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Online consultations for a knowledge sharing platform on resilience

Collection of contributions received

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Topic 1 - The need for an integrated knowledge sharing platform on resilience: overview and lessons learned from existing initiatives

Dear all,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the first discussion of this online consultation on the creation of a knowledge sharing on resilience.

As the number of resilience related initiatives grows within the food and agriculture sector, it becomes increasingly important to address the clear danger of duplication of initiatives and lack of learning. There is a clear need of harmonization and action-oriented knowledge sharing on resilience initiatives in order to trigger more effective actions and policy design.

This discussion intends to provide a space to exchange on current knowledge management initiatives around resilience so as to identify the needs and gaps for a centralized, integrated and action-oriented platform on resilience. In particular, we would like to invite you to share your experience regarding constraints and lessons learned in order to build synergies among the different initiatives and avoid duplications of efforts and replication of mistakes.

This discussion invites you to address the following questions:

- **Which knowledge sharing platforms including resilience work do you consult and why? If not, why not? What content and/or features are you looking for?**
- **Are you involved in knowledge management for food security and nutrition (FSN)? Are there any lessons learned you would like to share with the community?**
- **Which information on resilience related to FSN is missing so far? Are essential cross-cutting issues like gender and nutrition sufficiently addressed?**
- **In your views, what will be needed to increase the impact of knowledge management initiatives on improved actions (e.g better programming and analysis)?**

I look forward to your contributions and lively discussions,

Luca Russo

senior economist and strategic adviser on resilience at FAO

Contributions received on Topic 1

1. Tim Frankenberger, Tango International, United States of America

I have been part of the FSIN Technical Working Group on Resilience Measurement. This group has been very effective in bringing together technical people from a number of agencies and research institutions to work on harmonising measurement principles and analytical frameworks. There is also a resilience task force that is now being created by TOPS, a programme created by the Food for Peace Office of USAID. I will lead this task force.

One concern I have is it is uncertain whether the FSIN TWG on resilience measurement will continue. There has been on-going discussion with several organizations but no one has come forward with the resources. I think this is critical that it continues. The work on harmonization of measurement approaches is not complete and unless this work continues, there will be multiple approaches that are not comparable.

2. Victor Kamadi, World Vision Kenya, University of Eldoret, Kenya

I am part of the Livelihoods and Resilience team in World Vision Kenya, working in the pastoral communities of Kenya. We are working on project models that promote access and utilization of milk and milk products within the pastoral communities. On this basis, we are focusing on improving nutrition status of children below five years, and PLM, as well as improving household income. Our interventions are also on training the communities on kitchen gardening to establish diversified nutrient dense crops for food.

In partnership with other stakeholders, we are involved with knowledge and technology transfer, especially to the women. Among the lessons learnt during our implementation period are:

Consumption of poor quality milk and irregular milk production patterns at local levels has been minimized due to creation of a reliable, comprehensive and non-fragmented database across the entire milk value chain.

Farmers get onsite real-time results for their milk quality which is done at farm level using simple tools and methods and resulted recorded for transmission.

Acceptance of processed milk products has significantly increased

There has been a notable improvement on appropriate animal health and husbandry practices among the 150 HH reached

Some of the gaps we have come across are'

The constant migration of the pastoral communities

Inaccessibility to reach out to the grazing zones for more milk

Poor animal fodder and pastures

High levels of illiteracy hindering knowledge transfer

The SDG developed should focus more on household interventions as opposed to community based focus. The millennium development goals, were not well achieved especially on food and nutrition security due to too much attention on the community organs, other than trickling down to household level. Women are the hub of the household, our efforts should be concentrated on empowering the women with hands on skills on agriculture/food security interventions.

3. Laura Mattioli, Global Resilience Partnership, Kenya

Hi everyone!

I am the head of Monitoring and Evaluation for the Global Resilience Partnership. I do believe that there is a need for an integrated Platform on resilience measurement, especially as there is now a proliferation of methodologies, and consequently knowledge management platforms, communities of practice and useful information risk being drowned out due to a disproportionate number of channels. However, in order to have a product that makes the difference, it has to be practically oriented and interactive, making it possible to talk to practitioners (in particular in the field) to capture the knowledge generated by practical applications.

Another point is to make sure it is linked with other similar initiatives (but not only) in a consistent way in order to guarantee a rapid update and exchange of information.

On the FSIN, I think they have done a wonderful job with the Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group and it would be really helpful to continue this work. Something to improve: visibility and inclusiveness (more actors in the discussion).

I hope this helps.

Laura

4. Marco Derrico, FAO, Italy

Hi There

I have been part of the Technical Working Group on Resilience Measurement and I trust it managed to achieve a good result: clarify some crucial aspects of resilience measurement.

Resilience is one of the most charming words in development studies and projects. People, institutions, NGOs and agencies adopt a *resilience* approach for better designing their *resilience* enhancing programmes that should address the needs of those who are less *resilient*. Such a large use of the word resilience is not always supported by a clear definition or by a sound measurement approach. There is everywhere an attempt to oversimplify resilience in order to develop light tools that can easily measure and assess resilience. The risk is to produce a bunch of bad surveys and tools which will increase confusion and will not bring any real added value to what we know about resilience.

My take is to build upon what already exists as positive experience: the output from the technical working group on resilience measurement (4 very interesting papers on various aspects of measurement), and established knowledge sharing platforms such as resilienceinsomalia.org where evidence of the impact evaluation of the joint programme (WFP UNICEF and FAO) is reported together with other relevant documents.

5. Greg Collins, USAID, United States of America

The collective progress we have seen over the last several years on building resilience to recurrent crises is remarkable. Consolidating, disseminating and applying what has been learned at scale is an essential next step.

This includes analytic lessons learned in terms of deepening our understanding of resilience and the capacities that enable vulnerable households, communities (and systems) to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses.

It also includes programmatic lessons learned in relation to our efforts to reduce and manage risk, build adaptive capacity and facilitative inclusive growth among people and places subject to recurrent crises through our investments.

Finally, it includes operational and organizational lessons learned in terms of moving from coordination to collaboration and ultimately convergence, both internally within our organizations and across the large number of stakeholders from communities to governments, the private sector and humanitarian and development partners that are engaged in this work.

To make sense of the vast range of learning happening in real time, it is essential that a shared framework for organizing this knowledge be developed and that such a framework be agreed to among the range of actors who are developing local, regional and global knowledge management and learning platforms (FAO, but also a number of NGOs, governments, regional institutions, donors and partnerships, such as the Global Resilience Partnership) so that they can speak to one another.

I don't pretend to know what the right framework is, but I do know that thinking in analytic, programmatic and operational terms has helped USAID articulate 'what's different' about resilience (and what's not). I am also not advocating for a single platform as that would seem to be both untenable and constraining given scope of learning taking place at different scales from local to global and the need for diverse perspectives from the private and public sector and - above all - communities themselves.

Online consultations such as these are a starting point for this discussion and I'll be sure to follow this one with interest.

6. Awira Anthony, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Djibouti

Hello Everyone!

I serve to coordinate the Monitoring and Evaluation component of the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) and it's my pleasure to participate on this online consultation.

Yes, a knowledge sharing platform on resilience is a brilliant idea but requires leadership. In my opinion, the IDDRSI initiative provides a common framework within which partners can work together in populating, capturing, analysing and disseminating information related to resilience. An entire pillar under the IDDRSI strategy is dedicated to knowledge management and research, which provides the framework within which an integrated knowledge sharing platform can be established and coordinated. There are already a number of on-going initiatives being implemented by the IGAD/KM team with support from partners such as USAID, UNOCHA & UNDP – and I believe we can build and strengthen on these existing initiatives rather than re-inventing the will.

I find no harm in institutions investing in new KM products/materials, and methodologies for as long as it is done within a common framework of understanding that involves a wide stakeholder consultation such as the FAO/FSN online forum.

Our experience with the IDDRSI M&E working group has been very positive particularly in relation to the establishment of a community of practice through which demand driven M&E products and services related to resilience have been developed & provided at regional and national level. The main challenge though, has been the difficulty of maintaining a sustained & consistent momentum of participation of experts - especially when it's purely on a voluntary basis.

In regard to gender issues, I think exchange of knowledge through the platform should be guided by gender gaps identified through a gender analysis. IGAD recognizes this very important issue and has commissioned a gender analysis of the IDDRSI strategy with the objective of examining the gender inequalities in access, participation and benefits in all the IDDRSI Priority Intervention Areas (PIA) both at regional and national level; and the findings will be used to re-shape policies and strategies within the framework of the resilience initiative

Potential areas needed to increase the impact of KM initiatives include:

- 1- Conducting a KM audit prior to introducing new KM initiatives – this provides a situational analysis of exiting initiatives, gaps and entry points (demand driven).
- 2- Clearly mapping the information needs of your key partners to ensure that only relevant information is disseminated and shared
- 3- A clear theory of change that describes the pathways to behavioural change should be developed to facilitate tracking of impact of KM initiatives
- 4- Technologies developed to support knowledge management initiatives, should be designed in a simple and user-friendly manner to increase accessibility
- 5- KM products and materials should be communicated to target audiences in a simple and consumable format

Thank you

Anthony

7. Julius Jackson, FAO, Italy

The recent UNSG's report for the World Humanitarian Summit flags building resilience and putting people at the centre as a core part of the vision for "One Humanity: Shared Responsibility", and as underpinning delivery of assistance and risk management processes. Just by way of saying that global processes and related agreements and recommendations will be behind deepening our collective work on resilience, building the evidence base, and shaping how we work together to achieve Agenda 2030; given the wealth of material and research out there (analytical, programmatic, operational and organizational, as usefully characterized in a previous post) a centralized, integrated and action-oriented platform on resilience will be a vital resource.

A couple of design/feature points building on previous posts. First, given that it is inevitable (and desirable) for there to be a variety of resilience-focused platforms at different levels, and for different audiences, it will be vital to ensure a high degree of interoperability between diverse knowledge management and learning platforms to facilitate the sharing of information from the off, i.e. being able to set up regular feeds from other data sources, having shared/mapped ontologies etc. Second, the channels of information and increasingly overwhelming. Many of us subscribe to various online feeds from various networks – professional, technical and other – but the one's I value most are those that provide a synthesis of useful, interesting and topical items. For example, The One Billion Hungry: Can We Feed the World? weekly bulletin "What we have been reading this week" is a useful digest, which has led me to material that I wouldn't otherwise have come across. Something to consider as a possible feature.

8. Dramane Coulibaly, CILLS, Burkina Faso

[FRENCH VERSION]

De la formulation d'un Cadre d'approche harmonisé de mesure de la résilience

Depuis fin 2012, l'Union Européenne et les trois OIG de la région Sahel et Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO, UEMOA et CILSS) se sont engagés dans un partenariat international appelé Alliance Global pour la Résilience (AGIR) avec pour ambition de renforcer la résilience des populations. Il s'agit de créer les conditions d'adaptation aux mutations dues au changement du contexte climatique, environnemental et socio-économique.

Avec cette montée en puissance de la problématique de la résilience, le besoin de proposer à la région un mécanisme harmonisé de mesure de la résilience est devenu pour le CILSS (bras technique de la CEDEAO) une nécessité impérieuse. En effet créer des liens forts entre les efforts humanitaires et de développement nécessite la mise en œuvre des programmes structurants à long terme pour lesquels une bonne compréhension du dynamisme et de la dimension de la résilience est fondamentale pour renforcer les capacités des systèmes à tous les niveaux.

La 29^e réunion annuelle du Réseau de Prévention des Crises Alimentaires (RPCA) dont le thème central a porté sur les « Indicateurs et outils méthodologiques de mesure de la résilience » a recommandé la formulation d'un « Cadre d'approche harmonisé de mesure de la résilience » sous le leadership des organisations régionales (CEDEAO, UEMOA et CILSS).

En effet, la grande diversité des indicateurs et des méthodologies en développement et le souci d'éviter la cacophonie ont amené le RPCA a recommandé, à l'image du Cadre d'analyse de la vulnérabilité courante (CH), la convergence des approches vers un outil unique, reconnu par tous comme seul cadre de référence en matière d'évaluation de la résilience.

L'étroite collaboration CILSS/FAO instaurée depuis 2013, sur la base de RIMA, pour faire de cette préoccupation des autorités et acteurs de la région une réalité inspire de ma part les leçons et dispositions particulières à prendre pour créer les conditions idoines de réussite d'un exercice du genre :

- *Etablir une frontière lisible entre le technique et le politique.* Quand est ce que l'institution technique en charge de l'élaboration de l'outil devrait-elle impliquer les institutions politiques de décision. A défaut d'un règlement intérieur ou d'un code de bonne conduite gérant les relations entre le technique et le politique l'exercice de conception de l'outil pourrait être mis en retard.
- *Bien définir le rôle de l'appui-conseil dans le cadre de la construction de la Plateforme Technique.* Il faut que toutes les parties en face comprennent que l'action de l'appui-conseil, comme c'est présentement le cas de la FAO auprès du CILSS, s'explique uniquement par sa volonté entre autres (i) de travailler avec les institutions régionales et nationales, (ii) d'éviter la cacophonie dans l'analyse et l'évaluation de la résilience dans la zone en question, (iii) de renforcer les capacités des acteurs régionaux et nationaux.
- *Se mettre d'accord sur la nécessité de mettre en place une Plate-forme technique sur l'analyse et la mesure de la résilience (PT-AMR).* Un dispositif du genre est indispensable si on veut impulser une dynamique inclusive et participative. La plateforme a pour mandat entre autres (i) de conduire le processus de construction de l'outil de mesure, (ii) de coordonner l'ensemble des activités lubrifiant le processus de décision sur les investissements à savoir l'analyse et la mesure de la résilience, le dialogue politique, le développement des capacités, la recherche. Elle est dotée d'organes de pilotage impliquant tous les acteurs concernés et de documents constitutifs précisant son mode opératoire ;

- *Définir ensemble la démarche à suivre pour avoir un outil consensuel, démarche qui devra être participative et inclusive. Des boucles de concertations devront ponctuer le processus pour se mettre d'accord sur les sous-produits constituant des « bulding blocks » ;*
- *Inventorier les méthodologies et approches existantes et leur état de mise en œuvre. Cet inventaire permettra de se mettre d'accord sur une d'entre elles qui servira de fondation. Cet outil de base sera bonifié par les composantes non prises en compte des autres initiatives mais, tout de même utiles dans l'exercice d'évaluation et de mesure de la résilience ;*
- *Créer les conditions de pérennisation de l'exercice d'analyse et de mesure de la résilience. Les activités d'analyse et de mesure de la résilience au niveau régional et dans les pays devront s'inscrire dans la durabilité pour pouvoir (i) montrer les effets et impacts des investissements effectués, (ii) orienter les décideurs et appuyer la planification et la programmation de leurs interventions futures. Entre autres, trois conditions préalables devront être réunies à savoir l'appropriation de l'outil par les pays et les institutions régionales concernées, la capitalisation de la dynamique de mesure de la résilience dans la formation diplômante au sein des institutions de formation de la région, notamment en mettant en place un « Master Résilience » et mise en place d'une stratégie de financement durable de l'exercice.*

Dramane Coulibaly, Conseiller Principal - Analyse et Mesure de la Résilience de la FAO auprès du CILSS - Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)

[ENGLISH TRANSLATION]

On the formulation of a structured harmonized approach to the measurement of resilience.

Since the end of 2012, the European Union and the three International Organizations for the Sahel and West Africa region (ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS) have engaged in an international partnership called Global Alliance for Resilience (AGIR) with the purpose of reinforcing the resilience of the population. It involves the creation of the conditions for adaptation to the mutations arising from the changes in the climatic, environmental and socio-economic context.

With this increased importance of the resilience question, the need to propose to the region a harmonized mechanism for measuring resilience has become for CILSS (technical arm of ECOWAS) a compelling need. In fact, to create strong links between humanitarian and development efforts requires the implementation of long term structuring programs, for which a good understanding of the dynamism and dimension of resilience is essential to reinforce the capabilities of systems at all levels.

The 29th annual Meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) of which the main theme was about the indicators and methodological tools to measure resilience, recommended the formulation of a structured harmonized approach for measuring resilience, under the leadership of regional organizations (ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS).

In fact, the great diversity of indicators and methodologies being developed and the concern to avoid cacophony brought the RPCA to recommend, just like the framework to analyze present vulnerability (CH), the convergence of approaches towards a single tool, recognized by all as the only reference framework in terms of assessing resilience.

The close collaboration between CILSS/FAO that has existed since 2013, on the basis of RIMA [Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis], in order to make the preoccupation of the authorities' and actors in the region a reality, suggests to me the lessons and particular dispositions to be taken in order to create the ideal conditions for success in an exercise of this type:

- *Establish a clear boundary between technical aspects and policy. When is it that the technicians in charge of constructing the tool should involve the politicians who are taking decisions? Without an*

internal regulation or a code of good conduct that manages the relationship between the technical and the political, the exercise of developing the tool could be delayed.

- *Define clearly the support-advisory role in the organization of building the Technical Platform. It is necessary that all the sections taking part understand that support-advisory action, as is at present the case of FAO with CILSS, is explained only by their desire, among others, to: (i) work with regional and national institutions, (ii) avoid cacophony in the analysis and assessment of resilience in the area in question, (iii) reinforce the skills of regional and national actors.*
- *Agree on the need to implement a Technical Platform for the analysis and assessment of resilience (PT-AMR). A system of this type is indispensable if one wishes to push ahead with an inclusive and participative dynamic. The platform has as a mandate, among others, (i) to conduct the process of building the measuring tool, (ii) to coordinate the ensemble of activities easing the process of investment decision, that is to say, analyzing and measuring resilience, political dialogue, development of capabilities, research. This platform is equipped with steering mechanisms involving all the actors concerned and with a documented constitution wherein its modus operandi is defined;*
- *Define together the actions to be taken to have a consensual tool, a course of action that should be participative and inclusive. Spot Agreement reviews should occur throughout the process to agree on the by-products that constitute building blocks;*
- *Make an inventory of existing methodologies and approaches and their state of implementation. This inventory will produce an agreement as to which one of them will serve as a basis. This basic tool will be enriched by components of other initiatives not taken into account but, even so, useful in the exercise of assessment and measuring of resilience;*
- *Create conditions for the perennial exercise of analysis and measuring resilience. The activities of analysis and measuring resilience at regional and country level should be perpetuated in the long term to: (i) show the effects and impacts of investments made, (ii) give guidance to the decision makers and support planning and programming for their future interventions. Among others, three prerequisite conditions should be met, that is, the adoption of the tool by the regional countries and institutions concerned, the emphasizing of the dynamic of measuring resilience in degree courses in the educational institutions in the region, in particular the implementation of a Master in Resilience, and the implementation of a lasting financial strategy for the exercise.*

Dramane Coulibaly, Conseiller Principal - Analyse et Mesure de la Résilience [Main Advisor for Analysis and Measuring Resilience] for FAO with CILSS - Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)

9. Nancy White, Full Circle Associates, United States of America

Greetings!

Just a small end of the week thought about knowledge sharing in general that has been learned through a lot of experience:

data and information sharing is critically important...

data and information sharing increases in value when it comes out of a database and one can make sense of it in one's own context and

see how to apply it to one's real work (HUGE implications for practical application - another commentor talked about leadership, but it is really about how KS and learning itself pragmatically fits into workflow)

and discuss it with other peers (communities of practice, etc.)

sharing back out the experiences of that contextualized knowledge to keep the knowledge flowing (continuous learning).

The second thought digs deeper into the sense making. Past experience may or may not be useful in future application, particularly in complex situations. So knowledge sharing has to be done in a way that there is clarity about the level of complexity. If there is low complexity, the KS can help for replication. If there is high complexity, we have to do a probe/test/probe approach which may be adaptation or something novel. (See the work of [Dave Snowden](#))

So what does this mean in the context of resilience? From my distant view (I don't work on resilience directly) it seems to me that whatever approach you take, it has to have its roots in complexity theory and practice. There is a significant difference in wanting to avoid reinventing the wheel, and adaptive, forward looking learning that allows improvement in a complex context. So when we think of "platforms" I hope we think far beyond technology and really dig into the business practices in these contexts.

Thanks

Nancy

10. Simone Sala, FAO, Italy

Dear all,

Here are some of the resilience platforms I consult for my work and research:

1. Web Page on Resilience by Rockefeller Foundation:
<https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/our-work/topics/resilience/> [focused on cities, but with interesting insights]
2. LinkedIn community of practice on Resilience by PopTech:
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/5074090> [user-led, 380 members]
3. Farmerfirst platform <http://www.farmingfirst.org/resilience> [unfortunately it is not being updated since 1.5 years]
4. World Bank supported Open Data for Resilience Initiative (OpenDRI)
<https://www.gfdrr.org/opendri>

I think it is often missing a link to the tools, methodologies/approaches that are already available and (may be) linked with resilience issues. I refer not only to products developed from governmental organizations or academia, but also to the many community-driven projects that may be mobilized towards resilience building (e.g. the Missing maps project, an Open Street Maps project to develop accurate maps of poor disaster-prone areas of our planet <http://www.missingmaps.org/>).

In terms of information and knowledge, it seems to me that there is a general lack of references to move beyond the general concept of resilience as a 'recovery from crises' only. I would expect further information on the way we could build redundancy into a society, since that is key to how a given community or city responds to disaster (for example providing resources to better link the agrifood and 'neighboring' system, as energy and transport).

Broadly speaking, I think that cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, nutrition) are not adequately addressed. For this reason engaging established (online) community of practices may help in conceptualizing the way such issues can contribute to resilience building as well as in providing concrete means for their integration into resilience initiatives.

Finally, I think another missing link is that of the last mile. How can we transfer the knowledge from a web portal to the stakeholders serving a community in need (and to the community itself)? How can we share complex concepts with them without these concepts/information being misunderstood? Leveraging multiple communication channels and building on existing networks could help disseminating knowledge, as well as engaging the communities in sharing their knowledge. I think it is very important to keep this in mind before/while designing the platform, instead of considering it as a separate issue - otherwise there may be bottlenecks for sharing and capturing knowledge outside of it dynamically.

11. Dramane Coulibaly, FAO/CILSS Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

A regarder de près, la problématique de la résilience n'est pas nouvelle pour les sahéliens, leurs gouvernants, leurs institutions et leurs PTF. En effet depuis plus de 40 ans, ils ont par la création du CILSS matérialisé leur volonté et leur solidarité à combattre ensemble la sécheresse et la désertification. Les initiatives de sortie durable de l'insécurité alimentaire, de la malnutrition et de la pauvreté qu'ils ont pour ce faire créées, se sont articulées autour de deux orientations essentielles :

- une réponse à court terme pour prévenir et gérer les crises alimentaires et réhabiliter les zones à risque ;
- une réponse structurelle à moyen long terme pour réduire la pauvreté et l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages par l'amélioration de la productivité agricole, l'accroissement de la production et l'amélioration de l'accès au marché

Malheureusement, les processus d'opérationnalisation de ces orientations étaient cloisonnés voire concurrentiels notamment dans la mobilisation des ressources. La présente montée en puissance de la problématique la résilience ces dernières années, avec les populations vulnérables et la sécurité alimentaire comme focus, donne par conséquent la formidable opportunité de créer des liens forts entre les efforts humanitaires et de développement et ce, de manière visible et concrète. Ce rapprochement est synonyme entre autres (i) de plus de synergie entre urgence et réponse structurelle, (ii) de mutualisation des efforts voire des ressources financières, (iii) de programmation concertée et de meilleure appréhension des effets et impacts des interventions, (iv) de meilleure identification des cibles.

C'est pour cette raison qu'en 2012, les responsables des organisations régionales Ouest Africaines (CEDEAO, UEMOA, CILSS) et l'Union européenne ont convenu de fédérer leurs efforts autour d'un partenariat international pour la résilience à travers une initiative baptisée « Alliance Globale pour la Résilience -AGIR- Sahel et Afrique de l'Ouest. Elle ambitionne d'harmoniser les réponses aux situations d'urgences et aux causes structurelles de l'insécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle.

Par conséquent, pour minimiser les risques d'éparpillement des initiatives non porteuses de résultats, d'émiettement des ressources financières, de refus de mutualisation des ressources et des efforts, les porteurs de AGIR prônent certaines exigences et conditions préalables :

1. L'existence d'une volonté politique affirmée des Etats, des institutions et des acteurs concernés nationaux et régionaux. Elle est nécessaire et se matérialise entre autres par :
 - a) des investissements structurants visant l'utilisation durable des ressources disponibles et l'accroissement non moins durable de la productivité et de la production agricole au sens large du terme et ;

b) une réponse appropriée et efficace aux pénuries alimentaires – ce qui implique une assistance alimentaire permanente - par la réhabilitation des infrastructures de soutien à la production et la restauration rapide des capitaux circulants dans les zones affectées par les crises.

2. La disponibilité d'un cadre stratégique et des programmes structurants nationaux de résilience. Le cadre stratégique en tant que référence pour les interventions aussi bien régionales que nationales sera décliné dans les pays en projets et programmes. Le processus de formulation desdits programmes se fera à travers des dialogues nationaux participatifs et inclusifs durant lesquels, il sera procédé à un « mapping » des politiques, programmes et cadres de dialogues existants à l'aune de la résilience. Ce « mapping » permettra d'identifier les priorités pertinentes contribuant au renforcement de la résilience des ménages, familles et communautés vulnérables. Le caractère inclusif des dialogues nationaux est crucial pour favoriser la mutualisation des efforts et surtout éviter la cacophonie aussi bien dans la formulation des projets et programmes que leur mise en œuvre et leur mesure. Cette dernière requiert non seulement des données fiables mais également consensuelles.

3. La disponibilité des moyens et capacités nécessaires pour mesurer les impacts investissements faits sur la résilience. Ce qui passe par la mise en place d'une Plateforme technique pour évaluer, analyser et mesurer la résilience. Cette Plateforme sera structurée et régie par des textes qui règlementent son fonctionnement. Elle devra fonctionner suivant une approche participative et inclusive mobilisant l'ensemble des acteurs ayant participer aux dialogues nationaux de formulation des programmes résilience. Compte tenu de la multiplicité des initiatives, une de ses tâches serait aussi de concevoir et faire appliquer un outil consensuel d'évaluation, d'analyse et de mesure de la résilience à tous les niveaux (national, communautés, familles et ménages).

Enfin créer de la synergie entre les initiatives autour de la résilience et harmoniser et partager les connaissances en la matière me poussent à exprimer quelques préoccupations :

- Beaucoup de définitions et de concepts de la résilience existent encore aujourd'hui. Lesquels prendre ? D'où la nécessité d'adopter une approche pragmatique pour aborder la problématique de la résilience. Il est de ce fait nécessaire de prendre en compte les aspects entre autres liés à la programmation, aux compromis à faire et au coût-efficacité des interventions.
- Il faut aussi pouvoir se mettre d'accord sur un certain nombre de principes à savoir : la compréhension du contexte de la résilience, le renforcement de capacité des acteurs pour participer à la construction de la résilience, la prise en compte des institutions qui y contribuent, bâtir autour de l'atténuation des risques, la prise en compte de la nutrition.
- La résilience porte certes sur 4 types de capital : le capital humain, le capital institutionnel, le capital social et le capital politique. Mais, il est essentiel d'investir en premier lieu dans le capital humain qui est le fondement des autres capitaux.
- il est nécessaire d'impliquer les petits producteurs dans la planification, la mise en œuvre et le suivi évaluation des politiques de résilience.
- La nécessité de prendre de plus en plus en compte la dimension régionale de la résilience dans nos réflexions me paraît évidente. Les communautés vulnérables frontalières à cheval sur deux pays ou plus devront nécessairement harmoniser leurs initiatives pour investir dans et mieux exploiter les ressources partagées.

Topic 2 - Setting the scene for an integrated knowledge sharing platform on resilience

Dear all,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this second week of the online consultation on the creation of a knowledge sharing platform on resilience.

As the number of resilience related initiatives grows within the food and agriculture sector, it becomes increasingly important to address the clear danger of duplication of initiatives and lack of learning. There is a clear need of harmonization and action-oriented knowledge sharing on resilience initiatives in order to trigger more effective actions and policy design. This week, we would like to focus on the need to build synergies with existing resilience initiatives, discuss the gaps to fill in terms of knowledge sharing, and consult with participants on what they would like to see as products and services on the knowledge platform on resilience.

This discussion invites you to address the following questions:

- **How can we avoid duplication efforts and create a living, innovative and action oriented platform?**
- **How can we build effective synergies with existing initiatives? Which ones? How to link to NGOs, Academia, other UN, international and regional organizations, as well as national governments?**
- **How can we ensure that the platform will not be an information aggregate platform only but an information and service provider? With what content, what types of products? What services? What level of interactivity?**
- **How about 'learning': Should we include capacity development and learning material and activities? How and which ones?**

Looking forward to your contributions,

We count on you,

Luca Russo, Strategic adviser resilience programme management team, FAO

Tim Frankenberger, global expert on food security, livelihood approaches and resilience, and president and co-founder of Tango International

Contributions received on Topic 2

12. Jemal Mensur, IGAD, IDDRSI, Djibouti

Dear all,

I would like to congratulate the FAO team for creating a good mechanism to capture the expert's views on KM and resilience issues. Which is one way of capturing a tacit knowledge.

Having said that, recently, In IGAD PCU we come up with draft Knowledge Management Strategy document which will guide road map, to implement the Knowledge Management issues on resilience within IGAD region. The KM Strategy come up with seven key KM Strategic areas.

1. Facilitating Knowledge Generation Processes
2. Strengthening Knowledge Capture Processes
3. Strengthening Knowledge Sharing Processes
4. Facilitating Knowledge Utilization Processes
5. Diversification of Knowledge Management Experts
6. Enhance Analytical Capacity of Experts
7. Promoting Partnership and Networking of Knowledge for Development

In my view In order to achieve the above key KM strategic areas, technologies can play an important role. Technologies will used by people (Stakeholders) to meet pre-identified processes to achieve or support the drought and disaster resilience agenda. I also believe there should be a smart unified and integrated platform which provides various types of services and address all the issues above.

Now the question is, is there already a generic tool which can address the above key KM strategic areas in an integrated fashion? If there is already a tool, which can address the above issues, no need to reinvent the wheel except adapting or strengthen the tool. The challenge is that, there are plenty of disconnected technologies, which can address / satisfies specific requirements but not all. This by itself is remain as a challenge for us.

Regarding, one of the discussion point which is **How can we avoid duplication efforts and create a living, innovative and action-oriented platform?**

Within IGAD the reason why we come up with the KM strategic area number five which is **Diversification of Knowledge Management Experts**, is because to minimize / avoid duplication of efforts. This could be achieved by establishing a Knowledge Management Working Group composed of key KM players (KM workers), Regionally, Nationally and subrationally. If such kind of KM working group network is established, it can easily be connected to the global KM working group to transparently share, discuss, aware what is currently going on. Which can contribute to avoid duplication of efforts.

Thank you

13. Tim Frankenberger, facilitator, Tango International, USA

Hello everyone:

I am sitting in an airport lounge traveling home from meetings held in Washington on resilience and wanted to pass on some thoughts to you. First I think that there are a number of networks that need to be linked up for sharing resilience information. These include the Food security Information Network which I mentioned in my last message, as well as the Food Security Network supported by TOPS, Agrilinks supported by USAID, and Rockefeller resources. All of these sites can be accessed through the internet and have plenty of material on resilience measurement. We must make sure that the lessons captured by these networks is shared across these sites because they have very different memberships. DFID is also setting up a knowledge sharing platform through BRACED that ODI is engaged in.

Second, given the cost of collecting primary data, we should encourage different agencies, donors and governments to make existing data available for promoting resilience analysis. Many donors are already making these data available but more could be done on this.

Third, I think the real gap in sharing is about what are better practices in terms of interventions that actually lead to improved resilience. NGOs, governments and other implementing agencies are requesting such information all of the time. We need to share the tools we use to determine whether one practice is better than an alternative under what circumstances and in which context. With all of the resilience projects being implemented we need to share the lessons that are coming from implementation. We have a great opportunity to do this in real time as we see whether the programmes we are implementing are holding up under the impact of El Nino.

Fourth, we need to share better practices on how to do comprehensive assessments that lead to better design. Such assessments should help in developing a theory of change on what investments will lead to greater resilience in a given context so that measurement approaches can be designed to capture these changes. There is a long history on vulnerability assessments that we can build upon to inform our assessments aimed at improving resilience. We need both light assessment approaches that rely on qualitative data and secondary data as well as more mixed method approaches that combine qualitative and quantitative data collection.

Finally we need to determine what are better practices for linking social protection to resilience programming. For example if we know that shocks are overwhelming a community's ability to manage the shock, what are the key trigger indicators for activating a crisis modifiers for protecting assets. How do we determine the scale of the response, the timing and the duration. This information sharing would be critical as we struggle to respond effectively to the effects of El Nino.

Thanks. Tim

14. Jimmy Owani, FAO, Italy

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate the resilience/FSN team for putting in place the knowledge sharing platform. In order to avoid duplication, promote innovative ideas and ensure sustainability, it is important that all key stakeholders (donors, the academia, UN agencies, research institutions, NGOs, etc) are actively involved and provided with regular updates through the platform. This could be done through organizing bi-annual or quarterly meetings at global and regional levels to discuss resilience related issues. By doing so, the platform will be able to get new ideas, remain vibrant and alive!

To be more effective, the platform should consider building synergies with existing fora or platforms at global or regional levels such as the Resilience Development Forum for the Near East and North

Africa, which brings together UN agencies, NGOs, the private and public sectors in the region to discuss resilience issues in countries affected by the Syria crisis.

In order to make the platform an information as well as service provider, I suggest that key institutions, bodies and persons with expertise and experience in resilience should be identified and networked to ease access to their expertise whenever needed. In other words, consideration should be made to develop a roster or a network of experts on resilience that can be engaged or tapped whenever needed. The platform could facilitate sharing of resilience good practices, development of resilience technical papers and act as one of the main sources of resilience experts.

In terms of capacity building, given the nature of its work, mandate and the current work on resilience, I believe FAO is well placed to strengthen capacities of Government institutions and other stakeholders on resilience either singly or in partnership with other resilience renown institutions and bodies such as Tulane University and the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPN), among others. Capacity building tools can be developed and tailored depending on the target group.

15. Giulia Riedo, FAO, Italy

Dear all,

I am glad to read all this insightful contributions about knowledge sharing for resilience. I am working on Good Practice documentation and I have also cooperated in documenting Good practices on Resilience.

Here some of the main issues I have noticed by documenting good practices:

First, practices often lack of monitoring and evaluation, hence it is difficult to evaluate the results/impact of a practice and it is difficult to understand whether the practice is really a good practice or not. It might be useful sharing on the platform the indicators/criteria used to verify the improvements on resilience after the practice implementation. I think it would be also useful, let the Technical Working Group using part of this platform to make progress on their discussions on resilience measurement harmonization and to share their results.

Second, there are difficulties related to Good Practices dissemination and even more for Good Practices implementation. In order to reach directly practitioners, the platform could produce learning material for training government and NGOs staff, university students, etc. It is also important to make a link with all these different actors, even by outreach and communication activities at the country level. Furthermore, we should reflect on how this knowledge, once shared and disseminated, will be implemented, also at the FAO level. What are the obstacles to the implementation of resilience good practices? An online platform could be also used as a tool for monitoring/validating the implementation in an interactive way: once a good practice is shared, people could upload their experiences on implementing the same practice, making comments and sharing their results.

Gathering, disseminating and applying good practices seems to be considered one of the key elements of this upcoming platform. Therefore, in order to design a more demand-oriented product, hence a more useful tool, I have just two small questions: What are the essential elements to be included in a Good Practice document for Resilience? What would be the most effective way to disseminate them?

My best regards,

Giulia

16. Roger Leakey, International Tree Foundation, United Kingdom

Dear Dominic,

The attached docs are all about increased resilience (environmental, social and economic), land rehabilitation and reversing the "Cycle of land degradation and social deprivation". The problem is a complex set of interacting issues, requiring equally interactive interventions to address them. I have been working on this for 25 years and believe we now have an appropriate and tested (and perhaps unconventional) approach.

Best wishes

Roger

Prof RRB Leakey

Vice Chairman, International Tree Foundation

[Twelve principles for improved food security within multifunctional agriculture and enhanced rural development](#)

[An African Solution to the Problems of African Agriculture](#)

[The role of trees in agroecosystems and tropical agriculture](#)

[What readers say](#)

17. Nancy White, Associates, United States of America (second contribution)

Some week two ponderings...

As I read through the responses to date, a couple of things jumped out at me. One was the sense of information overload, contrasted with the need to map out the various km/ks/data and related platforms (and all that this implies in terms of data formats, agreements, etc.)

What I have not discerned is how the demand from the user has been clarified or articulated. Is there a role for design thinking here? It is easy to start setting out design ideas and requirements and march ahead, but designing with users might be a useful initial exercise.

What do the rest of you think?

Nancy

18. Ky Luu, Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy, USA

Many thanks to FAO and Dominique for this timely discussion as Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (TU/DRLA) is currently hosting two learning forums in New Orleans for our academic partners in Africa as part of our USAID supported "*Resilient Africa Network (RAN)*" and our UNICEF supported "*Resilient Malian Child.*" Over the past two weeks, our partners from Ethiopia, Uganda, South Africa, Ghana, Mali, etc., have been able to share and discuss their qualitative and quantitative data addressing a range of challenges from climate variability, conflict, drought, flood, food insecurity, child well-being, etc. We've also been able to have a dialogue on what has worked . . . and what has not worked. These exchanges have resulted in the exploration of resilience dimensions, pathways, and interventions, across 10 countries and cross-cutting issues.

A critical discussion that is currently taking place is not only WHAT are the most salient findings emerging from the data to strengthen resilience, but WHO (in addition to the local innovation teams

supported by the RAN) will take up these findings to strengthen programs and policies, and HOW can these university partners effectively disseminate their findings. Therefore, we clearly see a need for a knowledge sharing/management platform (question 1). With regard to question 2, I fully agree that the platform should be more than an information aggregate platform and should be an avenue for discussion and debate around what is useful and relevant . . . and what is not. Therefore, the platform should have a mechanism whereby those who share their methods, data, and analysis can interact with consumers of that knowledge in a side forum that promotes respectful exchanges that can result in constructive feedback to strengthen future efforts to design, collect, implement, and evaluate resilience building activities.

Ky

19. Volli Carucci, World Food Programme (WFP), Italy

Interesting initiative Luca & colleagues. A few inputs into this discussion and a few questions below.

- There are already some resilience knowledge sharing platforms (called differently in specific contexts – localized to a few countries, some more ad-hoc) or planned ones and to develop a new one on resilience building for food security and nutrition may be a good idea but we need to make sure that it is either possible or desirable, considering all the work that is ongoing on this topic worldwide - some partners may see this as a duplication of theirs efforts or happily join if there is a true value addition.
- It is not clear what the intention of the platform is – including with whom and on what? This relates to discussion 1 – i.e. it is critical to be clear about what is the main aim and focus of the platform. For example, will this platform focus on programme, policy, analysis and knowledge aspects of resilience building for food security and nutrition? Is the main aim to trigger effective programmes and policies? Too broad and we will end up surfing into an ocean of topics, sub-topics, etc, with the risk of not being used or becoming self-celebratory. Too narrow and it will probably duplicate some of the existing efforts. We are also not clear about the target audience? Will for example this platform target policy makers? Or will it include practitioners and analysts? Where is the gap at this point in time.
- As by definition resilience building is a partnership effort, it would be interesting to explore to make this initiative '**partnership-driven**' (like the FSIN) – and not a single agency platform. If we aim to create a platform that will target different audiences, then we will need to make sure that different aspects of resilience building efforts are well reflected - **from the planning, design and implementation of programmes, to measurement, and sharing good practices**. This is what is really missing at the moment: a platform where different approaches are presented in a coherent manner, from planning to implementation and to measurement of results. So far, there is a lot on definitions, analysis and measurement – little or nothing on programming, integration, concrete activities. As resilience building is about layering efforts and strengthening complementarities, this will be particularly useful to have a better understanding of what are the various tools, approaches, programmes, analyses, activities in different contexts being implemented by different stakeholders and, in turn, it will help trigger actions on how to best integrate efforts. However, this is a lot of work and the risk is to stretch already scarce resources to fill a portal info.
- Another important aspect is the governance of the platform. It would be extremely important to clarify upfront the main roles and responsibilities, especially if this is a partnership initiative. For example, who will be in charge of what? Will there be an editorial team? Will there be monthly multi-partner meetings? Costs? How to filter info, validate what is valuable and decide what is not?

20. Awira Anthony, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Djibouti

Allow me bounce back into the discussion to share a few thoughts on setting the scene for an integrated knowledge sharing platform.

I recognize quite a lot has been mentioned about the need to avoid duplication - but this time I would like to pick-up on the point of creating a living, innovative and action oriented platform. I recall in my last submission, I mentioned something about the challenge of maintaining a vibrant momentum in the platforms especially when membership is largely based on a voluntary basis.

I asked myself what incentives would keep a platform action-oriented. Tim pointed out an important issue on the increasing demand by NGOs, governments and other implementing agencies on the good practices that lead to real improved resilience. For as long as such a platform can provide valuable & visible benefits/services to its clients, the demand will be available and this would consequently keep the platforms action-oriented. I also think that by recognizing outstanding contributions of institutions & personalities including specific products and services generated through these platforms, this would significantly keep the fire burning.

A few additional thoughts on how a platform can be an information and a service provider:

- 1- Clearly identify the knowledge management initiatives in a target area;
- 2- Clearly identify what knowledge management products and services are most needed (and, therefore, most highly valued) by high-priority, clients, e.t.c;
- 3- Clearly identify which of these key knowledge management products and 4- services are already satisfactorily provided by others in the target area;
- 5- Clearly identify which of the gaps of the remaining key knowledge management products and services are in area where the platform can contribute significantly

Thank you

21. Tesfaye Beshah, The World Vegetable Center, China

Currently, I am working with the AVRDC - World Vegetable Center as a Capacity Development Specialist. I Served IGAD as Technical Coordinator to the Resilience Analysis Unit and as a Coordinator of Knowledge Management, which provides a background to my contribution below.

I appreciate the proactive and consistent actions taken by the FAO Team to create space for knowledge sharing on relevant topics.

Returning to theme of discussion 2, I vote for the idea of creating an order to the influx of information from various sources. Following the comments from my colleagues in IGAD, we need to align the global knowledge management, such as the one proposed here, with the regional, national level and the sub-national levels. If I got it right, issues mentioned earlier about scale speak to this level of operations.

The other issue about strengthening resilience is who uses what knowledge at which level? For instance, how can pastoralist, farmers and fishermen and women get access to information that is available in digital forms? Moreover, knowledge sharing is not sufficient to bring resilience capacities because knowledge management is about integration of knowledge generation, capture, sharing and utilization.

Hence, one has to think of the nature of knowledge itself (its relevance for who). This is best approached when we integrate and share what we do from planning, M&E to impact assessment. Making effort on sharing knowledge alone will not help much in resilience agenda, even though we need to organize ourselves better in knowledge sharing.

Knowledge management is one of the essential components of capacity development at individual, group, organizational and systems levels. Therefore, we need to integrate knowledge management with capacity development framework to achieve strategic goals at scale. In this regards, I wish to indicate the IGAD's initiative together with its partners (FAO, WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNOCHA) in strengthening the analytical capacity of middle level policy-makers and technical experts on resilience measurement and analysis. This work is in progress by the IGAD Resilience Analysis Unit.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Tesfaye Beshah, PhD
Capacity Development Specialist
AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center

22. Alexis Hoskins, World Food Programme, Food Security Information Network Secretariat, Italy

Dear colleagues:

As mentioned by several respondents, the Food Security Information Network's Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group is a good example of how to build and share knowledge on resilience among different stakeholders. The RM-TWG's publications on principles and a conceptual model for measuring resilience have been instrumental in guiding regional and country-level practitioners; four additional resilience Technical Papers were recently published on Household Data Sources; Qualitative Data and Subjective Indicators; Measuring Shocks and Stressors and Systems Analysis (see <http://www.fsincop.net/topics/resilience-measurement/outupts/en/>). These products have already been used to inform resilience measurement approaches by NGOs, FAO, WFP and IFAD, and over 780 FSIN members have signed up for the Resilience Measurement Community of Practice. It will be important to build on these achievements using the FSIN (which is governed by a multi-agency steering committee) as a "neutral broker".

Some comments/for your consideration:

First, FSIN is exploring the use of more interactive features to better engage with our COP members, but given the heavy demands on field practitioners, it is challenging to get them to share their experiences and questions. One option we have identified, is to establish a roster of independent, external experts to respond to technical requests from the field.

Second, since one of the aims of the Knowledge Platform is to aggregate information on resilience, how is this information different from, or related to, the information found on existing food security, nutrition or natural resource management platforms?

Finally, in order to build effective synergies with existing initiatives, a participatory mapping of these initiatives would be welcome. This could be followed by a meeting with key stakeholders at which a more fleshed out proposal for the Platform is discussed.

Thank you,

Alexis Hoskins

23. Jean-Thoma Cornelis, Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, ULg, Belgium

Dear,

The concept of resilience is of prime importance when the magnitude of a disturbance implies that a return to the preliminary environmental state will increase the functioning of the system and its environmental functions.

In terrestrial environments, Soil is an interface between the lithosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere and atmosphere where the bio-physico-chemical processes occurring will strongly govern the biogeochemical cycles of elements at the global scales. Soil is by its very nature integrated in terms of components and mechanisms. In this regard, sharing knowledge about factors and processes (natural and anthropic) that will influence the evolution of soil properties in the landscape is of utmost importance to get an integrated understanding of the ecosystem functioning of the natural environments.

Soil resilience is defined as the intrinsic ability of a soil to recover from degradation and return to a new equilibrium similar to the antecedent state, to recover its functional and structural integrity (Blanco and Lal, 2010; Principles of Soil Conservation and Management). The environmental factors controlling soil resilience are the factors that control the soil-forming processes: rock, vegetation, climate, topography, time and human influence. We therefore welcome initiative sharing knowledge for an integrated understanding of soil-forming processes that control their properties and, in fine, their functions. In this regard, an initiative such as the Earth's Critical Zone Observatories (<http://criticalzone.org/national/>) can augur a promising future in terms of inter-disciplinary research and knowledge sharing about how bio-physico-chemical processes, and their interactions, affect the evolution of soil systems.

Cheers

Jean-Thomas

24. Boniface Bouan, Centre National de Recherche Agronomique (CNRA), Côte d'Ivoire

[FRENCH VERSION]

Bonjour à tous,

Pour que le portail ne fasse pas doublon avec les autres, il dans un premier temps, identifier les portails déjà existants dans ce domaine, ensuite dresser une liste des évènements, des faits ou tout autre chose pouvant entraîner la résilience. il faut également impliquer fortement les exploitants agricoles, les fermiers, les éleveurs, les agriculteurs, les chercheurs les techniciens d'appui au développement.

Boniface

[ENGLISH TRANSLATION]

Good day everyone!

So that the portal does not duplicate others, it is necessary to identify the portals already existing in this area and then draw up a list of events or facts or any other thing that could bring about resilience. It is equally necessary to deeply involve farmers, breeders, farm operators, researchers and technicians supporting development.

Boniface

25. Beatrice Ghirardini, FAO, Italy

Dear all,

Thank you for this interesting initiative.

In response to the question on learning opportunities: as part of the FAO e-learning team (www.fao.org/elearning), I see a good opportunity to integrate elements of distance learning on the knowledge sharing platform. Taking into account the diversity of the perspective users of the platform – for example, in terms of background, knowledge, languages – including e-learning materials would allow the building of a common knowledge base.

e-Learning materials could also address the needs of middle-level policy makers, technical experts on resilience measurement and analysis, as well as potential trainers and extension staff working with people in remote areas.

Kind regards,

Beatrice

26. Rebecca Pietrelli, FAO ESA, Italy

Dear all,

Thank you for the interesting initiative and the stimulating debate.

I am currently one of the members of the FAO – Resilience Analysis and Policies (RAP) team and I previously worked for the FOODSECURE research project in the Department of Economics - Roma Tre University.

I believe that two initiatives may be useful for building synergies between universities, UN organizations and other partners working on resilience.

It would be interesting to develop sections by country in the platform, where partners from different institutions may easily share information and materials about their researches and projects on resilience by country. The participation of partners living and working in the country would be a strong asset.

In terms of learning material and activities, uploading in the platform videos of conferences and workshops on resilience would be highly useful for linking colleagues and interested people around the world.

Best,

Rebecca Pietrelli

27. Rajendra Aryal, Food Security Cluster

How can we avoid duplication efforts and create a living, innovative and action-oriented platform?

Example of how Food Security Cluster (FSC) functions is a good one to answer this question. FSC is established to coordinate the food security response during a humanitarian crisis, addressing issues of food availability, access and utilization. It is co-led by FAO and WFP, and the Global Support Team includes FAO, WFP, several international NGOs and Red Cross and Red Crescent members. FSC works in around 36 countries affected by sudden onset and protracted crises. The cluster always serves as a

platform for information sharing among partners, proper coordination of humanitarian responses, discussion on emerging issues related to food security, and information management. FSC has a well versed IM team in Rome that provides the required IM support to countries on data and information management and mapping. These works and capacities largely help complement the partners' effort and avoid overlaps or duplication. Some of the countries where clusters are not activated as per IASC protocols, e.g., some Pacific Island countries, Nigeria, etc., FSC functions as sector and coordinates preparedness, monitoring (e.g, El Nino monitoring in the Pacific region) and response in close collaboration with the Government counterparts and other partners. The cluster serves as a neutral platform for coordinating action avoiding any duplication or overlaps. FSC at global level also facilitates several thematic Working Groups, normally chaired and co-chaired by NGO partners, including the Preparedness and Resilience Working Group (CRS and WHH currently co-chair the WG) that help streamline agencies works and develop relevant products and guidelines. The WG aims to guide and support cluster partners on necessary preparedness and resilience building through the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC).

The platform FSC offers therefore is always dynamic and innovative providing opportunities for partners to also share their ideas, products and good practices. This platform could be well utilized by the partners working on resilience building in food security sector. In the countries where the cluster/sector is not existing, a similar platform could be established led by the relevant Government line ministry (e.g., Ministry of Agriculture) and co-led by FAO/WFP.

How can we build effective synergies with existing initiatives? Which ones? How to link to NGOs, Academia, other UN, international and regional organizations, as well as national governments?

Effective coordination is only possible through close cooperation with partner organizations. FSC has established strong partnership with nearly 40 UN agencies, I/NGOs, academia and donors. FSC also provides necessary guidance at the country level that supports a broad base and timely response in close coordination with the cluster partners. On average, FSC coordinates with around 60 partners at national level. The FSC also works with national and regional cluster systems in both sudden onset disasters and protracted crises. The Preparedness and Resilience WG constitutes both UN agencies and NGO partners, which is at the moment trying to develop a position paper to guide the cluster coordinators in preparedness and resilience building in disaster prone countries or in different contexts and scenarios (i.e., protracted crises, sudden onset and slow onset disasters), determining the different entry and exit points of the country Clusters through the HPC, including linkages to agriculture-based livelihoods, urban livelihoods and early recovery activities in food security). Having the Government leading the cluster coordination in many countries, food security cluster is a perfect platform to synergize the resilience building initiatives in a very participatory and collaborative manner.

How can we ensure that the platform will not be an information aggregate platform only but an information and service provider? With what content, what types of products? What services? What level of interactivity?

FSC manages information by producing 3Ws/4Ws/5Ws matrices (Who? What? Where? When? for Whom?) and relevant maps using GIS. FSC has strong IM team, which works very closely with WFP VAM team, and other IM teams of the partner institutions, in particular OCHA.

Over the last few months, FSC has also initiated a dialogue with Early Recovery Cluster led by UNDP at HQ level to demystify some of the confusions occurring at country level, and this dialogue is continuing. A guidance note prepared on Early Recovery Interventions and Best Practices in food security sector brought further clarity on the scope and nature of the early recovery works the cluster partners can pursue without duplicating or overlapping with the works carried under the umbrella of Early Recovery Cluster.

Gender and Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) lies at the nucleus of FSC's works and gFSC provides continuous support to the country level clusters on increasing awareness and understanding of the benefits of mainstreaming gender, age, diversity and AAP in response and recovery works. A guidance note for Mainstreaming AAP and Core People-Related Issues in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle through the Cluster System, jointly developed by gFSC and Global Nutrition Cluster was considered as a high quality product the two cluster jointly produced.

With the proven track record, FSC can be very instrumental in producing and disseminating high quality products in close interaction and collaboration with the partners on resilience building.

How about 'learning': Should we include capacity development and learning material and activities? How and which ones?

Being one of the major current themes among various humanitarian and development partners, the specific elements of resilience building in food security sector needs to be brought to the ground reality for which people need to be well trained. The elements of resilience, mainstreamed at corporate level by agencies such as FAO, UNDP and few donors and elegantly packed in form of strategic objectives, outcomes and indicators, need to be properly unpacked and applied at the field level. In order to do so, the 'frontline soldiers' working on resilience building at the field level need to understand what it means for them, for the host Government and the very people who have to reap the eventual benefits.

For gFSC, cluster coordination is to ensure that international responses to both sudden onset and protracted crises are clearly led and accountable, aiming to make the international community a better partner for the affected people. This requires additional expertise, and FSC always strives for building capacity of the Cluster Coordinators that are deployed at national and sub-national level. gFSC has developed different training modules in English and French, based on simulation based techniques, and these are perceived as very effective for training the field people. In addition, gFSC also has a pool of experts with decades of strong field experience. Similarly, FSC regularly conducts training for the Information Management Officers. Our strong focus on capacity building and maintaining a roster of Cluster Coordinators and Information Officers has really helped us become quick and efficient to address the requests coming from the field by deploying best people in a very short period of time. Based on this experience, we can advise the resilience team to put a strong focus on preparing a pool of resilience experts and build their capacity.

28. Justin Chisenga, facilitator, FAO, Italy

Dear Beatrice

Many thanks for your contribution. Integrating distance learning/ materials in the knowledge sharing platforms will be a good thing. It will allow the target audience to continuously upgrade their knowledge.

Do you have any end user-based platforms/technologies in mind on which the platform could deliver the learning materials to ensure that these are easily available, accessible and used by the end users?

We hope to hear from you or from any member of the Forum.

Justin Chisenga

29. Mike Jones, Swedish Biodiversity Centre, Sweden

Dear All,

I would like to pick up on a comment by Nancy White with regard to sense making and complexity. I use the sense making framework of Dave Snowden in my approach to understanding the kinds of hard to define problems associated with any environmental management project, of which food security in the context of climate change is an example. I wrote a article on this in relation to pastoralist systems in E. Africa <http://livestocksystems.ilri.org/2015/06/19/system-characteristics-will-determine-appropriate-project-designs-for-resilience-building/> . Knowing what kind of system we are attempting to change has major implications for the design of policy and project interventions.

Similarly, I use Holling's Panarchy as another sense making tool for understanding change in complex systems and wrote another article about this <http://livestocksystems.ilri.org/2015/04/30/resilience-of-what-to-what-and-for-whom-contextualizing-resilience-and-development-in-drylands/>

My impression from the reports that I have seen about resilience building for food security in E Africa, suggests that much of the work being done is based on simple systems thinking and that in part at least, this is due to the accountability constraints of donors who need to know what has been accomplished by the expenditure of funds granted. Matching the needs of cost/benefit accounting with the demands of changing complex and unpredictable systems is challenging. It suggests that a four step approach is required in the design of resilience building projects for food security in the face of climate change:

- 1) what kind of system will the intervention be aimed at;
- 2) if its a complex system, then an assessment key drivers and thresholds that define desirable and undesirable trajectories of change using Holling's Panarchy
- 3) participatory selection of a desirable future state for the system;
- 4) design a project around a theory of change to achieve the desired future state.

My background is in ecology, rural development, planning and complex systems and I lead the resilience thematic group in IUCNs Commission on Ecosystem Management

All the best

Topic 3 - A knowledge sharing platform on resilience: what about Information Technology and Knowledge Management?

Dear all,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this third week of the online consultation on the creation of a knowledge sharing platform on resilience.

As the number of resilience related initiatives grows within the food and agriculture sector, it becomes increasingly important to address the clear danger of duplication of initiatives and lack of learning. There is an urgent need of harmonization and action-oriented knowledge sharing on resilience initiatives in order to trigger more effective actions and policy design.

This week, we would like to focus on the importance of information technology and knowledge management issues. This last discussion is designed to exchange on what technology and infrastructure are most suitable to address the needs of a platform as identified by participants. We also invite participants to express their views on how to best ensure impact of knowledge products and upscale of resilience practices that will be shared on the platform.

Modern information technology (IT) is a major component of most knowledge and learning platforms. Innovative uses of IT provide powerful tools for creating knowledge and accelerate the speed of knowledge transfer. Furthermore, mobile and web-based technologies, including social media and web-based services, connect and facilitate interactions and conversations among users of the platforms and empower them to participate in creating, distributing, and sharing knowledge regardless of their physical location.

By 2020, the number of unique mobile phone subscribers in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is projected to reach 504 million (about 49% penetration rate) up from 329 million (38% penetration rate) in June 2014; and there will be 525 million smartphones, up from only 72 million at the end of 2013. Meanwhile, according to the World Bank data, in 2014 SSA had about 19 Internet users per 100 people. However, this number is expected to go up due to the increasing availability of mobile broadband and affordability of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablet computers (i.e. iPad, Galaxy Tab, etc.) all capable of accessing the internet and applications (Apps) on the go. The Internet Society also forecasts 703 million 3G and 4G connections for sub-Saharan Africa by 2018, which will increase the number of people accessing the Internet on mobile devices.

The information technology infrastructure for the resilience knowledge and learning platform should be scalable and take into account both existing and potential future technologies to connect users, stakeholders, and key partners and to leverage on similar knowledge platforms/initiatives.

Technology related issues are essential in the design of a knowledge platform. However, technology itself does not guarantee that the products and content of a web platform are useful, adopted and scaled up by users. This discussion will call upon “knowledge experts” to address the issues of “use” and “usefulness” of knowledge products and information. Space will be provided to exchange on the necessary links between information technology and knowledge management. Discussion will also address what knowledge sharing methods and tools should be used, what conditions should be put in place, what type of knowledge sharing events could be organized to maximize the impacts of knowledge products and contents.

This discussion invites you to address the following questions:

1 GSMA. 2014. [The Mobile Economy: Sub-Saharan Africa 2014](#).

2 Internet Society. 2014. [Global Internet Report 2014: Open and Sustainable Access for All](#)

- **What suitable, user-based information technologies should be supported by the platform?**
- **Should a web portal be a major component of the platform? What types of modern tools and technologies could be incorporated into the platform to help maximise knowledge transfer and the overall impact of the portal/initiative?**
- **What is the best arrangement for hosting the platform's information technology infrastructure? In-house? External (partners)? Cloud? What are the pros and cons of each option?**
- **How to ensure that knowledge products and other platform contents are used, useful, adopted and upscaled? For which users?**
- **What are the conditions to put in place? What knowledge sharing tools, methods and events should be used and how? Should we set up a community of practice? If yes, which one and why?**
- **How to measure the success of a knowledge sharing platform?**

Looking forward to your contributions,

We count on you,

Paul Whimpenny, Senior Officer, IT Architecture

Justin Chisenga, Capacity Development Officer

Contributions received on Topic 3

30. Fabiana Biasini, FAO, Italy

Dear Justin,

at the FAO e-learning centre we are using Moodle as a open-source, therefore it is an affordable learning management system. Moodle is a user-friendly platform where you can either deliver self-pace e-learning, as well as collaborative learning, supported by tutors.

Both this type of platform and the knowledge sharing platform could be used to carry out a learning needs assessment, to better understand what are the learning gaps and which of these gaps could be addressed by an e-learning programme. Indeed, the dynamic nature of this kind of platforms could also contribute to keeping the learning materials "alive" and up to date.

Best,

Fabiana

31. Justin Chisenga, facilitator, FAO, Italy

Thanks Fabiana.

Indeed a learning needs assessment of the target users will be needed if the platform is required to integrate learning.

Regards,

Justin

32. Joel Snyder, Opus One, United States of America

Some thoughts on a platform...

I think that it's good to throw something out here to get started from the IT side of the house, so here are five requirement that I think go along with this platform.

From a user point of view, it's not clear exactly what class of users you're talking about. I don't think you're trying to support the affected population, although the paragraph about mobile phone subscribers and Internet penetration suggests you are. In any case, I think we can come up with some guidelines that might apply no matter who the end-user is.

First, there is a clear direction for web-based applications to be the base for everything nowadays. In the case of the directions in the earlier consultations, there is nothing here which would require a heavy-weight client or massive amounts of client programming. So from a technology point of view, you'd have these basic design requirements:

- 1- built to run in browsers, without unnecessary plugins (ActiveX, Flash, Java, Silverlight)
- 2- responsive interface (Responsive is a term of art for web designers that indicates a web site that "knows" it is being looked at on a small screen such as a tablet or phone and behaves differently; everyone reading this should have encountered this phenomenon already as they switch between well-known sites on laptop, tablet and phone)

Within the platform, it seems like you will want to have multiple sub-applications. These, I think it is obvious, should be able to be plugged (and possibly unplugged) easily without re-engineering the system. For example, one 'sub-application' might be a discussion forum where people can pose questions and get help from the community to answer them. Another might be a calendar sub-application where participants can share information about events, conferences, webinars, etc. Over time, it might be discovered that the calendar is not useful, and so it should be easy to unplug. And over time it might be discovered that there is a need for some sort of collaboration/training piece (as has already been mentioned), so this should be easy to plug in.

I think that the designers will find this simpler to deal with if the whole project is thought of as modular, rather than monolithic. In other words, let's not have an extended debate on exactly what modules have to be there on day 1, but come up with different options and use rapid prototyping to get things going, then add as the user community finds needs for additional modules. Think of this as an extended and permanent development project, rather than a one-time development process that ends and is static for all time.

Thus, requirement 3:

3- agile framework, easy to expand to add new internal applications

In general, we find that platforms like this are all competing for the attention of the end-user, and the sense of community will be hard to create. We absolutely cannot depend on people coming to this web site on a regular basis unless they are being 'pulled' to it by other forces. So a key part of the core will have to be creating an entitlement system and linking to some sort of authentication/user profile. (Entitlement is a term of art here which can also be used to indicate subscriptions, interest areas, privilege levels, etc. In this sense, entitlement is a generic term for all of these things.) Folks like Facebook and Google are happy to act as authentication service providers, and it's not unreasonable to use those open systems to both eliminate your need to handle authentication but also to make it easy for people to link up. (Some folks will insist on a separate identity, but this is likely to be a fringe corner case)

Once entitlement/authentication is handled, then the system can provide push content to the end users to pull them back to the platform when there are updates in areas they are interested in, when questions they have posed are being discussed, and periodically just to give updates on new content (i.e., monthly or weekly digests). This is really critical to building and sustaining a community; without it, the user population will inevitably devolve into a small set of non-representative people who spend all their time shouting at each other.

Thus, requirement 4:

4- assumption of a "push" model from web site to users, rather than expecting that users will be coming by to participate without prompting

One final requirement comes from the need to ensure that the system meets the needs of the users. In a system like this, there is always a combination of "evergreen" content (i.e., white papers, technical and non-technical resources, documents) and "collaborative" content (i.e., discussions, Q&A, open forums). Collaborative content tends to decay quickly over time, as the topics being discussed become old or the discussion itself is too long to be interesting to a consumer. Thus, any sort of collaboration has to be combined with moderation and, more importantly, curation. There must be participants in the system who have some incentive to overcome the entropic decay and work to winnow content, create summaries, and so on.

The key here is "incentive," as without it, this will inevitably fail. Now, this is definitely not a technical requirement, but technology can help with this. For example, most readers will have noticed "badges" that are constantly being given out by web sites (everyone from Amazon on down) to their high-volume contributors. Some of this will need to be dealt with out-of-band (i.e., someone will be paid to

be a "gold contributor"), but the technology has to support this by providing tracking to recognize valued contributors.

5 - internal measurement system to provide feedback to users who are valued contributors about their status (and to report this externally as needed)

33. Justin Chisenga, facilitator, FAO, Italy

Dear Dr. Snyder,

Thank you for your contribution.

I like the idea of you providing "guidelines that might apply no matter who the end-user is", and the possible approach to building the proposed platform.

The need for incentives to encourage users to use the platform is also very critical.

Let us hear what others say about your guidelines, or possible alternatives.

Regards,

Justin

34. Andrew Nadeau, FAO, Italy

Hi Everyone,

I just wanted to note the issue of scalability of the platform to accommodate mobile/table only users, as well as users that have a preference in communicating and conducting knowledge searches using these devices. These platforms are becoming ubiquitous in many parts of the world, and we will see the same in Africa if you consider the statistics provided by Justin and Paul as part of the opening statement in this discussion. I think the platform should be designed with a forward looking approach in terms of web and mobile based technologies with at least a 5 year timeframe. 5 years may be hard to gauge in terms of emerging technologies, but smart phone access and contributions to the platform need to be considered, as well as a strategy to incorporate social media into the platform design.

Regards,

Andrew

C. Andrew Nadeau
Senior Capacity Development Officer
Head, Capacity Development Unit
Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

35. Joel Snyder, Opus One, United States of America

Andrew, I wanted to pipe in and agree with you on this. I think that we need to think about this type of application as being driven by web searches, rather than someone coming to a destination portal.

In other words, a user might go to their browser and type in what they are looking for, and then expect to get directly to that page. This is the most common model nowadays for people seeking information--things like portals and paywalls and other 'hidden content' are not how people find information.

Of course, there may be a concept of a community or a collaborative exercise where people come together to discuss, work on ideas, and refine thoughts. But I think that your vision of how people will address Internet applications in the future is absolutely correct.

Joel

36. Simone Sala, FAO, Italy

Dear all,

Thanks for opening this up - I think it is great to raise the issue of ICT & Knowledge management in the early stage of platform development.

First of all, I think it is critical to define who the target users of this platform will be. They are the one who we expect will be engaging with it and ultimately make it grow and flourish. The more we know about them, the better we will be able to build a platform responding to their information and knowledge needs through the information and communication channels they already use.

To "ensure that knowledge products and other platform contents are used, useful, adopted and upscaled" the first step is design knowledge products with the users - as stated by the [principles for digital development](#) adopted by various sister UN agencies, among others (e.g. UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, WHO).

There is indeed a huge difference in the information required and the ICT tools used by policy & decision makers, researchers, humanitarian operators, and vulnerable communities: this doesn't mean that the platform cannot serve more than one of these groups. By making the platform agile, as recommended by Joel, it will be easier to add/remove modules dynamically.

Another possible idea is to channel some of the interaction on external platforms that target user groups may be already using. If the Platform will be hosted in-house, it will provide the chance to have only verified information and knowledge products on the platform while leaving the community freely able to share knowledge outside. With ad hoc facilitation, the knowledge generated in this community could also feed the platform itself after validation. For the more, if the community is hosted on a platform included in [zero-rating packages](#) (such as that offered by Facebook in many countries of the developing world) this would allow having knowledge available for free to a larger user base.

I definitely agree with the point made by Andrew Nadeau. Especially if Sub-Saharan Africa is a major target of this platform, it is clear that we should make it mobile-friendly. Mobile is the present and future of the region. Out of the existing 400'000, 60% of African villages already have access to mobile network coverage (Orange Telecom). For the more, the percentage of the population using the Internet is rising thanks to the growth of mobile broadband subscriptions (17.4% of population in 2015). Since 2013 it is more likely to find Internet access in an African households than a computer.

I also think it is good to think about the features this Platform may have.

No matter who the users will be - I am positive that they will be hungry for information, knowledge and training. Learning tools, as recommended by Fabiana, are a great way to engage users. They can also be instrumental in attracting users to the platform - especially if training courses provide participants with simple certificates. Monitoring the way people does tests would also provide with relevant information about the knowledge gaps of key stakeholders.

Finally, I think that investing into facilitation to provide the users with access to information and the tools on the platform will be critical. Should I choose between investing more in technology or facilitation I won't have any doubts: facilitation can transform the platform into a community, the other way around is unlikely to happen.

Hope it helps for now!

37. Cavin Mugarura, Blue Node Media, Uganda

One of the better options for this type of platform is the Drupal Content Management System (CMS). Its abundant set of features makes it the ideal platform. I will highlight a few features.

Organic Groups - This features helps to organize content around groups or sub groups.

Taxonomy - Categorizing content around tags, taxonomy terms helps users find information easily but it also creates a richer user experience

Faceted Search - Building content around facets helps users find information very easily using a combination of filters, tags, terms

Messaging - Instant messaging between users or groups

Interactive maps, Views (Query Builder),

While working on a World Bank project, understandrisk.org we incorporated some of these features.

The other powerful aspect about Drupal is that it has matured beyond simply being a CMS and has evolved into a framework which means that you can build anything with it, interface with external applications based on your unique requirements.

Kind regards

Cavin Mugarura

Technical Lead - Blue Node Media

38. Karine Garnier, USAID, USA

Many thanks for carrying this consultation.

I'd like to offer some reflections which pertain not only to this current week but also previous key questions.

There has been tremendous progress in the recent past to make knowledge sharing and learning as inherent part of all organizations to improve the quality of the programs and increase impact for the ones we serve: the vulnerable men, women, boys and girls.

Overall, I think we need have a better informed on the push and pull factors around KM for resilience. I think someone already touch on that point.

Here at the USAID Center for Resilience which supports resilience across the agency we are utilizing a variety of external platforms which include Agrilinks, the Food Security and Nutrition Network and the USAID learning labs as well as some internal tools. As, Greg Collins, our director, mentioned in previous post, USAID also has participated in the FSIN resilience measurement working group.

I also would like to bring your attention on other relevant platforms such as the the upcoming <https://www.globalinnovationexchange.org> and such OCDE and World Bank platform on innovations.

We should ensure that the RECs' needs and existing initiatives are also considered and involved (i.e. IGAD has developed its resilience KM strategy which should be considered as well and include the IGAD Resilience Analysis Unit which has an important role in KM and learning including capacity building component for the member states).

Other global initiatives such as the [Global Resilience Partnership](#) should be also strongly involved as it already covers a wide and growing range of partners and initiatives.

Capacity development learning material and activities would be a good feature of the platform- could include link to existing trainings by partners, keep track of upcoming in person trainings and events. We can share with you the "introduction to Resilience at USAID" a Primer e-learning module which we released mid last year on Agrilinks. We are also working on Thematic Series on Resilience for USAID and partners which should be ready later this year.

In terms of measuring the success of the knowledge sharing platform, I would recommend consulting this well done [Guide to monitoring and evaluating knowledge management in Global Health programs](#) which can be applied to other KM area.

These are some initial thoughts and I am happy to further engage.