

Generating Policies & Programs with Evidence & Data:
Resilience Measurement
Executive Summary

The Resilience Measurement Series supports the development of evidence and data to generate policies and inform innovative, high-impact programming. This series focuses on promoting a whole-of-government, data-driven approach that can be applied to meeting the inter-related humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crisis, and recurrent conflict.

USAID defines resilience as “the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth” (USAID Resilience Policy 2012).

This seven-part Measurement Series introduces key resilience measurement concepts to help Mission Staff and Implementing Partners assess progress and learn the findings to develop **synergistic humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding programs**. The series draws on research and lessons learned for strengthening a nascent evidence base—to foster learning and promote the outcomes of resilience-focused programs, such as job creation, improved infrastructure, and environmental justice.

The series includes **approaches to understanding and addressing the underlying factors** that affect the ability of communities, households, and systems to deal with recurrent shocks and stresses—in a way that prevents backsliding on progress towards reducing chronic vulnerability and promotes inclusive growth. Approaches are outlined for determining what can work in different operating environments. The guidance also includes ways to identify opportunities for helping the local public and private sector actors build capacity and strengthen the sources of resilience in their communities.

The Measurement Series is published by **the Center for Resilience** at USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS). The Center for Resilience leads USAID’s resilience work, which includes Mission Support for Project Design in Resilience Focus Zones in fourteen Resilience Focus Countries. In this role, the Center manages the U.S. Resilience Challenge Fund, per the OMB directive to increase development resources in areas of recurrent crises. Through technical assistance, training, and curated learning products, the Center supports USAID Missions’ programming, policy, and partnership work in climate adaptation, resilient livelihoods and markets, and resilient communities and systems, including, natural resources and disaster risk management, and social protection.

The Center manages a **global research portfolio** and conducts analysis on investments to facilitate the design of measurable, high-impact multi-sectoral strategies and programming. This research and analysis serve as a foundation for supporting the international leadership of the United States on resilience-related issues. The Center collaborates with a variety of local, national, and international institutions to carry out innovative research and dialogue that explores pathways that promote diversity and inclusion across cultures.

Generating Policies & Programs with Evidence & Data: Resilience Measurement – Series Overview

This Measurement Series introduces key resilience measurement concepts for the development of evidence and data to generate policies and inform programs. Following is an overview of each of the notes in the series. To read the series, go to ResilienceLinks.org.

1. Risk and Resilience Assessments

Risk and resilience assessments play an essential role in supporting an adaptive programming process through which humanitarian and development strategies can be monitored, assessed, evaluated, and refined over time. The note underscores the value of using risk and resilience assessments to formulate effective Theories of Change, as well as to measure frameworks that link resilience-building strategies to humanitarian and development program outcomes.

2. Measuring Shocks and Stresses

Investing resources in resilience-building requires earnest efforts in resilience measurement and analysis, and an indispensable component of resilience measurement is shock measurement. This note provides guidance on incorporating shock measurement into monitoring and evaluation frameworks to better design and evaluate resilience-building interventions; and addresses stresses that pose significant operational threats to development gains.

3. Resilience Capacity Measurement

The abilities of people, households, communities, and institutions to manage the impacts of shocks and stresses are underpinned by several factors. To promote development gains under uncertain, high-risk conditions, this note provides guidance on how to determine which factors matter, for whom, and at what level.

4. Resilience Analysis

An overview of many of the quantitative and qualitative approaches used for resilience analysis, including examples and resources for further exploration and capacity development.

5. Design and Planning for Resilience Monitoring and Evaluation at the Activity Level

Guidance on monitoring and evaluating resilience in the field for the immediate benefit of target communities – for staff in the field who manage resilience activities or lead monitoring and evaluation.

6. Recurrent Monitoring Surveys

Guidance on using the recurrent monitoring survey (RMS) to capture how individuals, households, and communities draw on resources and employ strategies to respond to shocks and stresses to improve their wellbeing in the short and long-term.

7. Cost-Benefit Analysis

A resource for policymakers and implementing organizations to identify cost-effective resilience interventions and prioritize development resources using Cost-Benefit Analysis and other analytical tools. The guidance includes return on investment analysis to facilitate public-private sector engagement on the priorities for covering the future needs for humanitarian assistance and avoiding/reducing losses caused by recurrent shocks and stresses.