



11. Infuse resilience in all programming and projects

In response to Cyclone Idai in March 2019, CBM and partner Jairos Jiri Association worked to address food security and rehabilitation for the affected population, including persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups. ©CBM/ Hayduk

Investing in building and strengthening resilience has garnered much attention in both the development and humanitarian sectors, including in community development and DIDRR.

The objective here is to build and sustain projects that have stronger ability to weather stresses and shocks and to recover¹⁸. This process starts right from planning, and resilience needs to be reflected in all dimensions of community development. From projects on education, to housing, to rehabilitation and also advocacy, the key questions to ask as you go about planning what to do and how to do it are the following: (note: disaster information, including that from risk assessments may come in handy at this point):

- Can the planned programme or projects be impacted by hazards and to what extent?
- How strong and prepared are they to withstand shocks?
- Do they run the risk of collapsing?
- What will the losses be?
- What measures and/or adaptations need to be in place to ensure resilience?

When discussing resilience, the protection and strengthening of livelihoods is an important theme, but is not the only one. Resilience needs to be built into all programmes, for example those working on education, to ensure that this is not interrupted with a crisis event. It needs to be infused in health care and rehabilitation programs, and importantly in orienting families towards structures and systems that do not collapse.

Stronger livelihoods are not only a means of addressing immediate consumption, but also a critical safety net when it comes to disasters, for example by preventing a system from collapsing or by facilitating the ability to recover. Maintaining an adequate income generation, for example, means the ability to purchase adequate materials and strengthen homes so they can withstand shocks. Livelihoods need to be resilient enough to withstand hazards, and substantial enough to generate sufficient income to cover disaster losses. Livelihoods are also one of the main areas, if not the main one affected by disasters, especially for those engaged in agriculture and/or in close proximity to natural resources or who are dependent on these.

The box below lays out some points for reflection on resilient livelihoods and how to get planning for these. You will see that much will also depend on making use of contacts in other specialised areas and bringing them in:

BUILDING RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS: SOME POINTS FOR PRACTICE

Ask persons with disabilities what they would like to do and how and what they need, including accommodations, to ensure any activity is contextually and personally relevant and wanted, and not imposed from the outside. This is where [Income Generating Activity \(IGA\) Assessments](#) are useful, especially when these genuinely listen and learn.

With a changing climate, it is possible that traditional livelihoods such as cropping may suffer decreasing output and profits. Conducting a market analysis can lead towards the identification of new potential areas and promising value chains.

¹⁸ For more, see [PreventionWeb: Key Concepts](#).

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Work on supporting the adaptation of activities to be more accessible to persons with disabilities using new options and with input from a range of experts without forcing persons with disabilities into them. If you work in CBID, you will have much knowledge to impart in this process and to bring OPDs in. Remember that persons with disabilities are the real experts that can advise on 'solutions' to their own needs and should steer the process.

In most cases, persons with disabilities and their families may not only have one source of income as in a traditional job that can cover all costs. Instead, they are often engaged in multiple informal activities, frequently erratically and seasonally, in the bid to survive (e.g. casual agricultural labouring during harvesting). So, when introducing new livelihood activities, it is important to leave space for and to not interrupt existing ones.

Work to minimise barriers to livelihoods before and after a disaster e.g. infrastructural, physical, and attitudinal ones. This involves technical knowledge and advocacy with local and regional politicians.

Educate communities to show how even persons with disabilities contribute, and how their participation in the labour market ultimately benefits the whole community, including in building resilience to and recovering from disasters.

Provide training on livelihoods that are less strenuous and that can be performed by different people with different disabilities e.g. small-scale gardening, poultry farming or retailing.

Explore climate resilient livelihoods using modern and also high yield seeds.

Ensure there is a market for what is proposed: this implies the need to conduct a market analysis alongside an environmental analysis.

Where possible help provide or facilitate access to start-up capital and inputs, for example seed and fertiliser.

Look at higher value crops that are more resistant and explore multi-cropping possibilities.

Consider livelihoods that can be 'moved' during a disaster e.g. certain livestock which can ensure some or other productive as well as consumption potential.

Extend the portfolio of possible livelihoods beyond agriculture into areas that may be less volatile and exposed, for example the service industry and explore combinations of activities and earnings.

Consider group-based income generating activities: these offer the potential for collective knowledge and skills as well as risk reduction strategies and measures. For example, people with no disabilities can take on more physically arduous tasks, while persons with disabilities can be engaged in less strenuous administrative work.

Focus on people who are already working, and then include those who are not.

Lobby government extension workers and other specialists: open channels as well as contact so that these can offer specialised training to persons with disabilities.

Source: Adapted from Grech (2022)¹⁹

¹⁹ Grech, S. (2022) [Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction: Critical Insights and Good Practices from the Field](#). Cape Town: CBM & University of Cape Town.