Institutionalization of resilience measurement and analysis in Uganda through the establishment of a Resilience Measurement Unit (RMU)

Building resilient livelihoods using the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA)

→ Context

Resilience policy

Despite Uganda’s flourishing economy, food insecurity remains a challenge in many parts of the country, particularly in the northeastern region of Karamoja. As in other fragile contexts, understanding and measuring the resilience of affected populations is crucial in order to provide better and more informed solutions and to empower vulnerable populations to withstand shocks. As such, an institutional set-up for resilience policy is essential for tackling chronic vulnerability to food insecurity.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) addresses the effects of drought and related shocks in the IGAD region. This initiative provides a necessary framework to coordinate action and enhance partnerships at national, regional and international level to develop resilience-building interventions.

Informed by the IDDRSI strategy, Uganda developed its Country Programming Paper (CPP), a 15-year resilience strategy that identifies priority areas for intervention at both national and regional level. Uganda has since seen substantial investments made toward implementation of the CPP.

Resilience analysis and measurement

Within this context, a Resilience Measurement Unit (RMU) was set up in Uganda in 2016 with the technical lead of FAO under the framework of the EU-funded “Information for Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience Analysis for Decision Making” (INFORMED) Programme. The RMU is based under the Office of Prime Minister and is coordinated by the IDDRSI National Platform. It is tasked with coordinating and undertaking national resilience measurement efforts. It systematically measures the returns on investments aimed at increasing the resilience of vulnerable households in Uganda through the application of appropriate tools. The RMU receives technical guidance from FAO and IGAD through the Resilience Analysis Unit (RAU) on the design of tools for data collection, analysis and reporting, following the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) model.

Key facts

Stakeholders ➔ The Office of Prime Minister (OPM) coordinates with key stakeholders such as the IDDRSI National Platform, the Resilience Analysis Unit (RAU), the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), FAO, WFP and UNICEF.

What is RAU ➔ The Resilience Analysis Unit (RAU) was established by IGAD and UN partners, including FAO, OCHA, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP. It is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and housed within the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD). Its purpose is to develop the capacities of IGAD Member States to measure and analyse resilience.

How does the process of institutionalizing resilience measurement and analysis contribute to increasing the resilience of livelihoods?

Institutionalization refers to having national institutions become part of, and eventually lead, resilience analysis in their country. This is achieved by developing local capacities in resilience measurement and analysis. It also implies involving key stakeholders to collect key research questions and to raise awareness on the measurement findings and their possible use as policy indications and/or impact assessments.

This process brings ownership at country level and ensures that the government is able to measure and analyse resilience of livelihoods, allowing for policy design and impact assessment. Institutionalization ultimately enables better targeted solutions to be designed for vulnerable populations that help to build their resilience to shocks and stressors.
Methodological approach

Since its establishment, the RMU's role has evolved under the technical guidance of the RAU. Its methodology revolves around:

- Organizing working group meetings with key stakeholders, including UN partners, providing a common approach to resilience measurement and analysis in Uganda;
- Developing capacities of national stakeholders and partners on resilience measurement tools through technical trainings, followed by practical hands-on work;
- Conducting impact assessments of investments by building baseline, midline and endline analyses, e.g. the case study in Karamoja (see page 4); and
- Reporting on analytical findings and programme and policy implications to relevant government actors to ensure the constant streamlining of recommendations into action plans.

Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA)

The RMU has endorsed FAO's Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) as the main tool for conducting the required analytical work to inform decision-making on resilience-building initiatives.

The RIMA tool estimates household resilience to food insecurity. The RIMA methodology provides evidence for more effective design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation assistance to vulnerable populations, targeting their priority needs.

In 2017, RIMA was applied to analyse resilience in Kenya, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, Jordan and Mauritania; and to assess the impact of programmes on resilience capacity in Karamoja (Uganda), Mandera cluster (Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia), Puntland and Somaliland (Somalia) and North Kivu (Democratic Republic of Congo).
Governance of the Resilience Measurement Unit (RMU)

The Resilience Measurement Unit (RMU) in Uganda is a technical working group established under the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Disaster Management in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). It was set up by FAO under the framework of the EU-funded “Information for Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience Analysis for Decision Making” (INFORMED) Programme, in collaboration with regional and national stakeholders and UN partners. The RMU includes technical staff from the OPM, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), FAO, UNICEF and WFP. Simultaneously, the RMU creates active linkages with actors within the region, such as the Resilience Analysis Unit (RAU) of IGAD.

Impacts

Thanks to the mandate of the RMU to bridge and create systematic linkages between analytical work and policy processes, research questions inform resilience analysis, which in turn informs policy making. As such, the institutionalization process developed in Uganda enables the newly established RMU to play a critical and central role at national level and to ensure:

- Awareness raising among stakeholders about resilience analysis methods;
- Harmonization of resilience measurement interventions from various partners;
- Government capacity to measure the resilience dynamics on the ground, and therefore better contextualized resilience analysis; and
- Evidence-based allocation of funds and improved targeting of vulnerable populations.

Targeted and coordinated trainings sustainably build capacity for resilience measurement and analysis.

Active participation of resilience analysis at country-level allows for better contextualized resilience analysis.

Governance of the Resilience Measurement Unit (RMU)
Replicability and upscaling

Given its valuable impact on policy and programming, resilience measurement and analysis is being replicated in other parts of Uganda. Specifically, a comprehensive assessment is being conducted for areas that are risk-prone as a result of the refugee crisis, such as the northern areas. With the displacement of more than 1 million South Sudanese refugees in Uganda and despite a unique policy for refugees, a heavy burden is being placed on host communities. It is therefore important to understand the dynamics between the refugees and host communities in terms of resilience capacities. The assessment will help better allocate funds for both humanitarian assistance and longer-term interventions aimed at bridging the humanitarian-development nexus.

Institutionalizing the RMU in Uganda provides a promising example of a government-led resilience strategy that can be replicated in other countries with similar needs. With the support of the RAU, the process could be scaled up across the IGAD region given its high exposure to climate hazards and conflicts.

Pilot study in Karamoja

The first exercise undertaken by the RMU was the roll-out of resilience measurement and analysis in the Karamoja region. Located in northeastern Uganda, Karamoja is one of the poorest and least developed regions in the country. Food insecurity is a major challenge, and vulnerability is further exacerbated by violence and extreme climate events.

The resilience measurement and analysis exercise was undertaken within the framework of the Joint Resilience Strategy (JRS), launched in January 2016 by FAO, UNICEF and WFP for Karamoja. A household level dataset was collected from November to December 2016 in all of Karamoja’s seven districts using the RIMA methodology. The overall findings provide policy indications to enhance agricultural productivity, increase assets, promote social safety nets, reduce distance to basic services and enhance environmental sustainability.

More information

Information for Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience for Decision Making (INFORMED):

RIMA and analysis in Karamoja

- www.fao.org/resilience/background/tools/rima/it/

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