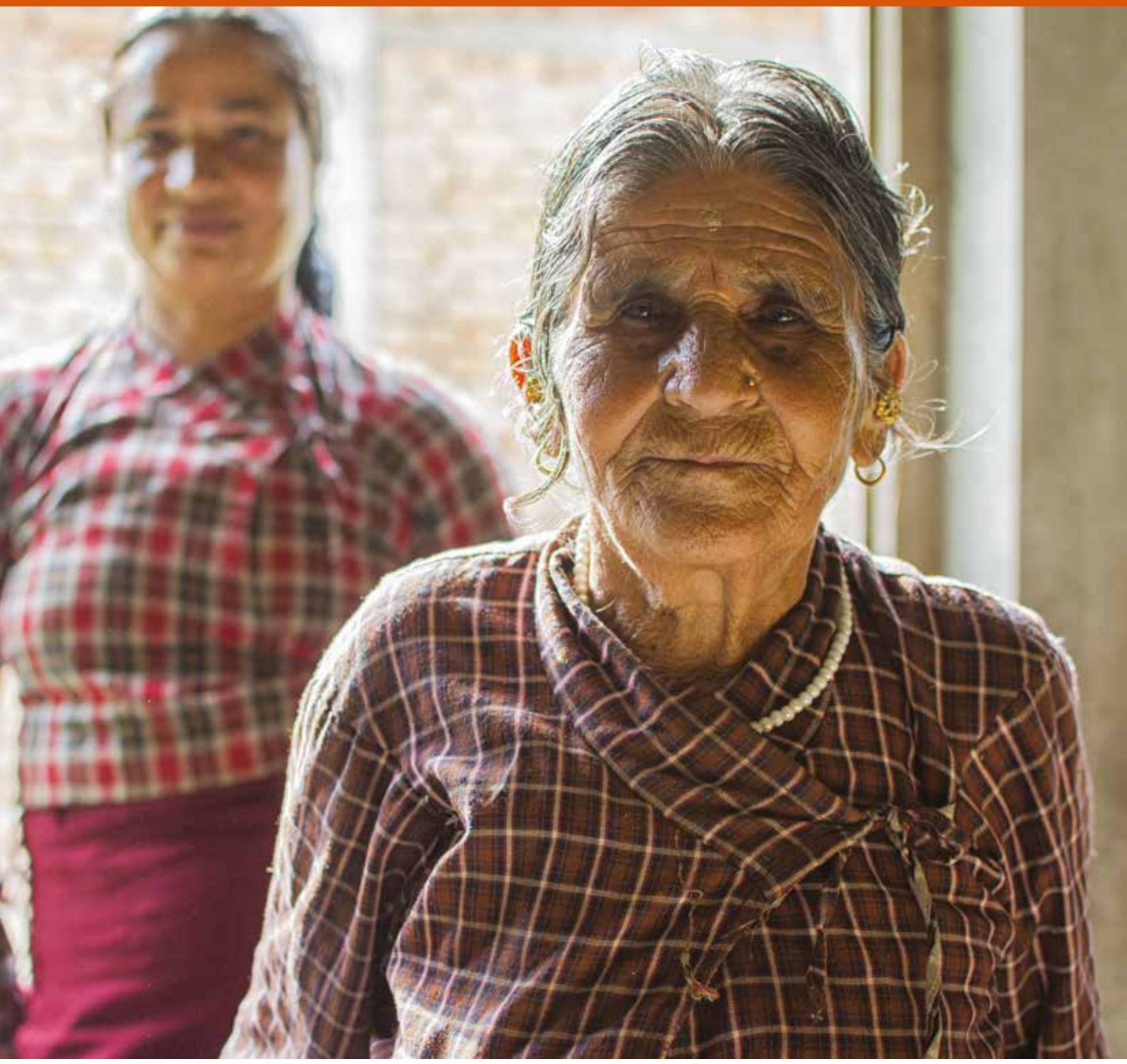
GNDR

Local Voices for Resilience



Lessons learnt from more than 14,000
conversations around the world

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List of Acronyms

AFOSC	Action for Sustainable Change
CDP	Center for Disaster Preparedness
CDRCR	Centre for Disaster Risk and Crisis Reduction
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DENIVA	Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
FSPK	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati
GEADIRR	Geotechnology, Environmental Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction
GNDR	Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction
HURADEC	Human Rights Awareness and Development Centre
LEMA	Local Emergency Management Authorities
LGU	Local Government Unit
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MIF	Micro-Insurance Facility
MP	Member of Parliament
NCO	National Coordinating Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSET	National Society for Earthquake Technology
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEEDS	Sustainable Environmental and Ecological Development Society
SSID	Servicio Social de Iglesias Dominicanas
STEC	Save the Earth Cambodia
STEP-UG	Support Transformation Effort Program - Uganda
TCDT	Tonga Community Development Trust
UGX	Ugandan Shillings
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VFL	Views from the Frontline
YEU	Yakkum Emergency Unit

1. What?

Introduction to *Frontline*

About GNDR

GNDR was launched in 2007 in the belief that civil society will have a greater impact in strengthening the resilience of vulnerable people by working together. Responding to the underlying concern of civil society organisations that the international frameworks for disaster risk reduction do not translate into effective implementation and change at the frontline – where communities vulnerable to disasters live and work – GNDR focuses on how to strengthen resilience at the community level.

Spread across 140 countries worldwide, our membership in excess of 850 organisations share a vision: a world of resilient communities where vulnerable people are able to prepare for, mitigate against, recover from and adapt to hazards and a changing climate.

What brings our members together is being joined in the singular purpose of enabling civil society to connect local to global and speak with a collective voice that drives action to reduce risk and increase the resilience of the most vulnerable.

Reducing disaster risks must start with understanding the reality of people most affected. This is the reason why GNDR members designed and implemented programmes such as *Views from the Frontline*, GNDR's flagship programme, and *Frontline*. These programmes set a bench-mark with more than 95,000 personal views recorded to date on the most critical local challenges to strengthening community resilience.

Between 2014 and 2018, civil society organisations in 22 different countries held structured conversations with 14,282 people from local communities, local civil society organisations, and local governments across diverse risk contexts. These participants reflected on their knowledge of critical shocks, their experiences of barriers to reducing risk, and what they identify as the most effective steps to address these obstacles. This information has been coded and collated into a global database that can be accessed and analysed by anyone. Civil society organisations have worked with communities to use the findings to develop local action plans and work with governments to bring about changes in national priorities, services, and systems.

This is, in a nutshell, the *Frontline* programme. *Frontline* has collected local information on risk and resilience and built the capacities of local and national actors to use this data to better protect those most vulnerable to disasters. *Frontline* has been designed to address the gaps and constraints in designing and implementing DRR actions, such as unavailability of local and disaggregated data about shocks and threats. *Frontline* provides a credible evidence base on local risk that can be disaggregated by community, gender, age and socio-economic status.

Such in-depth information gathered directly at the community level provides insights on how to build resilience in complex real life situations, and how to design cross-sectoral solutions, that become useful when working across sectors or in complex, fragile or informal settings.

The participatory nature of the programme addresses the challenge of building capacities and skills for resilience that sometimes lack at local level: leadership and collaboration are key elements of the *Frontline* methodology which enhance capacity development among local CSOs.

Moreover, by highlighting how local resources can be better mobilised and where funds should be prioritised, *Frontline* provides information on where to best allocate the scarce resources available for DRR actions.

A previous analysis of the *Frontline* data highlights five global findings on challenges and successes of making communities resilient:

1. All dimensions of risk affect people simultaneously.

Frontline surveys report that there is never only one threat communities face at the local level. Even when there is one predominant issue (such as earthquake risk in Nepal), there are also many other threats that people face at the same time. When zooming in to the local level, the diversity still exists. This shows that people are concerned about the impact of a whole range of threats and that we need to take integrated action to respond to them, rather than focus on them separately.

2. Small-scale and recurring threats are prioritised.

When looking at the community level, it is evident that small-scale, recurring threats are the biggest concern of community members. Community participants often decide to develop action plans to address extensive threats, prioritising them over high-impact but low-frequency events. In other words, small-scale is large-scale in local experience. However, the extent of these small-scale threats is often missed in national and global assessments and databases.

3. Disasters are a development issue.

When the *Frontline* findings on perceptions of losses in each country are compared with countries' positions in other large-scale risk and development assessments, we see stronger correlation with development-related indices, than risk-related indices; this is because the priority losses raised by communities link closely with the indices measuring development and poverty, rather than with the indices on large-scale natural hazards which have limited exploration of complex underlying drivers of risk. However, at the global, national and local levels we often observe disasters and development being addressed by different institutions, following detached frameworks, and with separate budgets.

4. Disaster impacts are local and context-specific.

Frontline can zoom in from global to national, subnational and even to the community level. By zooming in closely, one can observe that even areas that experience the same threats may experience very different impacts. Moreover, as much as the impacts of threats are specific to each locality, so are the views on the actions needed.

5. Local knowledge guides effective action.

Frontline consults local people on actions that can be taken to reduce risk and the barriers that they are experiencing. This information can be used to identify locally specific next steps to build resilience. Looking at perspectives across a region or globally can in turn give direction for critical regional or global steps to build resilience and achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework, SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

2. How?

The *Frontline* methodology

It all starts with a conversation...

The *Frontline* methodology starts with individual conversations with the holders of local knowledge: community members, civil society organisations, and local government officials. Each conversation is based on four basic questions:

- **Threats:** what are the threats you face in your community?
- **Consequences:** what impacts do these threats have on the lives and livelihoods of you, your household and your community?
- **Actions:** what capacity do you and your community have to take action against these threats?
- **Barriers:** what factors beyond your control lead to these threats?

These four questions have been asked to over 14,800 individuals from communities in different countries around the world, gathering thousands of individual conversations into local, national or global databases, combining all responses. This information can be analysed by gender, age, location, and socio-economic group, amongst other factors, through an online data visualisation tool.

What are we talking about?

Community is intended as a group of people connected through formal and informal governance and organisational systems in villages, towns, cities and megacities.

Community resilience is the ability of vulnerable people and their communities to protect and enhance their lives, livelihoods and assets when subjected to threats of all kinds. (There are many definitions of resilience. This is similar to definitions from USAID, DFID and the Red Cross.)

Threats do not just result from natural hazards, but can be environmental, social, economic and political in origin.

The *Frontline* methodology applies a number of steps that can be seen in detail below:

PROMOTING PARTICIPATION

A group of participating organisations are identified in each country. A national coordinating organisation (NCO) coordinates these participating organisations (POs) to conduct field work in key locations, providing training and guidance. These organisations identify particular risk zones as locations for the work.

CONTEXTUALISATION

Initial focus group sessions contextualise the *Frontline* language and method for the particular country setting, and establish a basic set of codes, which will be used to analyse the individual conversations.

CARRYING OUT THE CONVERSATIONS

Participating organisations agree on locations and select key respondents at each location. They conduct structured individual conversations with respondents.

CODING THE CONVERSATIONS

Participating organisations code the responses from the conversations and record profile data (age, sex, socio-economic status, disability…), using a simple data entry tool.

DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

Coded data is collated at the national level and included in a global database by GNDR, producing national data sets and adding to regional and global knowledge. Data can also be disaggregated back to community level.

VISUALISING THE DATA

The online data visualisation platform is used to access the data.

USING THE FINDINGS

Support is given for actors to use the findings for 1) local action planning, 2) advocacy and 3) partnership building.

To sum up, *Frontline* consultations gather valuable risk information that not only provide a better understanding of the local context, but also facilitate reflection at different scales. At the local level, this reflection facilitates dialogues and partnership, and provides evidence to guide local action plans. At the national and global levels, this information can be used to inform national policies to ensure that local realities are taken into consideration. The *Frontline* database can also be used as a monitoring tool for measuring progress in the post-2015 frameworks, including the Sendai Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

3. Why?

The benefits of using local knowledge for action, coalition building and advocacy

Local knowledge gathered through these structured conversations has been used by *Frontline* partners in designing local action, informing advocacy campaigns at the local and national levels, and in developing partnerships and coalitions for resilience.

Conversations were used to start a process of reflection and action within the community: formal and informal meetings were arranged where the results of these conversations were presented and people could discuss how to take action based on the findings of the surveys. This process enables dialogue between local organisations and the community, and thus results in increased awareness of one's threats and consequences.

As part of the programme, *Frontline* partners worked with the communities to design and implement evidence-based local actions, advocacy programmes or partnership building.

Local action consists of resilience-building activities, designed to increase a community's ability to cope with the threats identified through the *Frontline* surveys: such activities range from improve waste management, to micro-gardening initiatives, to planting trees.

Frontline partners have adopted various ways of implementing local action: while some have mobilised communities in using their own resources, others have received the support of other (sometimes national) partners, building on pre-existing relationships. Evidence-based coalition building has been effective in gathering stakeholders with similar interests to work together on one or more priority threats, and has often resulted in advocacy efforts directed at the local or national level.

Frontline partners have undertaken several advocacy efforts, sometimes focusing on specific issues (e.g. public information campaigns to address road accidents), sometimes on influencing DRR policies more in general (e.g. campaigning for increased budget for DRR, creation of specific DRR agencies, etc.).

While the methods differ, the main advocacy messages resulting from collection and analysis of local information are quite similar in all the programme countries: partners have been involved in asking for more policy and resources for DRR, greater inclusion of communities in policy-making and greater local autonomy, as well as a stronger focus on small-scale recurrent disasters. Although these messages do not result directly from the surveys' findings, the whole process has increased the credibility of the advocacy actions.

In some cases, where the campaigns were centred around specific issues, partners have based their advocacy message on the evidence from *Frontline*, and have been asking for the prioritisation of the threats identified by the communities.

The section below is based on the analysis of experiences from *Frontline* partners on using local knowledge, and highlights some positive outcomes of integrating local evidence in action, coalition building and advocacy.

SENEGAL

Increasing Partnership Building for Community Resilience in Senegal

Scorecards developed by GNDR and partners identified gaps in collaboration between governments and CSOs and the consequent gaps between national DRR policy in Senegal and DRR practices on the ground.

To address these gaps, advocacy activities led by Shalom International focused on facilitating dialogue between government officials and other village-based stakeholders on disaster prevention and mitigation strategies along with promoting dialogue with relevant actors on implementing the global frameworks. The advocacy team also worked to mobilise local CSOs and platforms to strengthen their advocacy capacities.

As a result of the initiative, many local CSOs have increased their capacity to identify relevant stakeholders (primarily government ministries) to develop partnerships with. These partnerships have provided an entry point for opportunities to raise awareness and train members of parliament in considering DRR in implementing policies.

1 Peer-to-peer learning and knowledge-sharing

Knowledge-sharing and learning are important "spill-over" effects of collaboration in local action or advocacy. Different actors bring to the table different skill sets and knowledge that are shared and that benefit all. Capacity development programmes and knowledge exchanges have been set up in several case studies as a result of collaboration in using local information for action.

The community action groups, formed in East Delhi, ***India,*** as a result of the campaign for DRR led by the Sustainable Environmental and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS), were also the participants of capacity development workshops to enhance the community's understanding of local issues and local action.

The network that was formed by the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) and the Human Rights Awareness and Development Centre (HURADEC) in Nepal to undertake joint advocacy activities, has also been beneficial for members to get to know and share experiences, learnings and challenges. It is also active in collecting more information on its membership: resource mapping is being conducted to map out the areas where organisations are active, in order to enhance the knowledge of the local context and also avoid duplications.

Frontline activities in ***Senegal*** had a spill-over effect of an increase in the attention that communities pay to environmental issues: the implementation of land rehabilitation projects has increased the community's understanding of the importance of good land use planning and environmental protection.

2 Empowerment of communities and marginalised groups

Evidence-based actions are more likely to be owned by the communities, and result in increased effectiveness, as implementation is taken up by all society groups. Ownership derives also from inclusion and collaboration in the decision-making process, from early stages to implementation.

The *Frontline* experience highlights that ownership has a double effect, as it not only increases effectiveness of local action, but it also instils a stronger sense of empowerment in groups who traditionally felt "powerless".

The sense of empowerment, resulting from the recognition that the change pushed for is happening, enhances engagement in similar activities. This is more likely to happen at the local level, where advocacy actions can have a more direct effect, given that they are often more concrete asks and change can be seen within a shorter term.

For example, communities in ***Kiribati*** who took part in the discussions for improved waste management felt confident enough to approach private businesses and request them to support the activities by providing free transport for the clean-up work. The campaign led by the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati (FSPK) has opened new opportunities for local communities, governments and businesses to collaborate towards improving living conditions for all.

The experience in ***India*** shows that involving a wide range of actors, including volunteers and youth, has a ripple effect: the community groups have gained confidence and started taking more initiative, and this is inspiring others to join the groups and contribute to the initiatives, building ownership of DRR measures in the community. Youth and children are very passionate about the community groups, and have gained confidence in voicing their concerns to a wide public. The project has also helped bring cohesiveness among the community.

This is also the case for communities in ***Kenya***, who have now a better understanding of the threats they face and feel empowered to mobilise local resources to reduce the impacts of these threats. They also took advantage of the election period to reach out to political leaders themselves, requesting them to prioritise disaster reduction in their manifestos and to support grassroots organisations in their DRR efforts.

This is the case for women in the Chandragiri municipality of Kathmandu (***Nepal***), who have learned technical skills to implement non-structural measures for earthquake preparedness:

NEPAL

Siloes and Building Bridges for DRR in Nepal

***Frontline* survey data identified earthquakes as the primary threat to communities in Nepal. The National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET), the Human Rights Awareness and Development Centre (HURADEC) and partners have also noted a lack of coordination among organisations working on post-earthquake reconstruction in the country.**

In order to raise awareness surrounding how to reduce the risk of disaster if an earthquake hits Nepal, NSET, HURADEC and partners organised a number of interactive programmes, including an orientation programme on earthquake safety and earthquake-safe construction.

HURADEC also facilitated a series of meetings in which DRR stakeholders discussed how to increase collaboration with each other and local government. This led to the formation of a network of organisations working in DRR to address disaster risk collaboratively.

This newly-formed network has served as a forum in which DRR stakeholders can share experiences, learnings and challenges. The network members meet monthly as needed. They have conducted stakeholder resource mapping to map out the areas in which the different organisations work, including the nature of their work in order to avoid duplication. They have also mapped out existing resources, identified additional resources that may be required and developed back-up plans to help plan for future risks.

TONGA

Stronger Together:
Empowering Women to Develop Resilience to Disasters in Tonga

Local data in Tonga have identified women and girls as among the most vulnerable to disasters. As a result, NGOs have identified the need to equip them with the right resources and skills in order to increase their resilience to disasters. These NGOs agreed that women and girls are the basic agents of change within their families, communities and society in general. Thus, they decided to develop an advocacy initiative that focuses on women and girls and equips them to influence their communities.

In August 2017, the Tonga Community Development Trust (TCDT) hosted a workshop for women and girls. Workshop participants discussed the importance of diversity and inclusiveness of all people, regardless of their background and circumstances. TCDT facilitated a discussion on disasters and how to mitigate their impacts. Conversations at the workshop also took place surrounding the concept of alternative livelihoods and how there are means of earning an income outside of the traditional reliance on agriculture, which often leaves families committed to repaying loans and consequent financial hardship. As part of the workshop, women were taught how to make fans and dye-dye wraps, both of which are popular commodities, especially for the tourist industry.

As a result of the workshop, women in Tonga have learned new skills that can provide additional income to their families. They have also been empowered to build resilience to disasters in their communities.

they are now implementing these measures outside their community, and this led them to feel confident enough to start engaging in other income-generating activities, outside their traditional activities.

Getting the local government and CSOs together to discuss the flooding issue in Lower Motowoh, ***Cameroon***, had the effect of increasing their sense of ownership of the action agreed upon: every actor was included in the discussions from the very beginning, and had thus the possibility to express their views and concerns, and this resulted in a joint solution that responded to the needs of all.

3 New opportunities for advocacy and action

Several *Frontline* experiences resulted in the opening of new windows of opportunity for the programme partners, in terms of possibility of scaling up their actions or engaging in similar actions with more or different actors. Evidence-based activities provide a credible basis for stakeholders to engage with, and at the same time allow for communities in similar contexts to recognise the value of the activities and become likely to replicate them.

Action for Sustainable Change (AFOSC) in ***Kenya*** had initially focused its advocacy campaign in one county: they established local coalitions of women, youth groups and community-based organisations who undertook lobbying efforts targeting county officials, local MPs and others. This successful formula was replicated at national level, where like-minded stakeholders were brought together under the leadership of AFOSC and lobbied together for the development of a platform dedicated to address the priority threats identified by the *Frontline* surveys. 14 CSOs agreed to establish a national network for change, through which they would jointly define priorities and advocacy campaigns addressing the whole country. They also leveraged the opportunity of tying their advocacy campaigns to the upcoming elections: the campaign included messages for peaceful participation in the election process, among other messages related to resilience. AFOSC also worked to encourage politicians to include DRR concerns in their electoral campaigns and political manifestos.

Local CSOs in ***Senegal*** have witnessed the opening of new windows of opportunity as a result of their advocacy efforts to foster DRR action and bridging the gap between policy and practice. By getting together, CSOs have identified relevant stakeholders to develop partnerships with, and these new partnerships have provided entry points for new awareness raising opportunities (including DRR training for members of parliament).

The work done by the Center for Disaster Preparedness in the ***Philippines***, who is heavily engaged with the national government to push for legislative change, has proved its scalability not in geographical terms, but in terms of stakeholder engagement. A thorough understanding of government mechanisms, together with insider support from political champions, has allowed the campaign leaders to identify allies and opponents: through this exercise, the partners have committed to discuss their priorities with local government units and other allies in Congress.

Save the Earth ***Cambodia*** (STEC) has built its advocacy campaign on the results of a previous local action that was designed and implemented based on the results of *Frontline* surveys. STEC had found that gender mainstreaming in resilience was one of the main elements for prioritisation, and decided to set up a micro-insurance facility that was gender-sensitive and where at least 50% of the decision-making positions were held by women. MIF staff was trained on gender mainstreaming and DRR, becoming a powerful mechanism for dissemination of disaster risk management awareness campaigns, targeting households and local authorities.

KIRIBATI

Vulnerable Voices:

Enhancing Collaboration to Increase Resilience in Kiribati

Kiribati is threatened by coastal erosion, which is limiting the amount of land available to communities which depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. There are also issues surrounding a lack of land rights for indigenous landowners, as the government leases the land. Furthermore, as a result of poor enforcement of land management, people are building homes anywhere, which is leading to increased solid waste pollution and poor sanitation and hygiene.

As a result of these issues, the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati (FSPK) led a *Frontline* advocacy campaign with community leaders that focused on cleaning up the polluted areas and tackling coastal erosion. The initiative involved meeting with government stakeholders to discuss constructing a sea wall to tackle coastal erosion and to seek support for the construction of community toilets and water systems. At this meeting with the government, the conversations focused on the issues surrounding coastal erosion and how the community can get support in the form of both technical advice and material resources. There was also mention of the types of services the government can provide and the processes around getting the requested support.

As a result of this meeting with government officials, communities were empowered to approach small businesses about the provision of free transport to help them complete activities surrounding cleaning up the solid waste in the area. This waste was then used to construct a sea wall to tackle coastal erosion.

INDIA

Turning Voices into Action in India

Rapid urbanisation, decreased vegetation cover, changes in land use and greater climate variability are leading to changes in the distribution of the population and posing new risks and vulnerabilities in eastern Delhi, India. Development is haphazard, lacking proper services including a lack of safe water and sanitation facilities, open drainage and a lack of proper solid waste management. Furthermore, this poor urban planning coupled with unprecedented growth has led to many informal settlements in the district. Though there is a constant threat of flooding or earthquakes, data has found that disaster response to date has been largely reactive rather than proactive.

SEEDS has established a multi-stakeholder Citizen's Forum to foster local leadership and build capacities for implementing the global frameworks. Members include members from resident welfare associations, market associations, youth volunteers, local community-based organisations and local community leaders. The Forum aims to address local issues related to reducing disaster risk and bridge the gap between local government and communities in order to turn policy to action.

Forum members work closely with communities living in informal settlements in the most vulnerable parts of East Delhi. These communities have created community action groups, with participants including youth, women, children, the elderly and local influential members of the communities. Capacity building workshops have been organised with these community action group members to enhance their knowledge, build their capacities and enhance social cohesion so they are better able to identify local issues and take action to reduce the risks their community faces.

The Citizen's Forum, as a platform between communities and local government, has strengthened the process of building urban resilience. Local government has become more receptive to the needs of communities, who now have direct access to their local governments for voicing concerns and ensuring that joint local action is taken.

As a result of the capacity building activities, the community action group volunteers have gained confidence and started taking initiative. They now play a vital role in raising awareness and tackling disaster risk in their communities. Furthermore, this volunteering is creating a ripple effect; it is inspiring others to join the effort, building ownership of disaster risk reduction in the communities.

KENYA

Kenya civil society join hands to address drought, deforestation and insecurity

Action for Sustainable Change Kenya (AFOSC Kenya) organised a community meeting in Mandera West County to discuss how to address identified threats through local action and advocacy. Local communities were sensitised on the outcomes of the *Frontline* survey and mobilised to conduct low-cost, feasible actions to build resilience to disasters. Local coalitions composed of women and youth groups and community-based organisations were established to build a movement for change at the sub-county level.

These groups, with the support of AFOSC Kenya, undertook lobbying efforts targeted at the county officials, local Members of Parliament and other stakeholders to raise awareness on local disasters using the evidence generated in the *Frontline* Survey. This included seminars, "peace caravans", and live talk shows. The efforts to build a network at the sub-county level were later expanded to build a nationwide network for change, when 14 civil society organisations were mobilised to define priority disaster events and a joint advocacy plan to bring realistic and desired change.

4. What works?

Success factors from *Frontline* partners around the world

Frontline partners involved in the implementation of the programme have worked throughout the years to collect experiences from their communities with the aim of sharing good practices, successes and challenges in using local information for action and advocacy at local and national level.

This publication reviews 21 case studies from countries around the world, collected by *Frontline* partners, describing the experience of communities in using local information for action, coalition building and advocacy. Each case study has been analysed to identify success factors; some key messages were then drawn from this analysis, aimed at highlighting what makes for an effective action or campaign based on local information.

The case studies report stories from local civil society organisations who worked actively in these past three years to gather, analyse and use local information according to the *Frontline* methodology. Each organisation mentioned in the case studies of this publication has collected a quantity of primary data that is available for consultation online on the *Frontline* website. Reports and more thorough case studies for each country where *Frontline* has been rolled out are also available at the website's library.

A database of all available local data will continue to be populated with information that GNDR members will gather through implementation of other projects, such as *Views from the Frontline*.

Principles of Advocacy

Flexible. **Circumstances can change very quickly. Therefore, it is important that your advocacy initiative is able to change when necessary. Your plan needs to have flexibility built into it, rather than being rigid, so that it can adapt with changing scenarios.**

Credible. **Data, stories, photos and other forms of evidence are essential to giving credibility to the process and strengthening your advocacy initiative in two different ways:**

- **You can use local evidence to help you better understand the problem at hand and check that you are asking for the right change.**
- **Supporting your call for change (your "ask") with appropriate evidence gives credibility to you and your proposals.**

Collaborative. **You are unlikely to be the only organisation that wants to see change. There may be others within the development, humanitarian, disaster risk reduction, or climate change fields that want the same thing. By joining up and working together you can utilise each other's ideas and resources and have more of an impact. Your voices are louder together than apart.**

Focused. **Your advocacy will be much more efficient if it remains focused throughout the process. Whether it is your overarching goals, your theory of change, what you are asking of decision-makers, the messages you are saying, or the targets you want to influence, you need clarity and simplicity all the time.**

Strategic. **Advocacy should be seen as a process that requires a plan. Isolated or ad hoc advocacy initiatives are less likely to have an impact. Instead, with a plan based on a solid understanding of the issues, that takes into account the context and the capacities of your partnership, and that is built on a clear goal and theory of how things will change and goals, an advocacy initiative is more likely to succeed.**

Context-specific. **It is not possible to produce standardised recipes for success in advocacy. The process is extremely context-specific. The enabling environment, the decision-makers and the influencers, your partners, your own individual and organisational capacities, the timing, and your supporters are just some of the variables that will make each advocacy initiative unique. The key is to adapt tools to your context, taking into account these variables.**

(Source: *Frontline* National Advocacy Toolkit)

1 Leveraging knowledge of the unique local context

Frontline programme partners have highlighted the value of local knowledge in improving the understanding of threats, root causes and barriers as perceived by communities. The local context is usually very complex, as communities tend to face a wide range of threats all at the same time. These threats are often linked in terms of what are the causes, what consequences derive from them, or what obstacles communities face in solving them. The *Frontline* methodology, by engaging in structured conversations with individuals from the community, provides information directly from those who are most affected by these threats, and who know best the local realities.

Local information can be used to design action plans, which should always take into consideration the local solutions identified by the communities. Thanks to the insights provided by the analysis of local information, actions can

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Formation of Local DRR Committees to address underlying drivers of risk in the Dominican Republic

Faced with the impact of flooding, the Dominican Republic has created national, sectoral and local emergency plans. The challenge is that beyond emergency response, many of the consequences of flooding at the local level reflect issues of pollution, waste management and vulnerability resulting from poverty, and plans have not been developed to address these consequences. *Frontline* findings suggest a lack of coordination by both local authorities and local communities, and propose local action to strengthen awareness, collaboration and coordination. As a result of these findings and recommendations, meetings have been organised by Servicio Social de Iglesias Dominicanas (SSID), a national NGO, to bring together communities, leaders and local authorities. Local Disaster Risk Reduction committees are being formed, which are identifying laws and policies which can be used to improve local risk reduction. While large disasters, such as the mudslides and floods which struck Jimani in 2004, attract national response, recent *Frontline* findings suggest that localised threats, for example water pollution in the Jimani urban area, are a more regular concern. It is these locally specific threats that the Committees intend to address.

UGANDA

Building resilience through Community Savings Associations in Uganda

In Namabasa, Uganda, the community members identified that recurrent floods are their main priority, regularly causing losses of property, lives and crops. DENIVA, a network of indigenous populations, worked with STEP-UG to undertake the surveys and organised a community feedback session to design a local action plan. The 200+ meeting participants, which included women, children and youth, and persons with disabilities, identified that a lack of local funding was holding back risk reduction actions. Therefore, as a group they decided to form two village savings associations to collect money to be used to prepare for floods in emergencies. Each Saturday when community members deliver their savings of UGX1000 (around US$0.35), they take the opportunity to chat about issues affecting the community and potential solutions. Through the savings, communities have been able to purchase seeds for storm resistant plants and plant local tree species to act as a barrier to storms.

"We did not know that there are certain things we can do on our own to reduce disaster risks. But with training from STEP-UG and DENIVA we realised that if we planted trees we would reduce the blowing away of our roofs whenever storms come." Community member

It has further opened the minds of the community in terms of using their own local resources to respond to their day to day threats without necessarily waiting for government or development partners. With a clear plan and drawing on each other's skills, the community has been able to cause change.

be adapted to the uniqueness of the targeted local context: this in turn improves the likelihood of it being effective and taken up by the entire community.

At the same time, evidence makes advocacy campaigns more credible and context-specific, essential for effective advocacy. In the cases where decision-makers are elected government representatives, bringing up the voices of their own constituencies is a powerful tool: governments work for their citizens, and responding to citizens' need is their primary responsibility. At the local level, advocacy directed at government representatives from a specific geographical area (e.g. members of parliament, governors, etc.) tends to be more effective when backed by evidence coming from communities living in that same area. When designing an advocacy activity, local knowledge should be used as a basis for planning the activity roll-out. It should inform the design of advocacy activities and "packaging" of the main messages in the most effective way.

In the ***Dominican Republic***, for example, the information collected through these interviews by Servicio Social de Iglesias Dominicanas (SSID) highlighted that actions previously taken to address the risk of flooding were not effective in addressing it. Local action was previously focused on developing emergency plans; the survey results, however, show that flooding is a consequence of issues related to pollution, bad waste management and, more generally, poverty, while the plans previously developed did not address any of these root causes. This led to a change in local DRR action, shifting away from emergency preparedness, and focusing more on development work related to the issues previously identified.

Disease and flooding, the two main threats highlighted by local communities in Kolda, ***Senegal***, are the result of a mix of causes, including climate change and environmental degradation. Climate change has led to extreme events that put additional stress on agriculture production, and this in turn results in food insecurity and water scarcity leading to malnutrition and diseases. This knowledge was beneficial in planning actions that would tackle all these issues in a holistic manner.

Local information also provides great insights in situations where the main threats are well-known by all communities, such as in ***Nepal***: here,

INDONESIA

Bringing Local Realities and Local Voices into Urban Development Policy Discourse in Indonesia

Frontline **surveys identified environmental degradation as one of the greatest threats to communities in Indonesia. This is partly as a result of a lack of consideration for DRR in people's behaviours. For example, many informal settlements are built in high-risk areas such as along riversides. As a result, improving urban settlements is one of the development priorities in Indonesia's National Development Agenda.**

As part of the *Frontline* advocacy initiative, Yakkum Emergency Unit (YEU), in collaboration with the Yogyakarta DRR Platform, academia, CSOs, community forums and media, organised a seminar and roundtable discussion with a wide range of stakeholders. The aim of this meeting was to facilitate the sharing of different perspectives on issues related to riverside slum settlements, in addition to information about the current strategy and mechanism to upgrade the slums. Participants also discussed how multi-stakeholder collaboration in implementing the global agendas at the local level could be strengthened.

An awareness-raising exhibition was also organised, open to the public, featuring photo displays of riverside problems and community-based initiatives, in addition to student ideas for development in the form of riverside planning architectural scale models and education games, and community resilience practices such as waste banks, aquaponics and water purification installations. This exhibition allowed visitors to get involved in building a sustainable riverside area through donating 200 banyan trees and vegetable seeds fur urban farming. Donations were also given to the Riverside Community Forum to enable tree planting activities.

As a result of all these advocacy activities, a declaration was produced, containing multi-stakeholder recommendations on how to work together in synergy towards ensuring integrated urban development, at all stages from planning to monitoring and evaluation. This declaration emphasises the need for community-led approaches to equitable economic, ethical and inclusive development.

NIGERIA

Empowering communities in Nigeria to protect themselves from floods

Gbekuba community is one of the most flood-prone areas in Ido, Nigeria. In June 2016, the flooding was particularly devastating, leading to loss of lives and damage to properties. Livelihoods were also seriously affected and there were significant socio-economic impacts in the community. The *Frontline* survey found that 43% of respondents thought that recurrent flooding is the priority threat faced by their community. Community respondents said a critical action needed was to raise awareness of the ways that the flood impacts can be reduced in communities and awareness of citizen rights before, during and after emergencies. The Centre for Disaster Risk and Crisis Reduction (CDRCR) therefore organised a meeting for communities and CSOs to design a campaign to raise awareness of the impacts of the recurrent floods and the ways that the risk can be reduced.

As part of the campaign, impacting flyers were shared that highlighted the steps to take before, during and after a flood. Community members went from door to door informing their neighbours about simple steps they could take to reduce damage, and a rally was held to draw attention to the responsibilities of government departments who can help during disasters. As a result, residents have developed personal contingency plans, organised local flood response teams tasked with providing the government with information before upcoming floods, and built relationships with different actors dealing with flood management. Sometimes it was difficult to hold meetings and open door rallies, so they often had to be flexible to adapt to changing situations.

earthquakes are widely considered the number one threat, but local information was essential to identify the most effective actions. According to *Frontline* results, non-structural measures are what's needed in the community of Chandragiri, Kathmandu, to improve individual resilience to quakes. This led to the realisation of a need for increased awareness about non-structural measures. NSET designed a programme that trains local women on how to protect their homes with simple non-structural measures (such as screwing cupboards or fridges to the walls).

In ***Uganda***, the underlying causes of vulnerability relate to the lack of local funding for risk reduction actions: this led to the decision of the Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations DENIVA (a local network of indigenous populations) and STEP-UG to create village savings associations that collect money to be used in case of emergencies or implement risk reduction measures, such as buying storm-resistant plants.

Yakkum Emergency Unit (YEU), a local CSO active in ***Indonesia***, has identified environmental degradation as one of the main threats, resulting also from a lack of consideration for DRR in people's behaviours: informal settlements are built in high-risk areas, for example, and individuals are not aware of the issues. Local advocacy was designed based on the need to change behaviours and improve people's understanding of DRR.

In ***Nigeria***, *Frontline* surveys highlighted that public officials responsible for the implementation of international frameworks such as the Sendai Framework, were not engaged enough due to a lack of understanding of these frameworks. Advocacy campaigns were therefore designed to address this, by disseminating simplified versions of the Sendai targets and priorities to facilitate understanding by government officials.

Local information in ***Tonga*** helped the Tonga Community Development Trust (TCDT) to find the right focus for their advocacy action: community consultations highlighted that women and girls are agents of change and should be equipped to influence resilience activities in their communities. As a result, advocacy initiatives by TCDT focused primarily on women and girls.

Poor enforcement of land management in ***Kiribati*** (a country where coastal erosion is the main long-term threat) is resulting in solid waste pollution and poor sanitation and hygiene measures. FSPK decided to build their advocacy campaign on these findings, pushing, among other asks, the need for better waste management by the communities themselves.

2 Collaboration on evidence-based action

Collaboration is at the core of effective action, especially when it involves a variety of stakeholders. Local knowledge is used to create a basis of evidence for stakeholders with different interests to gather together and agree on what actions to prioritise.

Local action works best when it is decided collectively by all those who have a stake on the matter, and in the case of resilience, all of society is involved. Experiences from *Frontline* partners show the value of bringing together local governments, civil society organisations, community members (including marginalised and vulnerable groups), to reflect on the evidence and take part in the decision-making process. Local action is better tailored for the needs of all and it is more likely to be owned by the community itself.

Moreover, evidence-based collaboration is likely to result in increased ownership of advocacy campaigns. All advocacy experiences start with a meeting, either between local CSOs with similar interests, or directly with the government at local or national level. Although different actors may have different asks, they have often come together and shaped these asks to be focused on the evidence-based priorities and needs identified through the local surveys.

In the Lower Motowoh region of ***Cameroon***, where seasonal floods are a recurrent threat (and where *Frontline* results show that one of the main causes is that rivers are blocked by rubbish), communities and local governments got together under the leadership of GEADIRR (Geotechnology, Environmental Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction) to discuss follow-up actions. Local CSOs and government representatives realised that they both had a role to play in addressing the

CAMEROON

Communities dredge river and prevent flooding in Cameroon

The Lower Motowoh community faces damaging seasonal flooding. Houses are inundated every rainy season, livelihoods are destroyed and roads are damaged, causing high levels of road accidents. The *Frontline* surveys found that the flooding is caused in part by the rivers being blocked by rubbish. This means that when rains fall, the water levels rise quickly. The surveys also highlighted another issue: that the community's frequent request for support from the local government was not heeded due to a lack of decentralised resources allocated for DRR work.

The NGO leading the *Frontline* process in Cameroon, Geotechnology, Environmental Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction (GEADIRR), led a series of meetings with community members and local government to reflect on the findings from the surveys. They decided that a concrete step to reduce the impact of heavy rains would be to dredge the river of the mud and rubbish. By coming together and discussing a joint solution, the representatives from the community, the local CSOs and the local government all recognised that they had a role to play in the solution and that together they could all contribute something towards this activity. A digger was hired to open up the Njengele river waterway, clearing the course for faster water flow. As a result, the community did not suffer floods during the 2016 rainy season.

NEPAL

Women's groups protect their community from earthquake impacts in Nepal

Women in Chandragiri, Kathmandu, have demonstrated their vital role with their implementation of non-structural earthquake mitigation measures. During the *Frontline* survey, residents in Chandragiri identified earthquakes as the top threat in the community and non-structural mitigation as one of the priority actions that has to be implemented. A group of women who had previously been trained by NSET to protect their own homes using non-structural approaches, such as screwing cupboards, photo frames and their fridges to the wall, were mobilised by NSET to implement their skills across the community. Now, they are implementing the mitigation measures in their locality as well as outside their community, including in 10 different schools across Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur and a hospital.

Not only has this initiative been a step towards achieving a safer community, but it has boosted women's confidence and empowered them with important new technical skills and new leadership roles in their community. Furthermore, the demonstration of these skills has led to women being engaged in new income-generating activities outside of the standard handicraft work.

issue and agreed to work together to clear up the river waterway, thus reducing the impact of heavy rains.

In the Gigantes Islands, in the ***Philippines***, 12 community-based organisations decided to get together to address the root causes of risk in the island (identified as unsustainable tourism, illegal fishing, unregulated transport sector): a Convergence Strategy was developed that helped all organisations to better coordinate and work together towards shared goals. This resulted in reduced duplications, increased effectiveness of action and better understanding of gaps to be addressed.

In some cases, "non-traditional" stakeholders were included, such as students from the ***Indonesian*** Art Institute in Yogyakarta: together with local communities and CSOs, students worked to design an advocacy campaign to promote zero-risk development. Some of the results included a "risk-aware" pop-up coffee shop and an alternative monopoly game. A donation mechanism was set up alongside a campaign exhibition organised together with the arts students: visitors could learn about the campaign and get involved by supporting it by donating in support of tree planting activities. Deciding to give financial support, even if very little, gives many people the feeling of being part of the cause, increasing its wide ownership.

In ***India,*** SEEDS has gathered multi-stakeholder forums, composed of community members, resident welfare associations, market associations, youth volunteers, community-based organisations and community leaders, to tackle the issues of unsustainable development, environmental degradation, and risks of flooding in Eastern Delhi. The level of inclusivity of these forums enhanced the effectiveness of the advocacy work, which was undertaken working closely with the most vulnerable groups: community action groups were created, which work to enhance knowledge, capacities but also social cohesion.

PHILIPPINES

Advancing small island resilience by working across sectors and boundaries in the Philippines

The Gigantes Islands, found in the municipality of Carles, is vulnerable to various hydro-meteorological hazards such as typhoons, as well as socio-economic threats such as unsafe livelihood activities and a lack of access to health and birthing facilities as a result of poverty.

Through the leadership of the UP Visayas Foundation and the Centre for Disaster Preparedness, *Frontline* has contributed to enhancing the implementation of the RISE Gigantes Project, a post-Typhoon Yolanda rehabilitation intervention for the islands. The inclusive risk profiling revealed shared underlying drivers of risk across the islands, such as unsustainable tourism, illegal fishing, and an unregulated transport sector. To help Gigantes address these development issues, a Convergence Strategy was designed to develop a clear division of responsibilities among stakeholders, reduce duplication and address gaps in coverage and quality, and gauge the extent to which needs are being met collectively. One of the main outcomes has been the formation of the Island Sustainable Development Alliance Inc., an umbrella organisation of 12 community-based groups in Gigantes working together to undertake participatory risk assessments, capacity building, and natural resource management.

Embracing a collective approach paved the way for dialogues and good relationships, resource mobilisation, and shared responsibility among stakeholders. It also helped strengthen governance mechanisms, evidenced by the support of local leaders and the inclusion of key sectors in local governance processes. Diverse priorities and coordination mechanisms meant that consolidating the barangay development councils was sometimes a challenge; however, the actors were helped to see their shared aims and joint accountability, and are now clear that the benefits of convergence are worth replicating.

INDONESIA

Using games to change attitudes on safe construction in Indonesia

Karangwuni village in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, is not only prone to natural threats such as earthquakes, heavy rains, and ash fall from the nearby Merapi volcano. The *Frontline* surveys also highlighted that the village prioritises issues relating to the unsustainable urban development. Community discussions about these urban hazards, in addition to a groundwater level survey (conducted by Yogyakarta DRR Platform, the Disaster Management Study Centre of Pembangunan National University, and the Natural Disaster Study Centre of Gadjah Mada University), concluded that the unregulated development of apartments has led to a significant decrease in water quantity and an increase in air pollution.

The local community of Karangwuni along with Yakkum Emergency Unit, Yogyakarta DRR Platform, and the students of Indonesian Art Institute created an evidence-based campaign using art to promote zero-risk development in Yogyakarta. Amongst a range of activities, the team designed a pop-up coffee shop which sold items with names related to high risk development, such as "Bitter Coffee", which only has a dribble of water due to the water shortage. They also created an alternative monopoly game with rules on construction and building codes. With these innovative and impacting lobbying techniques, local communities and local governments have been brought together to discuss how future construction can be zero-risk.

SENEGAL

Raising stone barriers together to boost agricultural production in Senegal

The *Frontline* project found that disease and flooding are the two major threats for the Kolda community in Senegal. The population has always faced a high degree of climate variability and over the last two decades, Senegal has seen temperature rises, variable rainfall and an increase in extreme events due to climate change. This has put additional pressure on agricultural production and the already degraded natural resources in communities within the area. Increased temperature reduces the humus content of soils due to faster mineralisation. Further losses of fertile topsoil occur through water and wind erosion. Degraded soils infiltrate less water, have lower water storage capacities and produce less food and fodder. Restoring soils, improving soil fertility and enhancing water availability therefore increases and stabilises agricultural production.

During the *Frontline* consultations, local community members agreed to mobilise themselves to local action and learning, using traditional knowledge to build their resilience to floods and soil erosion by erecting stone walls around farmlands they feel are vulnerable to floods and soil erosion. These stone walls act as permeable structures that act like a filter, trapping waterborne sediment and organic matter. The local technology has had positive environmental impacts. Degraded lands have been rehabilitated, crop yields have increased in the communities where the walls were constructed, and the entire *Frontline* process has resulted in increased attention to land use planning and the environment by villages. Ongoing awareness-raising efforts by the lead organisation, Shalom International, were also critical to ensure farmers' continued participation.

3 Addressing threats with a holistic approach

Within communities, threats and root causes are identified without distinction of their nature (e.g. climate change vs disaster vs poverty-related), and different stakeholder groups bring different priorities to the table that need to be addressed simultaneously. As a result, local action is often "multi-purpose", and targets a variety of issues that are found to be connected to each other. Such approaches respond to the need, recently identified also at global level, to stop working in siloes and to make efforts to ensure that different international frameworks are connected with each other in the implementation phases.

The use of *Frontline* findings to inform local action in ***Senegal*** has led communities to decide on the adoption of local technology (stone walls) to build flood preparedness measures: the stone walls break the intensity of the floods, but at the same time act as a filter, trapping sediments and organic matter. This has had a positive impact on environmental restoration, leading to land rehabilitation and increases in crop yields, thus also reducing food insecurity.

In the ***Dominican Republic,*** it is evident that effective local action cannot only focus on emergency management, as it has been the case until recently. Local actors have understood that they need to engage in resilience actions that tackle waste management, pollution, and poverty-related vulnerability at the same time if they want to be successful in their efforts.

The Gigantes Islands in the ***Philippines*** is a similar case: hydro-meteorological hazards are certainly a major threat, but action cannot be focused only on this. Socio-economic threats need to be taken into consideration, as well as unsustainable economic activities that increase risk: In addition to typhoons (the primary threat), *Frontline* surveys results mention diseases, traffic accidents, and many others.

4 Diversification of targets and actions

The conversations held through the *Frontline* programme were also helpful in highlighting a variety of actors with a stake on the identified priorities. Whether it is actors to partner with, or actors to target in advocacy campaigns, evidence-based solutions ensure that there is a consideration for all stakeholders. When time and resources allow it, diversifying the targets of an advocacy action is likely to result in an increase in effectiveness: voicing the need for a particular action or policy with more than one relevant actor increases the chances of reaching those with the power of taking these decisions. Evidence can be packaged and presented in different ways to respond to the need for targets diversification: the general public will respond to calls for action that would likely be framed differently than if the target were public officials. Advocacy actions at government level will require a different framing of the issue, linked to specific laws and regulations, or that stresses the needs of the base constituencies. Advocacy activities should also be different, and be based on a solid understanding of the interests and capacities to engage of the various groups targeted.

AFOSC in ***Kenya*** has engaged with women, community-based organisations and youth groups in Mandera West County to design an advocacy campaign to raise awareness for resilience. The campaign targeted both government officials and community members: different sets of actions were designed, to make sure that the targets would be reached. Peace caravans, live talk shows, seminars, workshops, and other activities ensured the wide reach of the campaign.

The ***Nigerian*** organisation called Centre for Disaster Risk and Crisis Reduction (CDRCR) worked to prepare flyers on flood preparedness measures at household level, which were distributed door to door and via neighbourhood networks. At the same time, CDRCR organised rallies to draw the attention of government officials who bear the responsibility to support the communities during emergencies.

The advocacy efforts in ***Cameroon*** led by GEADIRR focused on road safety, and to respond to the need for engaging with a very wide target

CAMEROON

Making Safer Roads in Cameroon

Frontline **surveys highlighted that Cameroon has a high prevalence of road traffic accidents. Many of these accidents are due to poor quality vehicles, irresponsible behaviour among road users, poor infrastructure (e.g. roads) and the use of motorbikes, making the traffic worse.**

GEADIRR gathered a wide range of organisations in Cameroon to plan an initiative to address the issues surrounding these road traffic accidents. This initiative aimed to make all stakeholders more aware of their individual roles in reducing the risk of road accidents in Cameroon. They set consultative meetings with key stakeholder groups, including staff members from the transport department and held a national road safety advocacy workshop in Yaoundé to develop an advocacy campaign guide and other materials. The advocacy team has been sharing the key messages surrounding road safety in Cameroon through a wide range of methods, including stickers, flyers, posters and even local radio broadcasts, to ensure that the message would reach the broadest possible audience (thus including, for example, remote communities who have radio access but would not be reached by distribution of flyers), and is hoping to scale-up this awareness-raising initiative to other parts of the country.

As a result of the work of GEADIRR and the advocacy team, road users are becoming more aware of their individual roles in reducing the risk of road accidents.

NIGERIA

Changing Government Attitudes Towards Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Nigeria

Local data in Nigeria revealed that many parts of the country are threatened by incessant flooding, storms, epidemics, fires, violent conflict and kidnapping. These have led to loss of lives, destruction of property and infrastructure, and loss of livelihood. Thus, it is important for the priorities of the Sendai Framework to be factored into policy and practice across the country. However, public officials in the key sectors responsible for implementing the Sendai Framework and other global frameworks in Nigeria tend to have lackadaisical attitudes towards these frameworks.

As a result, the advocacy initiative led by CDRCR focused on changing attitudes among key stakeholders in the sectors responsible for implementing the Sendai Framework in order to ensure it positively impacts the communities at the frontline of disasters in Nigeria. Targeting the government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) whose mandates directly affect disaster risk management in the country, the advocacy team promoted messages on the importance of effective implementation of the Sendai Framework for vulnerable communities, using *Frontline* data as evidence. They also developed materials that simplified the priorities and targets of the Framework to facilitate understanding among the MDAs.

This advocacy initiative in Nigeria has successfully increased understanding of the roles of the targeted stakeholders in implementing the Sendai Framework and a shift towards more positive attitudes. Several actions have been taken to support this, including (i) designating a desk officer to develop implementation plans for the Sendai Framework at the state level; and (ii) making budgetary provisions for activities to ensure disaster resilience. Furthermore, as a result of the advocacy initiative, the State Emergency Management Agencies of the two states in which the initiative took place (Lagos and Oyo), are working to establish functional Local Emergency Management Authorities (LEMA), which is directly linked to Priority 2 of the Sendai Framework, strengthening disaster risk governance in the states.

audience, the same message was packaged in many different ways, including posters, stickers, local radio broadcasts: this ensured that people with different means of communication could still be reached by the campaign messages.

The collaboration with arts students in Indonesia was also directed at increasing the diversity of advocacy tools used in the campaign. Games and exhibitions on the theme of urban development, resilience and water management attracted a wide audience from the general public and allowed visitors to get involved in the campaign.

5 Evidence-based policy lobbying

Some *Frontline* partners shared their experience of using local information when engaging with political actors at national level for legislation change or to push for the adoption of a new piece of legislation.

The case studies analysed referred to the importance of bringing in communities' voices in the discussions to draft the outline for new legislation: the leading CSOs made sure that local organisations could be included and had the possibility to input their own priorities in the conversation. The inclusion of local knowledge into a national consultation ensured that a proper multi-stakeholder participatory approach was followed, and contributed towards raising the visibility and credibility of the process.

Moreover, direct engagement between civil society and government bodies right from the start is beneficial, as it increases mutual trust, in addition to ensuring ownership of the resulting piece of legislation. The identification of political actors willing to take a stand in support of one's asks is also effective in pushing these up on the government agenda, and it opens possibilities for advocacy that CSOs often do not have, such as direct lobbying within government institutions (Ministries, Parliament, etc.). Having political champions also raises visibility of the advocacy actions, given that they often are well-known public figures.

CAMBODIA

Gender Mainstreaming in Sustainable Livelihoods and Environmental Management in Cambodia

In Cambodia, there is a lack of effective and meaningful gender mainstreaming in investment in sustainable livelihoods and environmental management in the face of climate change.

To tackle this gender gap, Save the Earth worked in collaboration with the local authority to establish a Micro Insurance Facility (MIF) with policies to ensure that at least 50% of the decision-making positions are held by women. All MIF team members underwent gender-responsive training and capacity building in order to enable them to better perform their assigned responsibilities. Promoting the importance of gender mainstreaming, the MIF team then went out to communities to raise awareness and advocate for collaborative community drought risk management.

The advocacy initiative engaged individual households under the MIF system, bridging gaps between the community and the local authority, which provided support and advice. After sufficient training and capacity building activities, the community took ownership of the system, increasing the likelihood of its long-term sustainability. By taking the approach of mainstreaming gender in adaptation investments, the MIF system successfully enabled men and women to work together to increase the sustainability of their livelihoods, thus reducing their vulnerability.

KENYA

An all-of-society approach to resilience building in Kenya

Local *Frontline* survey respondents identified drought and insecurity as top priority threats in Kenya, and suggested that effort to address these threats has been minimal. While large disaster events attract the attention of all stakeholders, 89% of the respondents identified that they were most affected by the frequent small-scale disaster events, with 66% of the respondents mentioning that they suffered substantial losses.

AFOSC brought 14 local organisations together to develop an advocacy initiative to address these 3 priority threats in Kenya. Each organisation contributed their local knowledge and expertise in drafting an ambitious work plan that aims to build a secure, stable and prosperous society in which there is a high level of awareness and preparedness to deal with high-impact disasters.

This advocacy team established local coalitions of women and youth groups and community-based organisations to build a movement for change at the sub-county level. These groups undertook lobbying efforts (such as those detailed below) targeting county officials, local MPs and other stakeholders to raise awareness on local disasters. This movement was replicated at the national level, where the Kenya *Frontline* lead brought together like-minded agencies to build national momentum to develop a platform to address these three priority threats. Bilateral discussions also took place with key stakeholders to build a momentum for change.

As part of the initiative implementation, AFOSC and partners took advantage of the Kenyan elections. They advocated for policy change and resource allocation during the campaign period, encouraging political leaders to add these needs to their manifestos as priority items. They also focused on addressing the risk of political violence during the election period, campaigning for enhancing the peaceful participation of youth as voters, educators, supporters and candidates.

To tackle the threats of deforestation and drought in Kenya, the advocacy team also organised informal discussions with local communities and political leaders in the run-up to the election to raise awareness on the importance of trees. They sensitised and mobilised local communities, gathering evidence to support the development of policies that engage all stakeholders in innovative ways to tackle drought.

This initiative has improved local communities' understanding of the disaster threats they face and empowered them to mobilise local resources to reduce the impacts of these threats. Taking advantage of the election period, these communities were also able to reach out to local political leaders, influencing them to prioritise disaster-related actions in their manifestos and support grassroots community-based groups in addressing these disasters.

The advocacy initiative has also led to the establishment of a National Advocacy CSO Platform, which is aiming to mobilise communities, influence policies and engage all stakeholders in innovative initiatives to provide sustainable livelihoods to drought-affected communities in Northern Kenya by 2020.

PHILIPPINES

Institutionalising an Independent National DRRM Agency in the Philippines

The Philippines is susceptible to a wide range of hazards such as typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. This is due to poor economic and social conditions, especially in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. Furthermore, climate change is exacerbating these hazards, as can already be seen in the rise of sea levels, drastic changes in weather conditions, and slow onset events. As a result, it is vital that an effective disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) system is established to help reduce the risk of these hazards leading to disasters across the country.

The Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) in the Philippines led a policy advocacy campaign to establish an independent National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management agency through an amendment of the Philippine DRRM Law. This Department of Disaster Resilience will be the primary government agency accountable, liable and responsible for overseeing, coordinating and implementing a comprehensive disaster risk reduction and management in the country. In order to achieve this, CDP worked with partners to (i) engage and influence relevant government agencies to support the amendatory bill; (ii) build relationships with champion policymakers who will push for the amendment; and (iii) mobilise support from CSOs, media and the general public.

The amendatory bill is currently being discussed at the Technical Working Group level at the House of Representatives. The campaign has identified a congressman as the main champion of the bill. Other possible allies and opponents have been identified through political mapping and CSO partners have committed to discuss the issue with their partner local government units (LGUs), communities and other allies in Congress. Once the amendment has been passed, CDP and partners will continue to monitor its implementation and further advocate for other strategies that will contribute to building disaster resilience.

UGANDA

Advocating for the Enactment of the Disaster Risk Reduction Bill in Uganda

Local data has revealed that, over the past decade, more than 200,000 people have been affected by flooding, drought and landslides in Uganda. This is likely to increase due to climate change. However, the current government institutional arrangement to manage disasters is reactive and lacks sufficient financial and human resources to engage in prevention, mitigation, preparedness, recovery and rehabilitation activities.

As a result of the lack of national laws and policies governing disaster risk reduction and management in Uganda, DENIVA led an advocacy initiative that focused on influencing the development of a national Disaster Risk Reduction Bill. The advocacy team facilitated preparatory meetings and a consultative meeting between stakeholders including CSOs representing the communities, the Uganda Parliamentary Forum for DRR, the Office of the Prime Minister, Representatives from the Greater North Parliamentary Forum and sister Parliamentary Forums, Members of the 10th Parliament and the Ministry for DRR. The initiative aimed to ensure that citizens were included in the drafting of the DRR Bill and that the Bill met the needs of risk-prone communities.

To date, a working group has been established to fast track the development of the Bill. A draft DRR Bill has been developed and is awaiting debate in Parliament. Presentations of the Bill along with draft principles have been shared with MPs to begin planning for the major provisions of the Bill. Furthermore, the initiative has raised awareness and created buy-in by MPs in DRR and strengthened existing DRR platforms.

In the ***Philippines***, the Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) has been advocating for the establishment of a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management agency. While this is a big ask, CDP has engaged with a wide range of partners along several lines of work: direct lobbying with relevant government agencies, mobilisation of support from media and general public, and find political champions that would support this ask. The campaign has identified a Congressman who is willing to champion the bill within the government. This is beneficial both to ensure that the issue is pushed during government internal meetings, and to stay up-to-date on the governmental process and discussions by receiving insights.

Uganda's DENIVA is working with partners to push for the adoption of a national disaster risk reduction bill: DENIVA made sure to engage with all actors (government included) from the very beginning of the process, when the first consultations were held, in order to ensure buy-in from civil society and government representatives from the start. Citizens were also included in the consultations, and this ensured that the proposed bill met the needs of risk-prone communities.

5. What's next?

Conclusion and way forward

The *Frontline* programme was rolled out between 2014 and 2018, and a number of products, information and case studies have been developed throughout the years which will remain available online at gndr.org/frontline beyond the end of the programme.

The programme has built momentum for collaboration among various actors at the national and local levels: some *Frontline* partners have formalised their partnerships and will continue to work through this mechanism beyond the end of the programme.

Our efforts to advocate for a bigger use of local knowledge in action, decision-making and lobbying continue under the activities of GNDR's *Views from the Frontline* (VFL) 2019.

Frontline has demonstrated that the inclusion of local knowledge and capacities in policies, plans and actions can help build resilience of communities at various levels. In an effort to advance the effective use of local knowledge in resilience work, GNDR has launched *Views from the Frontline* 2019. The VFL programme not only collects local perspectives on risk and resilience, but will also collect data on the extent to which local people are included in resilience processes.

Through this programme, we will be able to identify which countries are sufficiently including local knowledge and actors in risk assessment processes, design of resilience policies and plans, implementation and monitoring of activities. This will ensure accountability, as actors will be responsible for collaborative and inclusive design of resilience-building activities.

VFL 2019 will be rolled out in 50 countries: for more information about the programme and the implementation countries please visit www.gndr.org/programmes/vfl

VFL 2019 will be an opportunity for communities to further engage in conversations around perceived threats, and potentially take stock of the progress made towards achieving more resilient communities.

Want to join the call for local voices for resilience?

Would you like to get involved in future work on evidence-based resilience building? Here are some ideas on how to engage at different levels.

Local level: Volunteer to lead *Views from the Frontline* 2019 in your community!

This involves going to the community members and engaging in some conversations about their perception of risk. It also involves an analysis of the results of these conversations, which will result in coded data to be inputted into an online database. Get in touch with us for more information at vfl@gndr.org.

National level: Lead *Views from the Frontline* in your country!

This involves a little bit more work, as you will have to get down to the community level in selected areas. You may need help or resources for that: get in touch with us and we can help you organise the work and identify fundraising options if needed. We can be reached via email at vfl@gndr.org.

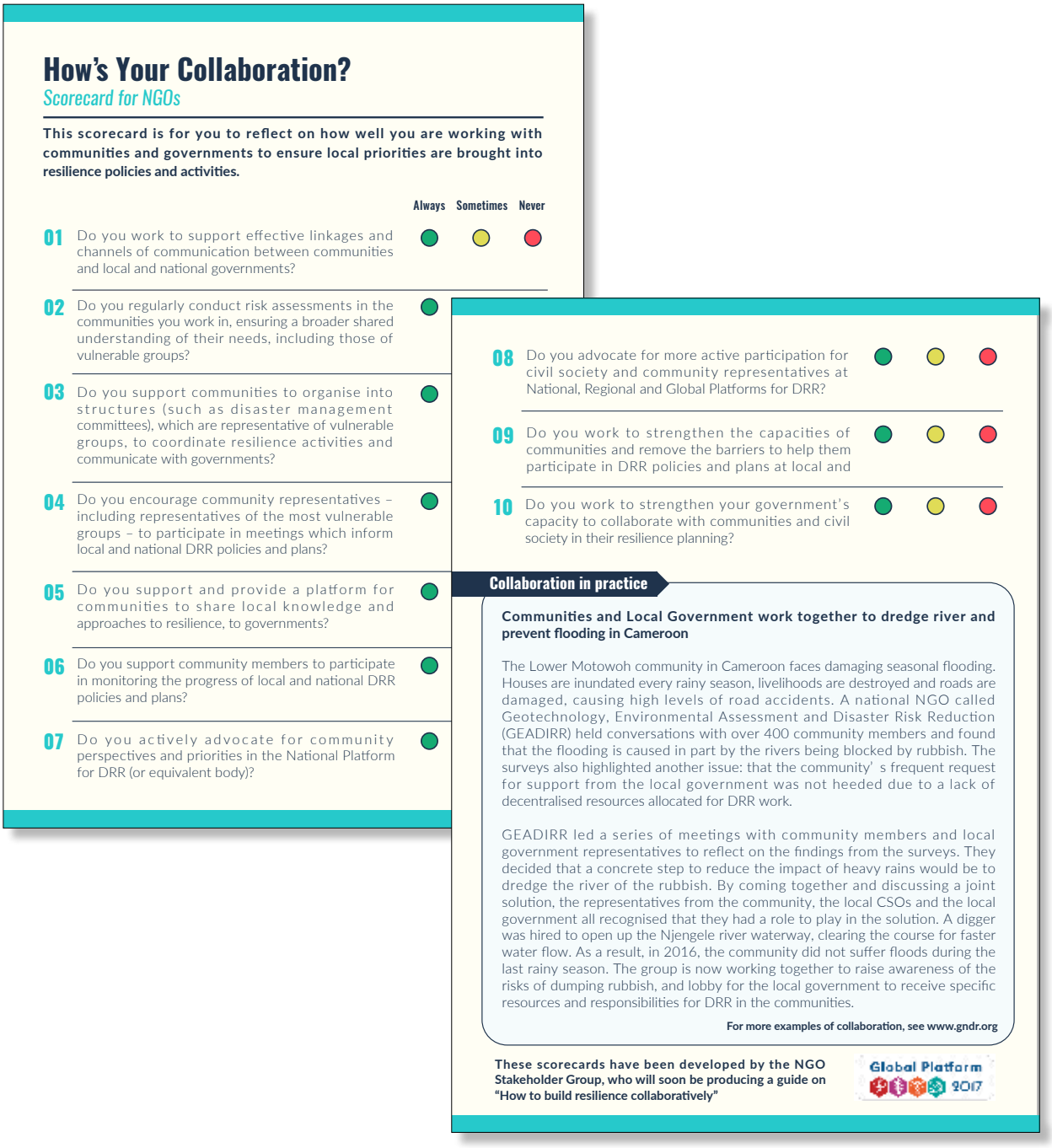
Global level: Raise your voice for resilience!

A global advocacy campaign is coming up soon, building on the findings of the VFL programme. Keep an eye on our website and on social media for more information on how to engage and to add your voice to many other local voices calling for resilience.

Curious to know how good is your organisation in including communities?

There are some scorecards available to help you find out. These are great tools to start a conversation about inclusion, if your results are quite poor, or to congratulate yourself on being as inclusive as possible, if your results are great (although remember, there is always room for improvement!).

Pick the "NGO Scorecard" if you are evaluating an NGO, or the "Government Scorecard" if you are evaluating a local or national government. The scorecards are available to download on GNDR's website. Get in touch with us at info@gndr.org if you would like more information about the Scorecards.



How's Your Collaboration?

Scorecard for NGOs

This scorecard is for you to reflect on how well you are working with communities and governments to ensure local priorities are brought into resilience policies and activities.

Always Sometimes Never

01 Do you work to support effective linkages and channels of communication between communities and local and national governments?

02 Do you regularly conduct risk assessments in the communities you work in, ensuring a broader shared understanding of their needs, including those of vulnerable groups?

03 Do you support communities to organise into structures (such as disaster management committees), which are representative of vulnerable groups, to coordinate resilience activities and communicate with governments?

04 Do you encourage community representatives – including representatives of the most vulnerable groups – to participate in meetings which inform local and national DRR policies and plans?

05 Do you support and provide a platform for communities to share local knowledge and approaches to resilience, to governments?

06 Do you support community members to participate in monitoring the progress of local and national DRR policies and plans?

07 Do you actively advocate for community perspectives and priorities in the National Platform for DRR (or equivalent body)?

08 Do you advocate for more active participation for civil society and community representatives at National, Regional and Global Platforms for DRR?

09 Do you work to strengthen the capacities of communities and remove the barriers to help them participate in DRR policies and plans at local and

10 Do you work to strengthen your government's capacity to collaborate with communities and civil society in their resilience planning?

Collaboration in practice

Communities and Local Government work together to dredge river and prevent flooding in Cameroon

The Lower Motowoh community in Cameroon faces damaging seasonal flooding. Houses are inundated every rainy season, livelihoods are destroyed and roads are damaged, causing high levels of road accidents. A national NGO called Geotechnology, Environmental Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction (GEADIRR) held conversations with over 400 community members and found that the flooding is caused in part by the rivers being blocked by rubbish. The surveys also highlighted another issue: that the community' s frequent request for support from the local government was not heeded due to a lack of decentralised resources allocated for DRR work.

GEADIRR led a series of meetings with community members and local government representatives to reflect on the findings from the surveys. They decided that a concrete step to reduce the impact of heavy rains would be to dredge the river of the rubbish. By coming together and discussing a joint solution, the representatives from the community, the local CSOs and the local government all recognised that they had a role to play in the solution. A digger was hired to open up the Njengele river waterway, clearing the course for faster water flow. As a result, in 2016, the community did not suffer floods during the last rainy season. The group is now working together to raise awareness of the risks of dumping rubbish, and lobby for the local government to receive specific resources and responsibilities for DRR in the communities.

For more examples of collaboration, see www.gndr.org

These scorecards have been developed by the NGO Stakeholder Group, who will soon be producing a guide on "How to build resilience collaboratively"

Global Platform 2017

How's Your Collaboration?

Scorecard for governments

This scorecard is for you to reflect and review on how well you are collaborating with civil society and communities in your resilience building work.

How well is civil society included?		Always	Sometimes	Never
01	Assessment — Do communities assess their own local risks and vulnerabilities as part of your risk assessments?			
02	Planning — Do you collaborate with civil society communities on developing your resilience policies and plans?			
03	Implementation — Do you allocate responsibilities and budget to civil society and communities to lead implementation of your resilience policies and plans?			
04	Monitoring — Do you include civil society and communities in the team responsible for monitoring progress towards resilience?			
How well are you supporting this?				
05	Do local government authorities have sufficient resources to understand and address communities' resilience needs, including those of vulnerable groups?			
06	Do you have properly resourced local platforms responsible for incorporating local perspectives into the National Platform for DRR (or equivalent body)?			
07	Does your National Platform for DRR (or equivalent body) have civil society and community representatives as permanent members?			
08	Do you engage vulnerable groups in the design of DRR policies and plans at the local and national level?			
09	Do all individuals who develop local and national DRR policies and plans consult regularly with communities?			
10	Do you include civil society and communities in your delegation at national, regional and global conferences?			
11	Do you have established communication mechanisms to provide communities with key information related to resilience, including your policy commitments and plans?			
12	Do you regularly self-evaluate your engagement with civil society and communities with regards to local and national DRR policies and plans?			
13	Do you provide funding to build capacity of civil society and communities to engage in DRR policies and plans?			
14	Do you work together with other countries to gather civil society and community perspectives when tackling cross-border risk?			
15	Do you exchange best practices with other governments on how to engage communities and civil society in DRR policies and plans?			

Collaboration in practice

Multistakeholder development of the National Policy for Risk Management in Costa Rica

Costa Rica experiences the full range of hazards, from flooding and hurricanes, to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. The Government started developing it's National Policy for Risk Management in 2016, wanting to reflect the priorities of the SFDRR and build resilience to the diverse range of intersecting disasters. They recognised that if the policy was to to be effective for the most at-risk, they needed to ask the most vulnerable about their local context, priorities and suggestions.

Towards this, the National Emergency Commission reached out to civil society networks, including the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, to help connect them to local actors. They initiated a collaborative process to design the policy and accompanying implementation plan, which included four rounds of sector and local consultation to develop indicators and define responsibilities, and a National Forum with 2000 stakeholder representatives from communities across the country to validate the plan. This collaboration ensured that the risk management plan was appropriate for local realities and the different contexts and capacities across communities.

For more examples of collaboration, see www.gndr.org

These scorecards have been developed by the NGO Stakeholder Group, who will soon be producing a guide on "How to build resilience collaboratively"

Global Platform 2017

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