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USAID Ethiopia Resilience Learning Activity

RESILIENCE LEARNING AGENDA

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CoPr	Community of Practice
DO	Development Objective
GOE	Government of Ethiopia
GYSI	Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion
HDP	Humanitarian - Development - Peace
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IM	Impact
IP	Implementing Partner
IT	Intervention
LQ	Learning Question
P	Portfolio
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
RLA	USAID Ethiopia Resilience Learning Activity
RCLAA	Resilience Community Learning Agenda Analysis
REAL	USAID Resilience, Evaluation, Analysis, and Learning Program
REGA	Resilience Evidence Gap Analysis
RP	Resilience Partner
TBD	To be determined
TFG	Learning Space Task Force Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VESA	Village Economic and Social Associations
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

I. INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Ethiopia Resilience Learning Activity (RLA) supports USAID and its resilience partners (RP) in Ethiopia with learning, collaboration, and research around resilience issues in Ethiopia. RLA provides a platform for thoughtful and informed integration of learning and adaptation into resilience programming. RLA seeks to instill a culture of iterative and intentional learning and evidence-informed decision-making, ensuring the meaningful engagement of end users and representatives at all activity stages; and disseminating information and lessons for reflection and application by ongoing and future endeavors.

A central pillar of RLA's work is the development of and ongoing support to a community-informed Resilience Learning Agenda – the document presented herein – to assist resilience IPs in appropriately orienting their interventions, reporting, and feedback loops to contribute to coherently explaining: *What interventions (or combination/sequence thereof) are helping to build resilience at the household, community, and systems level?*

RLA worked with the resilience community from March to June 2023 to develop this Learning Agenda, which will apply at the level of USAID's multi-activity resilience portfolio and be an essential reference point for learning from and iteratively improving resilience-building efforts. The Learning Agenda will establish our common learning priorities; recommend methods for answering learning questions; focus communities of practice around topics that address common-priority learning questions; provide consistency to resilience definitions and measurement approaches; and be a dynamic tool that shifts with changing resilience priorities and emergent issues and needs.

The Learning Agenda provides a set of impact, portfolio, and intervention-level questions to guide RLA's learning work with the resilience community. As noted in its work plan, a shared learning agenda across USAID's portfolio of resilience-building activities will provide a pathway to guide RLA and the Resilience Collective Action Platform's progress toward results, orienting diverse stakeholders around standard benchmarks and a shared definition of success.

RLA intends that the Learning Agenda be posted as a page on the RLA portal to allow for easy community engagement with the learning questions and information. Additionally, RLA plans to revisit the learning agenda at critical points across the project's lifecycle – ideally, annually – and will use the portal to communicate lessons, findings, and community-led adjustments over time.

2. RESILIENCE LEARNING AGENDA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

Development

The development of the Resilience Learning Agenda was a participatory process that engaged USAID and IPs. The Learning Agenda represents a community-informed set of priority questions/areas of investigation to help advance the thinking and implementation of resilience programs in Ethiopia. The Resilience Learning Agenda will establish our common learning priorities; focus communities of practice around topics that address learning questions; provide consistency to resilience definitions and measurement approaches; and be a dynamic tool that shifts with changing resilience priorities.

Following an established and agreed roadmap, RLA began key activities in early 2023 by conducting the Resilience Evidence Gap Analysis (REGA) and the Resilience Community Learning Agenda Analysis (RCLAA). The RCLAA analyzed existing learning questions from USAID and implementing partners (IP). The analysis first reviewed 131 questions from USAID Agency and Ethiopia Mission-level learning agendas, including the USAID Agency Learning Agenda, USAID/Ethiopia Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Learning Agenda, Feed the Future Learning Agenda, and Water for the World Research Agenda. This analysis identified learning clusters that highlighted common areas of inquiry and types of questions (context, measurement, approach selection, adaptive management, and results-focused). Then, the RCLAA team moved to a broad review of learning agendas from the IPs. RLA reviewed 145 learning questions from seven core resilience partners. The combined analysis of the USAID and IP learning agenda resulted in the development of eight core learning spaces.

In addition to the RCLAA, the REGA was an important tool to validate the learning spaces against existing USAID Ethiopia resilience evaluations. The REGA was explicitly designed to consolidate a library of USAID-funded documentation focused on resilience within Ethiopia. The authors systematically analyzed the library to isolate how interventions contributed to improving resilience and across which dimensions of resilience.

The research and analysis from the two studies were successfully presented and validated at the USAID Ethiopia Resilience Learning Activity Platform Launch Workshop in March 2023. Participants prioritized five learning spaces at the event out of the original eight. These are listed below.

1. Measurement Utility, Consistency, Effectiveness
2. Private Sector-led Economic Growth and Resilient Livelihoods (Merged two learning spaces)
3. GYSI programming for improved resilience outcomes
4. Essential Service Delivery to improve nutrition, sanitation, and hygiene for vulnerable populations
5. Humanitarian - Development - Peace (HDP) Coherence

These five learning spaces became the technical focus areas for five Learning Space Task Force Groups (TFG). The TFGs aimed to develop a clear sense of priority information needs (learning questions and potential areas of inquiry) for sharing with the broader resilience community. In May and early June, RLA convened a series of virtual and in-person TFG meetings that allowed TFG members, nominated by their organizations, to successfully craft resilience community learning questions and potential areas of inquiry.

Validation

Once the TFGs completed their work, RLA staff convened an internal review session to analyze and connect the refined learning questions to the broader resilience conceptual framework and develop a structure to organize the learning questions. RLA’s framework (Figure 1) connects directly to the USAID Resilience, Evaluation, Analysis, and Learning (REAL) Program’s Resilience Measurement Framework and provides the overall structure elaborated in this Learning Agenda. This challenging and productive work allowed RLA to bring a narrowed and refined set of draft learning questions for review and prioritization to the RLA’s Resilience Learning Agenda Reconnect workshop held in mid-June 2023.

During a one-day Resilience Learning Agenda Reconnect Workshop, participants actively collaborated to validate the learning agenda framework and prioritize the draft learning questions developed by the TFGs. With excellent participant engagement, RLA identified the top learning questions across three levels¹ (Figure 1), reflecting the critical areas of inquiry that the resilience community wants to focus on over the next 12-18 months.

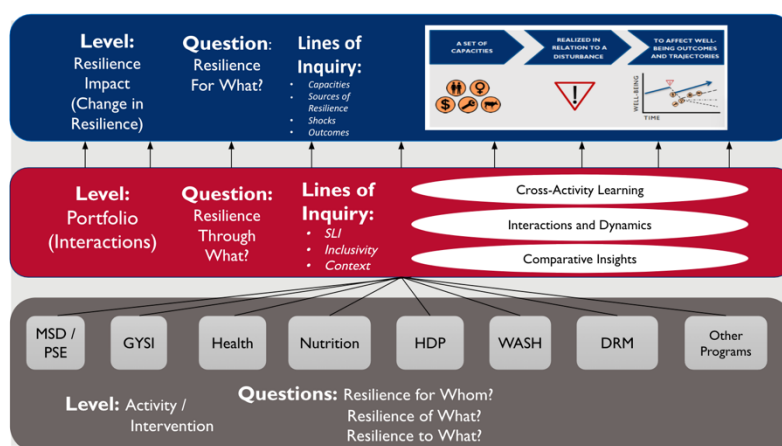


Figure 1. RLA Learning Agenda Framework reflecting three levels of inquiry

The collective review and analysis completed by participants during the workshop are reflected directly in the Resilience Learning Agenda presented in this document.

The Reconnect Workshop concluded RLA’s participatory process to develop, refine, and finalize the LA. Over the five months of intense work, RLA convened two community workshops with broad community participation, facilitated and supported five unique technical TFGs, and conducted a series of interviews and consultations to gather community perspectives. Over this process, RLA engaged with over 150 resilience stakeholders through various methods to gain insight and guidance on developing the learning agenda.

Alignment with USAID/Ethiopia’s Collaborating, Learning, and Adaptive Management (CLA) Plan

USAID/Ethiopia’s 2019-2024 CDCS embraces adaptive management and integrates many sectors, requiring more integrated learning pathways and management approaches. In its new (2023) Mission-wide CLA Plan, which operates in place of a traditional Performance Management Plan, multiple mini-CLA plans are presented to support the overall goal and each development objective. The CDCS CLA Plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

¹ The Resilience Learning Agenda investigates three levels of questions: (1) Activity/ Intervention level indicates learning focused on each individual award, the interventions/ activities within an award, or sub-award level interventions that are taking place across several similar awards (e.g., cross-RFSA sub-activity/ intervention-level questions); (2) Higher-level Portfolio-level questions that look at cross-activity learning, sequencing, layering, integration, and interaction among activities; and (3) Impact-level questions that help discern the effectiveness, contribution, or impact of individual or multiple activities across one or more sectors. Impact-level questions also invoke discussions of impact measurement, e.g., approaches to resilience measurement that are sensitive enough to discern resilience at the household level, system level, or both.

As a final step, RLA aligned the Platform’s prioritized learning questions with the Mission’s CDCS CLA plan (Figure 2) to support broader learning and fully integrate into Mission-wide learning activities.

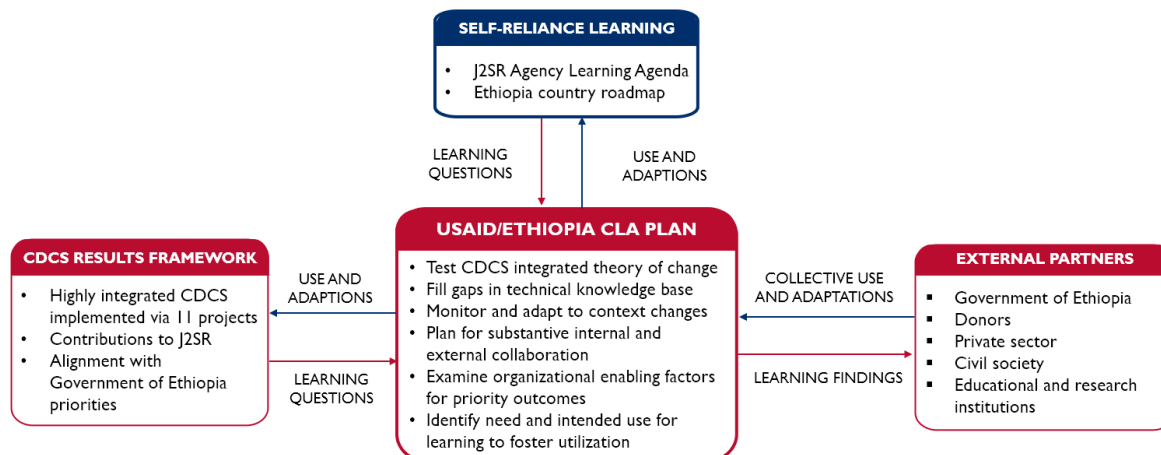


Figure 2. Diagram of USAID/Ethiopia’s CLA Plan to Further Programming and support for Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR)

USAID/Ethiopia has identified eight major learning themes that guide the development and elaboration of information collection, research, learning, collaborating, and adapting Mission-wide:

- Gender
- Youth
- Private sector engagement
- Governance, including civil society and citizen engagement
- Conflict
- New partnerships
- Mission operations
- Localization

Across these themes, the Mission has developed learning questions at the Mission level and for each of its five development objectives (DO), taking into consideration the goal, strategic principles, and crosscutting issues/ approaches embedded in its results framework (Figure 3, below).

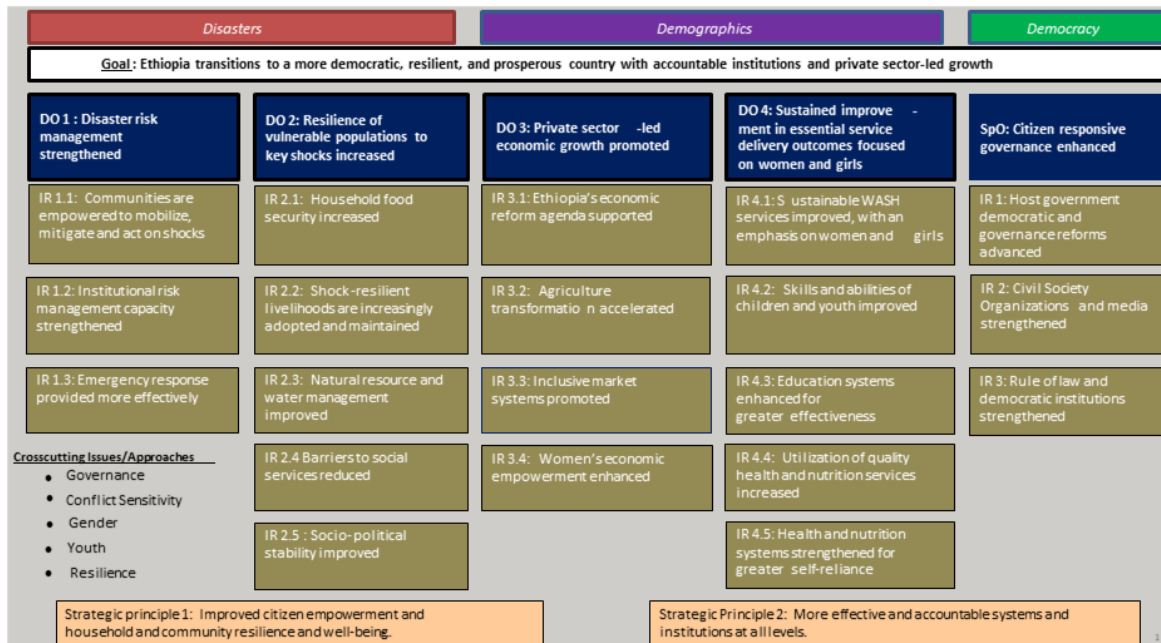


Figure 3. USAID/Ethiopia’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy Results Framework

For each set of learning questions, the Mission has identified whether the question is related to programmatic or operational (implementation-related) learning, the information’s intended use, suggested learning activities, a suggested timeline and assessment frequency, and level of priority (generally, ranked either “high” or “medium”).

3. RESILIENCE LEARNING QUESTIONS

This section presents the Resilience Collective Action Platform’s resulting priority learning questions for 2023-2024, aligned with USAID/Ethiopia’s CLA Plan. The questions reflect the resilience community's current priorities as captured at the June Resilience Learning Agenda Reconnect Workshop. The priorities expressed in the question selection will shift and evolve. RLA has planned regular (bi-annual or annual) opportunities for the resilience community to review and reprioritize the core learning questions and systems to allow for interim adjustments based on community feedback. In addition to the prioritized questions, RLA staff added learning questions through a post-workshop analysis to ensure inclusive coverage of different sectors of resilience programming.

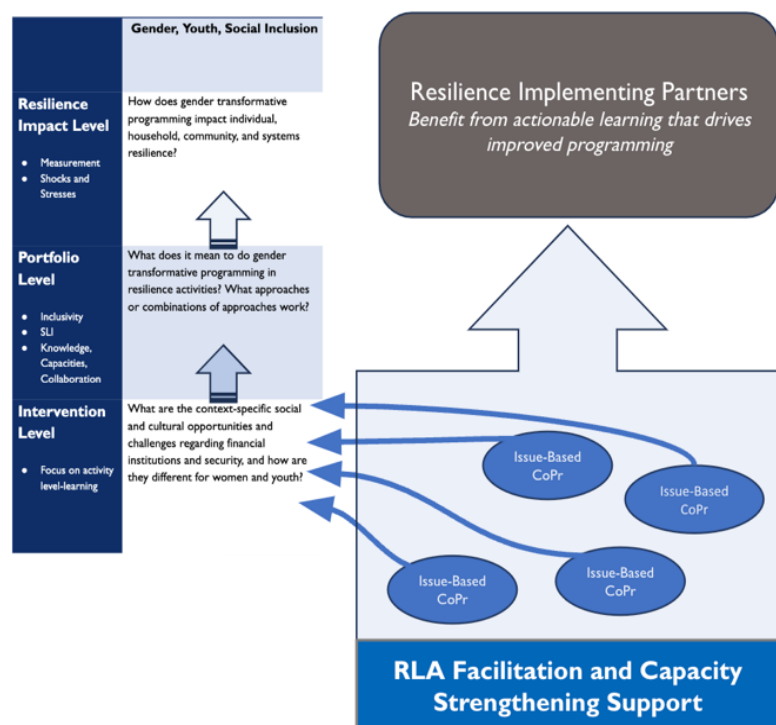


Figure 4. Diagram of RLA's approach to issue-based CoPr support

Priority Learning Questions Identified for Investigation through Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoPr, Figure 4, above) will be RLA’s preferred method to convene and facilitate ongoing community learning and analysis. CoPr are groups of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic and come together to fulfill individual and group goals. RLA sees this as an incredibly effective method in the Ethiopian resilience context because of the commitment, interest, and technical knowledge of resilience partners and USAID to finding the answers to the learning questions (Figure).

CoPr will be the engine advancing RLA’s and the resilience community’s learning priorities. With RLA’s support and facilitation, CoPr will focus on specific issue-based topics that will contribute to answering one or more of the prioritized learning questions. The CoPr will identify methods or tools needed to investigate the specific issue and map out how it connects to the broader learning agenda. As shown in Figure 3 to the right, CoPr will collectively contribute to answering resilience learning questions and provide actionable learning for IPs. Using this approach, resilience community stakeholders (USAID and RPs) will guide and drive learning to ensure it responds to their programmatic needs. RLA will support and facilitate CoPr to marshal IP and other resources and to provide a structure to identify different tools or methods to answer learning questions.

For USAID’s FY2024, the first cohort of CoPr that RLA will support is provided in Table I, below, including the objectives of each and the learning questions (LQ) in the Resilience Learning Agenda and USAID/Ethiopia’s CLA plan that the investigation may support.

Table I. Overview of CoPr intended for support by RLA in FY 2024

FY 2024 CoPr	Objective	Resilience LQ	USAID/ Eth. LQ
Integrated Multi Implementing-Partner Solutions to Market Systems Constraints in Somali Region	Pilot a more integrated market systems approach in the Somali region, leveraging the activities and lessons from multiple USAID implementing partners. The approach will address one or more specific market systems constraints using best practices in facilitation, partnerships, and systems thinking.	IM-3, IM-7, P-7, P-8, IT-1, IT-6, IT-10	0.1, 2.2.a, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5,
Home Garden Sustainability and Contribution to Dietary Diversity	Synthesize evidence on the gains achieved across the humanitarian-assistance supported home garden practices and their contribution of dietary diversity as well other initiatives. Research and report on the sustainability of household gardens in Ethiopia.	IM-1, IM-3, P-1, P-6, P-8, P-9, IT-2	0.1, 0.2, 2.2.c, 3.3
Financial instruments and digital technology that best serve the needs and build	Investigate and document technology driven financial products that improve access to finance and build on existing Village Economic and Social Associations (VESA) experiences. This may include field testing and documenting lessons that emerge.	IM-1, IM-2, P-1, P-4, P-6, P-7, IT-1, IT-8	0.2, 2.2.a, 2.2.c, 2.3, 3.2.b, 3.3, 3.4.a, 3.4.c, 4.4.a
Improving the use of forecasts and early warning systems to prepare households for shocks and enhanced food security. The resilience of women, men, and youth in poor households	Understand what early warning systems are being used by USAID’s resilience partners. Report on the emergency for which the system is being used, and when it is used. The investigation is intended to aid the resilience community in addressing issues related to cohesion and collaboration around early warning system effectiveness.	IM-5, P-1, P-10, IT-5	1.1, 2.2.a, 2.2.c, 2.3

RLA's support for these CoPrs will include:

- Convening and facilitate regular CoPr meetings
- Strengthening capacity around CLA and other technical topics
- Providing logistics and planning support to CoPrs
- Facilitating a knowledge management portal
- Supporting the adaptive management process through After Action Reviews and Pause and Reflect Sessions
- Capturing and sharing RLA learning processes and activities

High-Priority Learning Questions for the Resilience Community (full set)

The Resilience Learning Agenda includes learning questions at the three levels in the RLA Learning Agenda Framework (Figure 1, above): Resilience Impact (changes in resilience), Portfolio (cross-activity, interactions), and Intervention (activity/intervention).

To align with the Mission's CLA Plan, we have added the following information to each learning question: relevant goal/ Development Objectives; Mission-level learning question it contributes to; Mission's prioritization of this information need; and cross-cutting learning theme(s) it contributes to.

Additional (lower-priority) learning questions brought forward by the TFGs but not prioritized are included in Annex I. These additional questions are a resource that can be returned to in the coming years as the context and areas of focus of the resilience community shift.

The learning questions in Tables 2-4, below, include icons indicating potential investigation methods/tools to be considered (Figure 2). The options provided are not exhaustive, and new approaches may surface as the RLA and community stakeholders engage on the questions (see Section, 4, below for more).











Icon Key. Potential Investigation Methods	
	Communities of Practice
	Topic-Based Research
	Rapid Feedback/Systems Analysis
	Community Data Gathering and Analysis
	Evidence-generating and Sharing Event



Figure 2. Icon Key of Investigation Methods

Table 2. Impact (IM)-level Learning Agenda Questions

	Resilience Learning Platform Learning Question and Sub-Questions (where applicable)	Relevant CDCS Goal/DO(s)	Relevant Mission-level Learning Question	USAID/Eth Prioritization	Cross-cutting learning theme(s)
IM-1	<p>Under what conditions and in what ways are USAID Ethiopia’s sectoral interventions resulting in more resilient households, communities, and systems?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What conditions (shocks and stresses², location, other contextual factors) are most important in influencing resilience outcomes? - What types of interventions, innovations, or treatments are most sensitive to different conditions that may improve or diminish intended resilience outcomes? 	DO 2	<p>0.2 How have particular programmatic or sectoral approaches to systems strengthening been designed and implemented to foster self-reliance, and which are most effective? Why?</p> <p>2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?</p> <p>2.2.c. To what extent (or not) do USAID investments in Government of Ethiopia (GOE) programs and systems yield positive resilience gains?</p>	<p>High</p> <p>To be determined (TBD)</p> <p>TBD</p>	Conflict
	<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>				
IM-2	<p>What are the key sources and capacities for household or systems resilience?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under what conditions (e.g., how, where) do they contribute to, influence, or impact on resilience? - How can USAID’s investments be better tailored to build resilience? 	DO 2	<p>2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?</p>	TBD	Mission Operations
	<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>				

² For the Ethiopia resilience community, the most commonly considered and addressed shocks and stresses are drought, flood, price inflation, conflict, and conflict-based instability.

IM-3	<p>What combination of programming interventions (in sequence, layered, or integrated) most effectively achieve resilience outcomes for households and systems in Ethiopia?</p> <p>- How, where, and under what conditions are these most and least successful?</p>	DO 2	<p>0.1 To what extent, and under what conditions, does multi-sectoral integration lead to improved outcomes?</p> <p>2.2.c To what extent (or not) do USAID investments in GOE programs and systems yield positive resilience gains?</p>	<p>High</p> <p>TBD</p>	Mission Operations
<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					
IM-4	<p>Given the resources available, how can we most usefully and consistently measure resilience capacities and outcomes for individuals, households, communities, and systems?</p> <p>- What is the extent to which these resilience capacities and outcomes also contribute to a broader picture of individual, household, and community well-being outcomes?</p>	DO 2	<p>2.2.b How do we best measure resilience at the household, community, and systems level? How do we ensure proper focus on gender-specific vulnerability?</p>	TBD	Governance
<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>			<p><i>Notes:</i> USAID is a global leader in measuring resilience outcomes like food security and resilience inputs like resilience capacities. It will be important to understand the extent to which inclusive/ comprehensive programming also contributes to improved resilience capacities, and how these capacities help achieve wellbeing outcomes.</p>		
IM-5	<p>Of the known key shocks and stresses affecting Ethiopia and Ethiopians, under what conditions (e.g., how, where), and to what degree (i.e., exposure, sensitivity) do these shocks and stresses impact resilience?</p> <p>- How can recurrent monitoring of panel households help us see how the different interventions are helping households and systems “cope up” and thrive in the face of the above key shocks and stresses?</p> <p>-What tangible and psychosocial determinants assist households to participate in different interventions and build their resilience capacities?</p>	DO 2	<p>2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?</p> <p>2.2.c To what extent (or not) do USAID investments in GOE programs and systems yield positive resilience gains?</p>	<p>TBD</p> <p>TBD</p>	Conflict
<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					

IM-6	How can USAID’s investments be tailored to better anticipate and respond to key shocks and stresses (e.g., drought, flood, price inflation, conflict/ instability) affecting Ethiopia and Ethiopians?	DO 2	2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?	TBD	Conflict Localization
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					
IM-7	<p>How and under what conditions do market systems development interventions and approaches lead to sustainable and sustained results and impact on resilience outcomes Ethiopia?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways do different types of shocks affect market systems resilience? - What is the relationship between the impact of shock on the market systems, the systems’ response to the impact, and the resilience capacities of vulnerable households? - How do changes in markets, shifts in market resilience, and resulting changes to resilience capacities affect households’ recovery trajectories? 	DO 3	<p>2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?</p> <p>3.1 To what extent does USG-supported private enterprise development produce increased jobs and household incomes, increased access to healthy diets, and a broadened revenue base?</p>	<p>TBD</p> <p>Medium</p>	Conflict Private Sector Engagement
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>		<p><u>Notes:</u> Vikara Institute’s assessments and analysis under Transforming Agriculture can inform contributions to market systems resilience.</p>			
IM-8	<p>In what ways does gender-transformative programming impact individual, household, community, and systems resilience in Ethiopia?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can the resilience community best differentiate between ‘gender-transformative’, ‘gender-sensitive’ or other gender-related programming? - How does USAID make this distinction? - Do practitioners know the difference? If not, would informing them on the difference influence gender-transformation outcomes? - How, where, and under what conditions are different programming approaches most and least successful in achieving resilience? 	DO 2	2.5 Does addressing gender inequality as one of the root causes of vulnerability improve community and household resilience. Which specific gender inequalities, if addressed, are more likely to enable families and communities to withstand shocks and stresses?	TBD	Gender Mission Operations














Investigation Methods To be Considered:





Notes: Before we assess whether the intervention impacted resilience, we must determine whether the intervention was truly 'gender transformative'.

Table 3. Portfolio (P)-level Learning Agenda Questions

P-1	<p>How, where, and under what conditions do different combinations of interventions in Ethiopia (e.g., in sequence, layered, or integrated) improve the ability of vulnerable households to withstand and recover from shocks affecting their livelihood, food security, and nutritional resilience building strategies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the short term, how have resilience capacities improved during the life of the activity or intervention? - Over the longer term, have these capacity improvements lasted beyond the life of the activity, program, or intervention? 	DO 2	2.3 To what extent, and under what conditions, does multi-sectoral integration lead to improved outcomes?	High	Conflict
<p>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</p>			<p><u>Notes:</u> It is important to consider this question from both the short and the medium-to-long term perspectives.</p>		
P-2	<p>What are the psychosocial determinants that incentivize households to participate in an intervention that aims to build their resilience capacities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under what internal (within-household) psychosocial conditions might a household see/ not see value in taking part in the intervention? - How might this change over the life of the intervention, and what has been shown to influence that change? 	DO 2	2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?	TBD	Localization
<p>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</p>			<p><u>Notes:</u> Existing empirical evidence shows that the agency and decision-making power of households to learn and adapt their systems to changing contexts matters in their desire to participate in programs that aim to increase resilience capacities.</p>		
P-3	<p>If an intervention or a combination of interventions has had differential effects on household resilience, what are the external factors that determined differences in impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could this be because programs were differently implemented? - Could this be because the beneficiaries had different levels of resilience capacities at the outset? 	DO 2	<p>2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?</p> <p>2.2.c To what extent (or not) do USAID investments in GOE programs and systems yield positive resilience gains?</p>	TBD	Localization

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could this be because a shock was not equally strong in all areas (e.g., some geographies were more flooded or infested than others) - What other factors have shown to be important? 				
	<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u>    </p>		<p><u>Notes:</u> Existing evidence shows us that the combination of interventions that are successful depends on the individual households' existing level of resilience capacities and on the type and magnitude of the shock</p>		
P-4	<p>How, where, and under what conditions do economic growth strategies reduce poverty, empower, and create employment opportunities for women, youth, and vulnerable groups in Ethiopia?</p>	DO 3	3.4.a Where are the greatest opportunities for women's economic empowerment and employment?	Medium	Gender Youth
	<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u>     </p>				
P-5	<p>How, where, and under what conditions do inclusive approaches, tools, processes, and programs better help to rebuild individual, household, and community resilience during and following shocks or stresses in Ethiopia?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can the resilience community best identify and classify approaches, tools, processes, and programs as "inclusive"? - How can our community best differentiate between "high" and "low" quality implementation of an "inclusive" approach, tool, process, or program? - How does USAID make this distinction? - Do practitioners know the difference? If not, would informing them on the difference influence strategies or outcomes? 	DO 2	<p>2.5 Does addressing gender inequality as one of the root causes of vulnerability improve community and household resilience. Which specific gender inequalities, if addressed, are more likely to enable families and communities to withstand shocks and stresses?</p> <p>3.4 How do efforts to advance women's economic empowerment impact (positively/negatively) women's empowerment in other realms (e.g., health, governance, civic engagement, etc.)?</p>	TBD	Conflict Gender Youth
	<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u>    </p>				

P-6	<p>How, where, and under what conditions do different combinations of interventions (e.g., in sequence, layered, or integrated) best contribute to the resilience and graduation of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) clients?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can Ethiopia's resilience community best identify who could/ should/ has successfully graduated from PSNP? - What are the external, potentially perverse, incentives/ disincentives for graduation that affect how regions, woredas, and programs classify beneficiaries as "graduated"? 	DO 2	2.2.c To what extent (or not) do USAID investments in GOE programs and systems yield positive resilience gains?	TBD	Governance
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					
P-7	<p>How, where, and under what conditions do different combinations of interventions help to foster a business-friendly environment that improves business survival, support business growth, and grow resilient market systems in Ethiopia's sparse markets?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the incremental changes needed to build a pro-business enabling environment that better supports these outcomes? - Where has this been achieved to date? In each of these cases, what has been the type and level of donor (development partner) support? - What cases exist of better business, market, and enabling environment support outcomes independent of donor (development partner) investment? 	DO 3	3.2.b To what extent does USAID's support help stakeholders to improve Ethiopia's business enabling environment?	Medium	Private Sector Engagement Governance
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					

































P-8	How, where, under what conditions, and to what extent should market systems development programming in Ethiopia be customized to local context (geography, sector, partners) in Ethiopia?	DO 3	3.5 To what extent are activities under DO 3 taking a market systems approach? Are USAID investments in private enterprise development cost-effective and increasingly supportive of a sustainable, market-based approach?	Medium	Private Sector Engagement New Partnerships Localization
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> 					
P-9	How, where, and under what conditions have activities enabled food system investments to improve consumption of diverse diets, to improve economic growth, and increase household resilience in Ethiopia?	DO 3	3.3 To what extent does USG-supported private enterprise development produce increased jobs and household incomes, increased access to healthy diets, and a broadened revenue base?	Medium	Private Sector Engagement
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> 					
P-10	How, where, and under what conditions have USAID and others successfully addressed long-term natural resources management objectives while effectively increasing productivity, profitability and/or nutrition security in Ethiopia?	DO 2	2.3. How can sectoral interventions (e.g., natural resource management) support improved conflict prevention and mitigation? How do we move beyond just “conflict-sensitivity/do no harm” to “conflict prevention” as a cross-cutting lens?	TBD	Governance
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> 					
P-11	What are the more common and important barriers to increased Ethiopian households’ investments in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) products ? How do these differ by region, sub-sector, or importance? To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions are programs effectively overcoming those barriers?	DO 4	4.3 How and to what extent does community engagement impact service delivery and other sectors outcomes?	High	Private Sector Engagement
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> 					

Table 4. Intervention (IT) or Activity-level Learning Agenda Questions

IT-1	<p>How, where, for which value chains, and under what conditions have USAID's and others' investments in various market system functions in Ethiopia generated increases in income and opportunities for employment among the poor, women, youth, and other vulnerable groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What kinds of investments and which value chains have proved most and least successful? - What explains the difference? 	DO 3	<p>3.4.a Where are the greatest opportunities for women's economic empowerment and employment?</p> <p>3.4.c What approaches are effective in positive engagement on gender roles and in mitigating potential negative unintended consequences?</p>	Medium	Gender Youth Private Sector Engagement
<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>		<p><i>Notes:</i> Suggest leveraging the Inclusive MSD Framework for this investigation: https://www.marketlinks.org/resources/framework-inclusive-market-system-development</p>			
IT-2	<p>What barriers must be overcome, enabling factors improved, and interventions applied in Ethiopia to most effectively and sustainably...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve household dietary diversity? - Improve household access to food resources? - Increase caregivers' nutrition-related knowledge? - Advance better dietary practices? 	DO 2	3.3 To what extent does USG-supported private enterprise development produce increased jobs and household incomes, increased access to healthy diets, and a broadened revenue base?	Medium	Localization
<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					
IT-3	<p>How can sectoral interventions (e.g., natural resource management) support improved conflict prevention and mitigation in Ethiopia?</p>	DO 2	2.3. How can sectoral interventions (e.g. natural resource management) support improved conflict prevention and mitigation? How do we move beyond just "conflict-sensitivity/do no harm" to "conflict prevention" as a cross-cutting lens?	TBD	Conflict
<p><u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u> </p>					

IT-4	How, where, and under what conditions can/ should we move beyond just “conflict-sensitivity/do no harm” to “ conflict prevention ” as a cross-cutting strategy?	DO 2	2.3. How can sectoral interventions (e.g. natural resource management) support improved conflict prevention and mitigation? How do we move beyond just “conflict-sensitivity/do no harm” to “conflict prevention” as a cross-cutting lens?	TBD	Conflict
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u>    					
IT-5	Has the increased quality and availability of climate information and early warning systems influenced business decisions and household behaviors through... - Increased use of the information and systems? - Increased adaptations based on the information gained (e.g., transition to more drought tolerant crops)? - Has this led to improved agricultural practices?	DO 1	1.1 Which modality of strengthening disaster risk management is most effective for reducing the risk and impact of disasters (and most effective for vulnerable and marginalized populations), why and how?	High	Private Sector Engagement
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u>     					
IT-6	How well, where, and under what conditions do private sector partnerships sustainably improve the supply of quality extension services? - How well, where, and under what conditions are input/output agents bundling agricultural services? - How, where, and under what conditions are large anchor firms investing upstream and downstream in their supply/ value chains, including input/ output agent networks?	DO 3	3.5.b Are USAID investments in private enterprise development cost-effective and increasingly supportive of a sustainable, market-based approach? For example, to what extent is learning gained by providing firm-based assistance leading to more systemic, transformative approaches?	Medium	Private Sector Engagement New Partnerships
<u>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</u>     					
IT-7	To what extent is economic growth led by the private sector and how is this changing over time?	DO 3	3.1 To what extent is economic growth led by the private sector in Ethiopia, and how is this changing over time? (Alternate phrasing: To what extent does the development of the private sector lead to growth?)	Medium	Private Sector Engagement

IT-8	<p><i>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</i>   </p> <p>What are the enabling and constraining factors to structuring funds that blend public, donor, and private financing to reduce risk and enable increased finance for service providers?</p>	DO 4	<p>3.3 To what extent does USG-supported private enterprise development produce increased jobs and household incomes, increased access to healthy diets, and a broadened revenue base?</p> <p>4.4.a If and in what ways does having women in leadership roles impact basic service delivery, health, and education outcomes?</p>	Medium	Private Sector Engagement
IT-9	<p><i>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</i>    </p> <p>How is social capital defined, and how is the concept used in practice under resilience-related programming in Ethiopia?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions is social capital important in improving the status of women, youth, and marginalized groups in the household and community? - If an individual, household or community has 'low' social capital, what are some examples of successful interventions to help them increase it? - What are the limitations of social capital as a resilience strategy in the presence or absence of other resilience components? - What might be the implications of reliance solely on social capital for resilience vs. additionally investing in formal systems and markets? 	DO 2	<p>2.2.a What are the main opportunities, constraints, and risks to affect systems-level change and build resilience in highland and lowland areas?</p>	TBD	Gender Youth Governance
<p><i>Investigation Methods To be Considered:</i>    </p>			<p><i>Notes:</i> In the Vikara Institute's market systems resilience assessment in Ethiopia and their research in Kenya, some findings suggest that households in areas where the market system is more resilient rely more heavily on markets than kinship networks during shocks.</p>		

RLA's Approach to Investigating and Answering Learning Questions

Beyond collaboratively defining and developing the learning questions, RLA will also support the community to answer these questions through facilitated communities or practice, evidence-gathering and sharing events, research support, surveys, and other methods as appropriate.

RLA will ask the framing questions below when engaging with IP stakeholders to answer learning questions³.

- How many learning activities are required to answer the learning question adequately?
 - Will one learning activity be sufficient, or will it need to be paired with others to answer the learning questions adequately?
 - How long will this activity take? Will that timeframe allow for evidence to be gathered that can be used to enable decision-making?
- Will selected learning activities be considered valid by the Ethiopia resilience community?
 - What types of evidence are most compelling?
 - Are there trusted sources or methods that should be considered as they are seen as more valid?
- Do RLA and the resilience community have the resources to carry out the selected learning activities?
 - What budget and staff/partner constraints are required for the learning activities?

Once RLA staff and community stakeholders have assessed contextual factors to answer the learning question, the next step will be determining the best method or tool to investigate the question.

In addition to CoPr, described in Section 3, above, the table below provides some potential tools/methods RLA will consider leveraging to assist the community in answering the learning questions. RLA will not manage all the tools and processes listed below; instead, RLA will look to engage with RPs to understand where community research and analysis capacities can be leveraged and where there are capacity gaps where RLA can support the community to move its research and learning forward.

³ The questions listed in this section are paraphrased from the CLA Toolkit on Learning Questions located at usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/different_ways_to_address_learning_questions_tool.pdf

Topic-based Traditional Research

- Studies or Assessments which may use
 - ⇒ Key Informant Interviews,
 - ⇒ Focus Groups,
 - ⇒ or other methods for data collection
- Inventories
- Gap Analyses
- Case Studies
- Literature reviews

Rapid Feedback and Systems Analysis

- Mapping
- Causal Loop Diagramming
- Social Network Analysis
- Systems Dynamics Analysis
- Ethnography/Observation

Community Data Gathering and Analysis

- Analysis, Synthesis, and Re-Analysis of existing monitoring data from RPs
- Collection and analysis of new monitoring data from RPs
- Evaluations commissioned by IPs may include
 - ⇒ Impact Evaluation,
 - ⇒ Performance Evaluation,
 - ⇒ Meta-Evaluation,
 - ⇒ Developmental Evaluation, etc.

Evidence-Generating and Sharing Events

- Field days
- Experience sharing
- Training
- Conferences
- Workshops

4. CONCLUSION

The Resilience Learning Agenda provides a guiding set of learning questions for the RLA project to undertake its learning work with the resilience community as it moves into the end of project year one and into project year two. The Resilience Learning Agenda will establish our common learning priorities; focus communities of practice around topics that address learning questions; provide consistency to resilience definitions and measurement approaches; and be a dynamic tool that shifts with changing resilience priorities.

The Learning Agenda will help all resilience IPs to appropriately orient their interventions, reporting, and feedback loops to contribute to coherently explaining:

- *What interventions (or combination/sequence thereof) are helping to build resilience at the household, community, and systems levels?*

The Resilience Learning Agenda provides the resilience community with a framework and community-prioritized impact, portfolio, and intervention-level questions to guide the resilience community moving forward. The Learning Agenda will also serve as a guide for development of RLA's linked Research Agenda, intended for release in the coming months.

Looking forward, RLA is excited to get the Learning Agenda posted on the forthcoming RLA portal to allow for easy community engagement with the learning questions and information. RLA plans to revisit the learning agenda at critical points across the project's lifecycle and will use the portal to communicate community-led adjustments over time.

5. ANNEX: NON-PRIORITIZED LEARNING QUESTIONS

The list of questions below represents all the other learning questions developed by the Task Force Groups but not prioritized at the workshop.

Impact Level

- What gender inequalities, if addressed, are more likely to enable families and communities to withstand shocks and stresses in Ethiopia? How, where, and under what conditions is this likely to have the most significant impact?
- How, where, and under what conditions does urbanization impact resilience in Ethiopia? How, where, and under what conditions does urbanization affect rural and urban communities?
- How, where, and under what conditions is Ethiopia's private sector better positioned to sustain program outcomes? How best can we usefully and comparably measure and demonstrate the positive impact of an inclusive approach to the Ethiopian private sector?
- How, where, and under what conditions does the private sector impact resilience in Ethiopia? Where are the impacts positive, and where are they harmful, and why?
- How, where, and under what conditions does Ethiopian women's participation in public spaces impact building social capital? How does women's increased social capital affect resilience to shocks and stressors in Ethiopia?
- How, where, and under what conditions can USAID/Ethiopia better address drivers of migration and displacement? In what cases can evidence-informed decision-making improve USAID's work in Ethiopia?
- How, where, and under what conditions has Ethiopia's recent conflict impacted men's and women's resilience?
- How, where, and under what conditions have infrastructure interventions in Ethiopia impacted poverty levels? How do the impacts differ when infrastructure investments are combined with more traditional value chains or productivity interventions?
- How, where, and under what conditions do collaborative approaches affect governance within Ethiopia's water and sanitation sectors? What is the nature of this effect?

Portfolio Level

- How, where, and under what conditions are different modalities most effective in Ethiopia for strengthening disaster risk management for vulnerable and marginalized populations?
- How, where, and under what conditions do different combinations of interventions in Ethiopia (e.g., in sequence, layered, or integrated) best improve the capacity of other stakeholder groups to improve disaster risk management practices in Ethiopia?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions has USAID support to Ethiopia's PSNP-enabled market systems resilience?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions have interventions in Ethiopia's agricultural value chain development led to local institutions? To systemic behavior change? What is the relationship between local institutional development and systemic behavior change?
- What are the different types of gender-transformative programming are or could be effective in resilience activities in Ethiopia? To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions are these approaches or combinations of approaches having a measurable impact on resilience, and what is that impact?

- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions have programs in Ethiopia that emphasize gender equality, and the empowerment of women led to reduced poverty and hunger?
- How, where, and under what conditions do different combinations of interventions in Ethiopia (e.g., sequence, layered, or integrated) improve women's financial and social capital? For men? How are these the same or different for women and men?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions do women's and youth's actions affect peacebuilding (instigation) in Ethiopia? How could peacebuilding structures be more gender and socially inclusive, and what difference would we expect that to make on peacebuilding outcomes?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions does social tension contribute to unrest and conflict in Ethiopia? What types of social tension make the most significant contribution? How do these differ across implementation areas?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions does Ethiopia's development community effectively orient our programs to restore jobs in the face of conflict?
- What are the appropriate conditions and target populations for Ethiopia's market systems and/or safety net programming?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions do Ethiopia's safety net programs more effectively promote and achieve greater participation of poorer households in prudent risk-taking and more remunerative economic activities?

Intervention Level

- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions does the market work or not work for smallholder farmers engaging in food systems (production and commercialization) in Ethiopia?
- What are the more common and important barriers and opportunities related to microfinance institutions expanding and improving financial services to PSNP households in Ethiopia? To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions are programs effectively overcoming those barriers elsewhere? Are there interventions that have proven effective outside of Ethiopia, and how can they be applied or improved in Ethiopia?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions have enabling factors and other conditions been modified to influence water quality and sanitation policies, regulations, and processes in Ethiopia? What were the effects of these modifications on men, women, and youth? How can this experience inform programming in Ethiopia?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions does psychological support in conflict areas contribute to Health and Nutrition resilience in Ethiopia?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions does community engagement impact service delivery and accountabilities of service providers in Ethiopia?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions can we measure gender interventions for changes in norms and behavior in Ethiopia? To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions have gender, youth, and social inclusion (GYSI)-specific lessons been identified, promoted, taken up, and applied in other programs? How can the development community improve the learning process in this space?
- To what extent, where, how, and under what conditions have technology-related risks affected programs in Ethiopia? What lessons have been learned? What must practitioners do to minimize harm from threats like technology-based violence?
- What is the capacity of Ethiopia's government institutions to implement peacebuilding interventions? What are their opportunities and barriers regarding Information and Communication Technology (ICT) connectivity and digital delivery?

- **Note:** The two questions below emerged from the RLA Gender and Conflict Analysis. These questions were not included in the workshop prioritization exercise as they arose outside the TFG process, but we have them here for future consideration.
 - How do traditional community structures (e.g., Kire groups) that are often patriarchal in nature reinforce or provide opportunities to transform gender norms in the wake of shocks such as conflict? What opportunities do they present for program delivery?
 - What program approaches and interventions have successfully addressed psychosocial support needs and incorporated trauma-informed programming for conflict-affected communities and IP staff?

