks. Longer-term stressors include demographic changes, climate change, desertification and degraded land, insecurity and fragility, depletion of fisheries, and political instability.
- **Fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV)** should be considered as a system that is a main driver of food insecurity. (See CCIR 9 and the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Conflict Integration.)
- **Consider who is affected by shocks and stresses** and the varying levels of impact on their well-being, sources of resilience, and their capacities, in particular, the effects on poor households, women, children, other marginalized groups, and people living in geographically vulnerable areas.
- **Assess early warning, early action, and preparedness.** Link programming interventions to and improve existing early warning information and preparedness, and identify and address gaps. Early action has been shown to be cost-effective by reducing future humanitarian liabilities. Posts should work through the local government systems and international organizations that are

responsible for leading humanitarian assessment, response, and recovery, and implementing social protection systems, where relevant. Examples of tools and approaches include:

- Tools and standards to support early warning, action, and preparedness include the [Famine Early Warning Systems Network \(FEWSNET\)](#) and [Integrated Phase Classification \(IPC\)](#) used by the national government, U.S. Government agencies, and development partners
- Recurrent monitoring surveys to conduct high-frequency monitoring of community-level food security, livelihoods, and coping systems indices
- Shock-responsive social protection systems
- Forecast-based financing (see the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Finance: Unlocking Capital Flows)

Insurance and Risk Transfer

Insurance is a strategic way of managing risk that allows individuals, households, firms, and even national governments to transfer risk to a public or private sector insurance provider; helps people manage and recover from shocks; and has the added benefits of helping to address risk aversion. Some examples of insurance include [index insurance](#), which pays out when an index (such as a drought measure) is triggered, regardless of whether actual losses occurred. Index insurance is often enabled by digital technology and is cheaper to implement than indemnity insurance, which pays out for actual asset losses. At the national scale, sovereign risk insurance provides governments with a means of financing humanitarian responses in the event of a large-scale natural disaster. Posts should evaluate options for integrating or bundling risk management insurance into programming:

- See resources developed through the [Index Insurance Innovation Initiative](#) under the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Markets, Risk, and Resilience.
- Review the World Bank's [Weather Index Insurance for Agriculture: Guidance for Development Practitioners](#).
- Reach out to the government ministries and international organizations responsible for disaster risk management, and the USAID Center for Resilience to assess opportunities for sovereign risk management insurance. Assess if the government is a member of the [African Risk Capacity group](#), the [Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility](#), other regional facilities, or accesses insurance from the World Bank's [Disaster Risk Management Development Policy Loan with a Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option](#).
- Posts should consider integrated approaches for supporting asset creation and insurance, increased access to savings, and microcredit to facilitate risk transfer, livelihood diversification, and climate resilience. The [R4 Rural Resilience Initiative](#) is one example of this type of integrated approach.

Financial Inclusion, Financial Services, and Climate Finance

Financial inclusion—including access to savings and credit products, insurance, and remittances¹—access to financial services, and strengthening financial service products are a critical source of resilience for poor and chronically vulnerable households.^{2,3} Posts should consider how financial products and wrap-around services, such as capacity strengthening, targeting systems, and related livelihoods support, can be designed and supported to reach marginalized and underserved households and specific groups, such as the poor, women, girls, youth, or others who are more vulnerable to shocks and stresses. Posts should also consider opportunities to support improved access to climate finance by countries and communities. Climate finance is critical to achieving the GFSS climate, sustainable productivity, and other goals, and is associated with a key target under USAID's new climate strategy. (Climate finance refers to local, national, or transnational financing—drawn from public, private, and alternative sources of

financing—that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change.) See the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Finance: Unlocking Capital Flows. Specifically, posts should consider:

- **Informal financial services:** Integrating informal financial services, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) can build sources of resilience through savings, financial literacy, accessing loan capital, diversifying risk and sources of income, building social cohesion and agency, and empowering women. VSLA networks can provide a pathway to formal financial services, and, in some cases, are a component of a graduation approach to reach the ultra-poor and marginalized and help them sustainably escape poverty.
- **Formal financial products and services:** Posts should support development of formal financial products and services, and facilitate or subsidize access to commercial credit to de-risk these services for marginalized and under-represented groups. Digitally enabled financial services, such as mobile banking, are one way of delivering financial services in areas with limited brick-and-mortar financial infrastructure, particularly if mobile network coverage and mobile phone ownership are adequate. Please see the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Digital Technology. Given the high percentage of youth in many countries, posts can also work with local financial services to incubate youth-centric types of entrepreneurship and empowerment. Programs may incorporate emergency loans, soft loans, or incentives to de-risk and encourage investments, especially to increase access to marginalized groups. For example, In Bangladesh, BRAC has provided medical treatment loans as a means of preventing households from liquidating productive assets to meet medical expenses during an illness.
- **Climate finance:** Posts should consider how to expand and strengthen host country access to climate finance, both public and private (where appropriate), while supporting improvements in the broader enabling environment for private investment and strengthening the capacity of local governments, communities, and marginalized groups to access climate finance directly. In particular, more attention is needed to enable marginalized groups and local governments to benefit from mitigation-related finance (e.g., carbon markets).

Asset Accumulation, Protection, and Management

Asset accumulation, protection, and management within the drought cycle and before and during other shocks is critical for resilience. This includes investments in sustainable, productive, and climate-resilient crops and livestock. Other assets that are critical to consider include land, physical assets, savings, and social assets. Asset diversification as a strategy includes maintaining a balance between productive and nonproductive assets that can be liquidated to meet immediate needs. Posts should consider:

- Early action to prevent productive assets from being sold or lost during shocks to prevent households from falling into asset-based poverty traps.⁴ Design teams must understand the different coping strategies employed by men, women, youth, people who do not own land, and marginalized groups.
- Invest in holistic asset protection approaches considering risks of preharvest and postharvest loss and waste, animal disease, sustainable natural resource management, as well as diversifying between consumption and cash needs to ensure some level of liquidity in times of need.
- Integrate economic inclusion strategies for women and other marginalized groups that typically have less ownership and control over assets and resources.

Social Capital

A household's social capital, or ability to lean on others during times of need, is a powerful source of resilience.⁵ This includes bonding social capital, or the horizontal links between family members, close friends, and neighbors; bridging social capital that connects communities and groups; and linking social capital that connects social networks with some form of authority.

A variety of interventions can strengthen social capital, tailored for women, men, youth, and marginalized groups:

- Agricultural cooperatives and VSLAs, for example, provide fertile ground for strengthening bridging social capital when they link previously disparate groups in a common enterprise. Because the majority of VSLA members are women, this also empowers and builds their agency and control over productive assets.
- Cash transfers, when made directly to women and girls, have been shown to increase education enrollment and retention, which in turn positively affects multiple domains of their lives, including confidence, long-term health, and productivity.⁶
- Vertical and horizontal linkages within value chains is also a form of social capital in which trust and resource pooling are used in order to accomplish the common goal of functioning and resilient commerce.⁷

IR 6: Improved Adaptation to and Recovery from Shocks and Stresses

IR 6 focuses on strengthening the ability of people and systems to recover from shocks and stresses, adapt to climate change and other shocks, plan for future shocks, and build transformative systems and capacities that lead to sustainable pathways out of poverty.

Livelihood Diversification

Livelihood diversification is a proven approach promoted as a strategy for increasing incomes and managing risk among poor and vulnerable households.^{8,9} Designers should note that as agricultural productivity improves, the sector tends to shed labor. The process of rural transformation involves labor moving to the rural, nonfarm economy or migrating to urban areas. Diversification out of agricultural production is also consistent with trends laid out in the GFSS and the complex risk context people in GFSS countries are facing. GFSS designers need to weigh a variety of factors when considering how to support livelihood diversification, pathways out of poverty, and resilience. This is further explored in the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Diversifying Livelihoods, Resilience, and Pathways Out of Poverty.

Social Protection

Social protection has emerged as one of the strongest anti-poverty, pro-women, and effective approaches to mitigate the impacts of shocks and stresses on poor and marginalized communities. While social protection is presented here under IR 6, given the long-term nature of systems strengthening and range of services that can be provided, social protection services and approaches, and in particular shock-responsive social protection, also contribute to the entire continuum from risk management to resilience to long-term livelihood transformation. Forms of social protection that are the most familiar to GFSS activity designers may fall into the social assistance, such as agricultural subsidies, or labor market, such as livelihoods, jobs, etc., category. What is now generally known as “Adapted Social Protection” builds on traditional social protection services, and more fully integrates social protection with agriculture, nutrition, education, natural resource management and climate resilience, disaster risk management and shock-responsive systems, and building social capital. The private sector, digital, and financial institutions also play a crucial role in strengthening social protection systems and service delivery social protection services. Posts can find more details in the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Social Protection, and should consider the following:

- Strengthen deliberate and measurable linkages between Feed the Future agriculture programs and national adaptive social protection systems designed to strengthen inclusion of the poor, women, girls, youth, and marginalized groups most vulnerable to shocks and stresses, while also increasing access to sustainable productivity, climate adaptation and mitigation services, nutrition-sensitive services, risk management, and health and education benefits.

- Strengthen the architecture of government-led social protection systems, such as risk management approaches described above, social registries, targeting, delivery and payment systems, coverage and benefits, graduation approaches, data management and interoperability, and shock-responsive mechanisms.

Human Capital, Aspirations, and Empowerment

Human capital is a function of several factors that contribute to overall well-being and productivity. The World Bank Human Capital Project¹⁰ measures human capital as a function of a child’s potential productivity at 18 years of age, and an overall country’s gross domestic product having had access to full, quality education, health, and nutrition. Prior generation investment in education, as measured by current generation educational attainment, is a powerful predictor of a household’s ability to sustain and even improve well-being in the face of recurrent shocks and stresses across a wide range of contexts.¹¹ The relationship between resilience and nutrition is bidirectional—a person or child that is well-nourished will be more resilient to shocks and stresses. More resilient food and nutrition systems can lead to a greater ability to access optimal nutrition.¹² Household and individual aspirations, expectations, and motivations all influence resilience outcomes.¹³ Evidence stresses the importance of including psychosocial factors in theories of change and points to three in particular (risk perception, self-efficacy, and aspirations) that influence adaptive capacity.¹⁴ To ensure long-term resilience, investments in nutrition, health, and education, as well as women’s and girl’s empowerment, are all necessary to decrease the intergenerational cycles of poverty, allowing future generations to reach their full potential of economic productivity, agency and self-efficacy, and social status. Posts should consider:

- Integrating interventions that build empowerment, aspirations, agency, and psychosocial support. The Bangladesh nongovernmental organization BRAC’s PROPEL toolkit¹⁵ provides guidance on designing a graduation program that integrates these priorities.
- Integrating gender and youth. The [Intervention Guide for the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index \(WEAI\)](#) is an excellent resource.
- Including activities that target improved literacy, numeracy, and job-readiness skills and consider targeting strategies and other approaches for integrating across sectors.
- Integrating nutrition and resilience considerations. See the GFSS Activity Design Guidance for Diets and Food Safety.
- Integrating [health systems resilience](#) priorities.
- Integrating [education and resilience priorities](#). See the [Transforming Systems in Adversity policy brief](#), the [Transforming Systems in Times of Adversity: Education and Resilience white paper](#), and the [Rapid Education and Risk Analysis \(RERA\) toolkit](#). A toolkit on integrating education and resilience will also be available in early 2023. More information is also available on [EduLinks.org](#).

Climate Adaptation

Climate change is devastating communities around the world. From more intense droughts and floods to increasing temperatures and rising sea levels, climate impacts are pervasive across sectors and geographies—disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations and exacerbating inequality and conflict. Climate adaptation builds the resilience of people and places to the impacts of climate variability and change. It helps people, communities, and countries anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to current and future climate impacts while fostering dignity and hope. This work strengthens broader adaptive capacity and harnesses the robust evidence that adaptation can save lives, reduce food and water insecurity, safeguard ecosystem services and livelihoods, and improve health, education, and well-being. Posts should consider:

- Carrying out required [climate risk management \(CRM\)](#) assessments (see page 15 of the [Discussion Note: Resilience in Activity Design and Implementation](#) (internal to USAID) for how to use mandatory USAID analyses to support resilience planning).
- Adding a climate lens to food and water security efforts by improving the availability, quality, and use of weather and climate information, and linking this to risk management and long-term adaptation planning.
- Helping countries to integrate climate adaptation considerations into governance, planning, and budgeting processes.
- Looking for ways that resilience approaches in this guidance and other GFSS Activity Design Guidance documents (e.g., Social Protection, Diversifying Livelihoods, Resilience, and Pathways Out of Poverty, Climate-Smart Agriculture and Food Systems, Improved Water Resources Management for Agricultural Systems, Natural Resource Management, Increased Sustainable Agricultural Productivity, and others) can contribute to adaptation-related outcomes.
- Seeking synergies and alignment with other priorities under the [USAID Climate Strategy 2022–2030](#) and the [President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience \(PREPARE\) Action Plan](#).

Rural–Urban Linkages

Rural–urban migration has led to the expansion of urban communities that are marginalized, food insecure, and highly exposed to risks such as flooding, drought, high temperatures, and, since many urban areas are coastal, high risk of sea level rise. Rural–urban linkages are also critical considering that: (1) rural–urban linkages provide key sources of resilience, economic and otherwise, for rural and urban populations; and (2) migration to urban labor markets is a common adaptive strategy for millions of people every year and can be a critical source of income and resilience for migrants and household members that may remain at home. Migration is frequently used as a livelihood diversification strategy in places that experience recurrent, large-scale, covariate shocks like droughts. Posts should consider:

- Integrating analysis of migration to and from rural–urban areas and the impact on livelihoods.
- Investing in planned migration and urban livelihood development in response to jobs, livelihood diversification, climate adaptation, conflict and fragility, or other drivers.
- Mitigating the negative impacts of migration and displacement on people migrating, as well as those left behind.

Programming in Practice

Kenya’s Ending Drought Emergencies (EDE) Framework: After a severe drought in 2011, the Government of Kenya (GOK) developed the multisectoral common program EDE framework to consolidate resources toward ending drought-related emergencies by 2022 in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Northern Kenya, affected by large-scale recurring humanitarian crises. USAID supports the EDE through the [Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth \(PREG\)](#), which has strengthened resilience in the face of recurrent, large-scale droughts and other shocks. PREG is a coordination platform that unites multiple USAID implementing partners, along with national and subnational government actors, Kenyan institutions, and resilience and development practitioners from other donors to leverage resources and generate a knowledge management platform. EDE and PREG integrate several resilience approaches: (1) strengthened national and subnational governance and community structures, including a high-level steering committee and substructures to implement the EDE, as well as devolved budgets; (2) strengthening local systems and collective action to leverage public and private resources; (3) multisectoral programming leading to strengthening sources of resilience through sequencing, layering, and integration; (4) increasing and protecting agricultural and economic assets; (5) diversifying

livelihoods; (6) improving integration of health and nutrition-sensitive outcomes; and (6) strengthening risk management and finance to protect assets. Building on the ongoing lessons of EDE and PREG, USAID is supporting GOK and nonstate actors to deepen a Kenyan-led, -managed, and -owned resilience system for multiple threats and shocks related to conflict, climate (e.g., droughts, floods, and rising water levels in lakes), disease, and pests.¹⁶

Psychosocial Sources of Resilience: A resilience evaluation in Ethiopia¹⁷ tracked psychosocial capabilities, such as aspirations and confidence to adapt, that are thought to give people greater resilience in the face of shocks. During the 2014–2015 drought in pastoral areas, people with a higher sense of control over their own lives were found to be less likely to engage in negative coping strategies, such as pulling children out of school, getting into debt, selling off productive assets, and reducing consumption. The level of self-efficacy (belief in one’s ability to succeed in a specific situation or complete a task) had a positive and statistically significant relation with people’s ability to recover from shocks and stresses. Similarly, data from the Sahel¹⁸ shows that households’ aspirations and confidence to adapt have a positive association with their food security and ability to recover following multiple shocks (drought, erratic rainfall, and insect and bird invasions).

Strengthening Resilience in Burkina Faso: Alimata Korogo is representative of a large number of smallholder farmers in Burkina Faso who have seen their modest assets or savings wiped out by drought or extremist attacks, and represents an example of household and community resilience, women’s empowerment, and individual agency. Since 2014 through the USAID-funded Resilience in Sahel Enhanced (RISE) program, Alimata was trained in improved farming, home gardening, health, nutrition, and literacy. She then advanced as a leader and took charge of a farming group of 14 women, and over the next three years, she expanded her work to include 57 farming groups, of which 37 became formal cooperatives, and soap making business. Unfortunately, in 2019, Alimata, her family, and neighbors had to flee unidentified, armed men who attacked a neighboring village. Alimata lost almost everything and became an internally displaced person. However, her own aspirations, perseverance, and diverse sources of resilience she had built leading up to this major shock enabled her to bounce back and rebuild her livelihood within and out of agriculture. She formed new women’s groups for income-generating activities, built her community, and with her profits, she was able to rebuild a house for her family, which improved the well-being of her family.¹⁹

SERVIR: [SERVIR](#) is a joint initiative among USAID, the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), partner countries, and leading geospatial organizations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America designed to use satellite data to address critical challenges in climate change, food and water security, water-related disasters, land use, and air quality. To date, SERVIR has worked with over 50 countries providing a wide range of services linking satellites to villages and partnership on the ground. For example, earth imaging and other tools are used to measure vegetation and forestry coverage, soil mapping, flood mapping to inform risk assessment, biodiversity mapping, disease mapping, village mapping, and land use planning. One use of data is to inform early warning systems and weather-index insurance to strengthen risk mitigation and transfer systems reaching highly vulnerable groups. Each of these services contributes to different resilience approaches. For example, through [SERVIR, USAID/Kenya](#) is working with Kenya’s Department of Agriculture to scale microinsurance, which over the past five years has increased from reaching 1,000 farmers to 1.5 million farmers to protect them from climate and weather-related losses. Currently, the program is expanding to more deliberately integrate gender considerations to empower women by considering specific needs of women, increasing access to insurance, and tailoring insurance products to meet women’s needs, and working with private sector partners to develop a gender certification for index-based insurance. The range of services that SERVIR provides are among a rapidly growing number of public and private investments to use the power of data to strengthen inclusive growth and build resilience to shocks and stresses.

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- ¹⁸ Feed the Future FEEDBACK. 2016. *Feed the Future Impact Evaluation Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) Project 2015 Baseline Report*. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- ¹⁹ This case is drawn from the draft of the Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced Endline Report, 2022 (forthcoming).

For further assistance related to these Activity Design Guidance documents, please contact ftfguidance@usaid.gov.