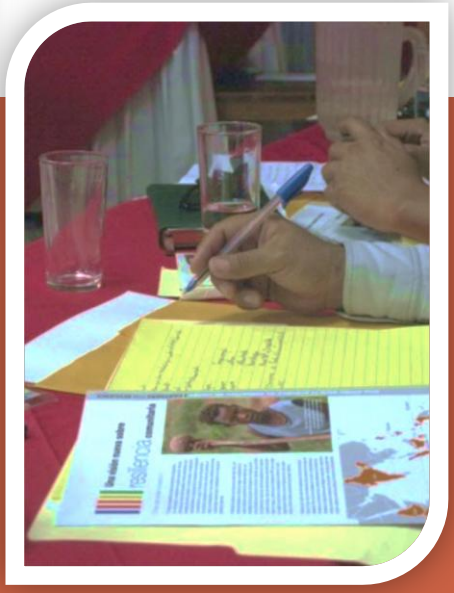
Globalisation Studies Groningen

Learning from and about Partners for Resilience

A qualitative study - Synthesis Report



Authors: D. Hilhorst, C.W.J. de Milliano, L. Strauch

December 2015

Pictures (top): PfR workshop Guatemala (Dávila Bustamente 2015)
Picture (bottom left): Vision map in PfR community Ethiopia (Desportes 2015)
Picture (bottom right): Community Philippines (Leung 2015)

TABLE OF CONTENT

Executive Summary

One of the key principles of the PfR programme is to stimulate learning by combining different knowledge systems (PfR, 2012). In order to learn as much as possible of their innovative approach, the PfR partners have commissioned a qualitative 'Learning from PfR' study to Globalisation Studies Groningen at the University of Groningen (the Netherlands).

The purpose of this study is to assess the dynamics and relevance of an integrated approach towards building resilience. The analytical framework for this study builds partly around: the Theory of Change (ToC); the characteristics of a resilient community as identified by John Twigg (2007), the DFID livelihood characteristics (1999), and the '5Cs' framework (Keijzer *et al.* 2011). Employing predominantly qualitative methods, the study has taken place in four phases: preparation and development of conceptual study framework and coding scheme; collection and analysis of documents, collection and analysis of empirical data (6 case studies), overall analyses and reporting.

The research firstly aimed to find out how the PfR approach is received at the country level and if it resonates with local thinking, assumptions and needs. Building on the theory of change, the different views of PfR staff, community members and government officials are studied (chapter 2). Although similarities were predominant, perspectives of the key obstacles and barriers to resilience often diverged between PfR and communities.

Following the eight key principles of the PfR, the research secondly sets out to explore how the PfR approach has been translated into practise (chapter 3). Generally speaking the PfR approach was well-received and perceived to be logical and valuable according to PfR staff. The approach was applauded since it enables integrated planning and project design and especially when a livelihood perspective is integrated into the approach. Sustainability, replicability, up-scalability proved to be challenging issues.

Drawing on the five capabilities framework, the factors that enable or obstruct the working of the alliance in the case study countries is analysed (chapter 4). As key strengths the study identified that: all stakeholders are convinced about approach; PfR shows it is possible to align NGO's under one agenda and that the model provided for immense learning. The key challenges revolved around the long (top-down) start-up phase and around achieving coherence with very different mandates.

The fourth research objective was to explore how PfR interventions enhance community resilience and what challenges are encountered in doing so (chapter 5). The findings point towards the enhancement of all characteristics of community resilience, in which the main focus was on the enhancement of human, social and political resilience. Given the time of the research project, much of the 'impact' on the resilience characteristics and especially on natural, physical and financial resilience remains yet to be seen.

The study concludes with several key findings (chapter 6).

1. The resilience approach is relevant for its integrated nature and the focus on communities, yet risks to background the structural causes of vulnerability and the rights-base of populations to be protected by their government. Most successful were activities that combine DRR, EMR and CCA with tangible livelihood projects.

2. The PfR approach is highly relevant to communities and stakeholders, yet the framing of the approach is complex (many principles, building blocks, dimensions), also because of the (artificial) separation of domains and time frames.
3. It is a strong suit of PfR to build on existing community structures with the caveat that this risks reproducing existing inequalities.
4. The PfR approach is complex in its incorporation of many stakeholders in programming. As a result, there was a long inception phase, and 5 years appears to be a short time frame for such a complex programme.
5. Coordination has appeared to be a key factor in the success of PfR.
6. The emphasis PfR put on learning throughout the program was strongly valued on all levels and by all partners, however more could have been reached.
7. Local government often lacks power to enable community resilience
8. National government turns out to be a powerful actor in the enabling environment of communities and trickling-up of the PfR approach from local to national government has not been realised.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Methodology

In order to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities, a consortium of five Netherlands-based humanitarian, development and environmental organisations and their 74 partner organisations collaborated between 2011 and 2015.[1] The alliance has adopted an innovative and challenging approach: it aims to reduce the impact of natural hazards on the lives of vulnerable people worldwide, by using an integrated risk management (IRM) approach that combines disaster risk reduction measures with strengthening livelihood options, addressing climate change, and improving ecosystems.[2] Activities are carried out in selected communities prone to the effects of disasters such as droughts, flooding, typhoons and landslides. PfR works in nine countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mali, Nicaragua, the Philippines and Uganda.

One of the key principles of the PfR programme is to stimulate learning by combining different knowledge systems (PfR, 2012). The programme has thus been designed to facilitate learning within and between countries and organisations. In order to learn as much as possible of their innovative approach, the PfR partners have commissioned a qualitative 'Learning from PfR' study to Globalisation Studies Groningen at the University of Groningen (the Netherlands). Different from an evaluation that assessing outcomes against objectives, the purpose of this study is to analyse the dynamics and relevance of an integrated approach towards building resilience. PfR hopes that the findings of this qualitative study enable PfR to promote its longer-term goals of:

1) Mainstreaming the approach within the PfR partner organisations,
2) Up-scaling and
3) Influencing policy formulation related to DRR, CCA and ecosystem management at local, regional and (inter-) national levels.

The study took place in four phases between 2013 and 2015. The core of the research consisted of country case studies that each have resulted into specific country reports. The research was done in 6 of the 9 PfR countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, Indonesia, Philippines, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. It did not cover Uganda, Mali and India. We meant to include India as a case study, but this was not possible after the visa application of the researcher was rejected.

This report provides a cross-analysis and draws out key lessons based on the findings of the first two research phases and the findings from case study countries. It explores strengths and challenges and the extent to which these are generic or context specific.

When discussing 'generic' findings, it is crucial to realise the importance of context and local history and experiences. This influences the way in which the approach of PfR is translated in the different countries. Thus, although generic findings are presented, they should always be understood and reflected upon in their local context. When necessary, country specific disparities are emphasized. For context specific, in-depth findings and analysis, we advise to consult the country specific reports of the six case studies. [3]

[1] The organisations include CARE Nederland, Cordaid, Netherlands Red Cross, Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre and Wetlands International. PfR is financially supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under its co-financing scheme MFS-II. It is a €40 million programme, undertaken from 2011-2015.
[2] Source: http://www.partnersforresilience.nl/
[3] For the specific country reports see: Dávila Bustamente 2015; Desportes 2015; Faling 2015; Srikandini 2015; Leung 2015; Strauch 2015.

The following section outlines the research questions, the theoretical framework and the methods employed. Chapter 2 is the first to present the findings, it reflects on the PfR approach in theory, followed by the translation into practise (chapter 3). Chapter 4 discusses the institutional dynamics. Key findings concerning PfR's outcomes are discussed in chapter 5. Chapter 6 concludes and makes recommendations.

1.1 Rationale of the research

The purpose of the study was three-fold:

I. Explore the relevance of the PfR approach (the programme and the integrated approach) towards building resilience,

II. Gain empirical evidence about the contribution of PfR's approach to enhancing the resilience of local communities,

III. Gain insights into the institutional dynamics and interventions related to implementing PfR's approach in the context of specific partners working in specific communities with their own social and economic make-up, political properties and community organisations.

The main research question that guides the study and this report were:

What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of the PfR approach towards building resilience and to what extent are these generic or context specific?

Specific questions were:

1. What does the PfR approach entail and how is it translated into practise?
    a. The *interventions* component
    b. The *institutional* component
2. What are the strengths and opportunities of the PfR approach?
3. What are the weaknesses and challenges of the PfR approach?
4. Which processes of the PfR approach enable community resilience?
5. To what extent are these resilience enabling processes generic or context specific?

1.2 Analytical framework

The analytical framework (see figure 1) for this study builds partly around: the Theory of Change (ToC); the characteristics of a resilient community as identified by John Twigg (2007), the DFID livelihood characteristics (1999), and the '5Cs' framework (Keijzer *et al.* 2011)

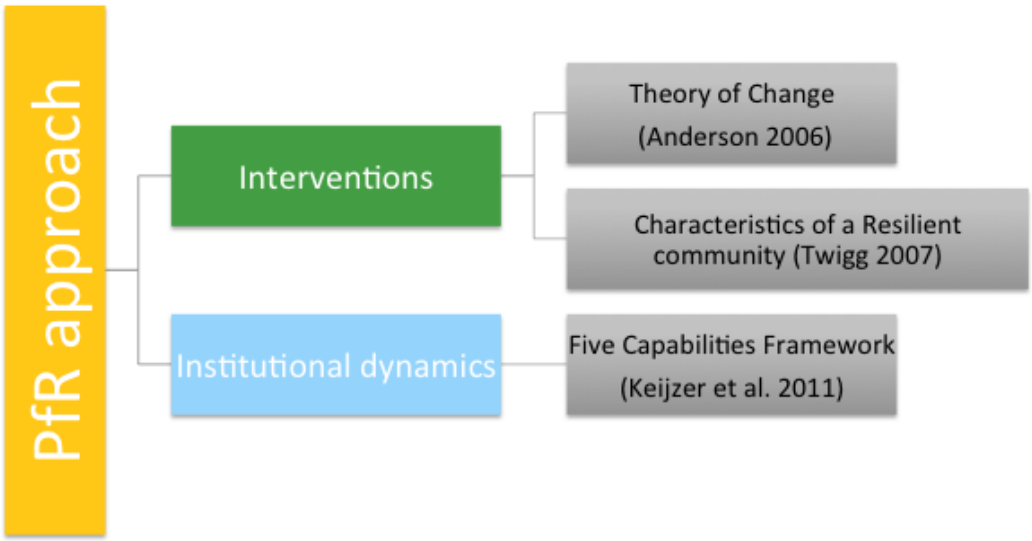


Figure 1 Guiding analytical frameworks

The Theory of Change (ToC) defines the steps and building blocks (outcomes, preconditions, results) that are needed in order to reach a certain goal (Anderson 2006). The 'map' that graphically represents the process of this change is referred to as the *pathway of change* (PoC). The ToC represents the actions and initiatives that (are supposed to) bring about the intended *goal(s)*. This can be on any scale: from a single programme to a comprehensive initiative. Everything identified in the pathway of change is a precondition or requirement to the long-term goal. Without the *outcomes* and *preconditions* identified, the goal will not be attained. The pathway will thus only contain these preconditions and outcomes which are necessary and together sufficient to reach the goal. In addition, a ToC also describes the types of interventions necessary to achieve a pathway of change. Hence, the pathway of change is a complex web of activities needed for the (long-term) community change. The ToC is obviously connected to stakeholders' articulation of assumptions, with which they tend to explain their perception of the change process represented by the change framework. These assumptions explain the expectations of actors regarding how and why proposed interventions will bring about change. These assumptions can be tested and measured.

Initially PfR did not work with a Theory of Change, but we found it useful to reconstruct the theory of change, in order to identify to what extent it was shared throughout the network. The ToC is thus used to assess the assumptions and views of PfR staff at different levels: from the HQ-level to the implementing technical officers in the field. We also used the ToC to analyse the assumptions and viewpoints of stakeholders outside the alliance, who may have their own vision and opinion on the needs of the community, including community members, government actors and other NGOs.

Characteristics of a resilient community and livelihood capitals

To explore how the PfR approach enhanced resilience, the research builds on the model of the 'characteristics of a safe and resilient community', complemented with the DFID Sustainable Livelihoods framework (Twigg 2009; IFRC 2012; DFID 1999). Twigg *et al*. (IFRC 2012), identify six characteristics of safe and resilient communities, based on a study of a wide variety of CBDRR programmes. The characteristics can be seen in relation to the 'capitals' distinguished in the livelihood framework, which was developed in the early 1990s by Ian Scoones and others (see table 1).

Both are important to this research. When we speak of characteristics of resilience, we refer to the community. When we speak of the livelihood capitals, we have mainly households in mind. Obviously, this distinction is not clear-cut, and there is a relation between the two in practise. When families are economically poor, this affects the resilience of the community. Vice versa, the best approach to enhance the resilience of the community may be to invest in livelihood capacities of households.

Table 1 Charecteristics of resilience and livelihoods capitals

Characteristics of a resilient community	***Livelihood capitals***
Be **knowledgeable and healthy**. It has the ability to assess, manage and monitor its risks. It can learn new skills and build on past experiences.	**Human capital** represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health.
Be **organized**. It has the capacity to identify problems, establish priorities and act	**Social capital** refers to the social resources upon which people draw: networks and connectedness, membership of more formalized groups, relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges
Be **connected**. It has relationships with external actors who provide a wider supportive environment, and supply goods and services when needed.	**Political capital** links an individual or a group to power structures and policy outside the locality. It gives way to claims and assets, moreover, institutions (both structures and processes) determine access to claims and assets.
Have **infrastructure** and **services**. It has strong housing, transport, power, water and sanitation systems. It has the ability to maintain, repair and renovate them.	**Physical capital** comprises the basic infrastructure (changes to the physical environment that help people to meet their basic needs and to be more productive) and producer goods (tools and equipment that people use to function more productively).
Have **economic opportunities**. It has a diverse range of employment opportunities, income and financial services. It is flexible, resourceful and has the capacity to accept uncertainty and respond (proactively) to change.	**Financial capital** denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives, including financial stocks (savings) and regular inflows of money (income, pension, allowances, remittances).
Manage its **natural assets**. It recognises their value and has the ability to protect, enhance and maintain them (natural capital).	**Natural capital** concerns the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and services (e.g. nutrient cycling, erosion protection) useful for livelihoods are derived. There is a wide variation in the resources that make up natural capital, from intangible public goods such as the atmosphere and biodiversity to divisible assets used directly for production (trees, land, etc.)

PfR is an alliance that was developed at the start of the programme and that brings many partners and stakeholders together. To explore and analyse PfR's institutional dynamics and to identify how PfR's capacities have developed, the capability framework of Keijzer *et al.* (2011) is employed. This framework centres around five capabilities ('5Cs') that together "*contribute to an organisation's ability to create social value*".

These encompass:

1. **The capability to act and commit**

This capability is about the ability to work properly: to plan, take decisions and act on these decisions collectively.

2. **The capability to deliver on development objectives**

This core capability concerns the organisations' skill to ensure that it is producing what it is established to do.

3. **The capability to adapt and self-renew**

This concerns the ability of an organisation to learn internally and to adjust to shifting contexts and relevant trends.

4. **The capability to relate to external stakeholders**

This capability is about building and maintaining networks with external actors. These actors include governmental structures, private sector parties, civil society organisations (CSOs) and in the end their constituencies.

5. **The capability to achieve coherence**

A main factor here is the strength of an organisation's identity, self-awareness and discipline.

1.3 Methods

Building on predominantly qualitative methods, the study has taken place in **four phases**:

1) Preparation and development of conceptual study framework and coding scheme,
2) Collection and analysis of documents,
3) Collection and analysis of empirical data (6 case studies),
4) Overall analyses and reporting.

1.3.1 Actors involved and levels of analysis

This qualitative study is a collaboration between PfR and the University of Groningen (RuG). The study was interactive in nature: it combined a high degree of self-evaluation and learning within the PfR consortium with independent academic research.

The study concerned research at different levels:

- **PfR alliance** which is the initial driving force behind the programme, engages with policymakers, funding agencies and international institutions to share experiences and evidence, to seek commitment for an integrated approach and to contribute to policy formulation. At this level lessons are drawn regarding the dynamics of developing and implementing the PfR approach in practise.

- **PfR partners** in the six countries: NGO field staff and managers interact with each other, and with other PfR partners, government officials, civil society organisations, knowledge centres and the private sector from the local to the national level. At this level lessons and insights and empirical evidence will be drawn regarding processes, collaboration, interactions, relationships and relevance of the PfR approach.
- **Household and community level**: all the PfR efforts are supposed to effect change at the household and community level in terms of vulnerability reduction, sustainable livelihoods and community self-management. As far as possible, empirical evidence has been gathered on the contribution of PfR's integrated approach to enhancing the resilience of local communities highly vulnerable or affected by disasters and climate change.

1.3.2 Phases of data collection

The research consisted of four phases during which various qualitative methods were employed (figure 2):

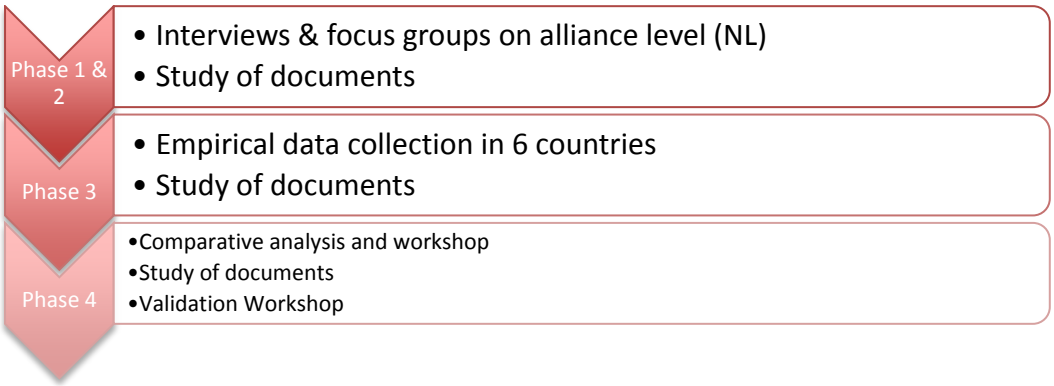


Figure 2 Main research phases

Phase one focussed on the theoretical preparations for the study and the content analysis. The key aim was to develop the analytical framework of the study and the 'coding scheme' and 'coding instructions'. The framework and coding scheme were developed based on the existing PfR vision, the four building blocks and the eight principles, which form the basis of PfR's approach to resilience programming (PfR 2011; PfR 2012). It was inspired by theory and interviews with the partners of the PfR alliance. The codebook formed the basis for content analysis and provided a practical tool to code data in a systematic and replicable way. A coding scheme is a tree of topics: where main themes are the main branches that sprout detailed topics. The PfR conference in September 2013, offered a unique opportunity to hold a reflection session with the PfR alliance and PfR partners. The coding scheme was tested multiple times to ensure intra-code reliability.

Phase two predominantly consisted of content analysis. This included the collection, coding and analysis of documents (secondary data). In total 49 primary documents were included in the study. The assembled and analysed data were documents previously produced by the PfR partners:

- Annual country reports 2011
- Annual country reports 2012
- Mid-year country reports 2013
- Mid-term country review (2012-2013),
- Initial programme proposal

Documentation from all nine PfR countries was included in the study. A large quantity of PfR's sources, produced since the inception of the programme, were scanned and relevant material was incorporated, taking into account the maximum capacity of staff available for this analysis. Where possible, original documentation drafted by local organisations and country teams were used, in order to incorporate country-level reflections on the programme. Using the coding scheme developed in phase one, documents were reviewed and coded. In addition, interviews and focus group discussions were performed. The selection of interviewees was based on a list of all staff members from the different organisations involved in PfR, provided by CTNL. The interview topic list mainly contained questions on the five capabilities and the PfR vision. All data gained from these two methods were also coded and analysed with Atlas-ti. One of the aims of phase 2 was to identify relevant data gaps to be addressed during the fieldwork of phase 3. Details on the methods and findings of Phases 1 and 2 were reported in an internal document for the PfR (Hilhorst *et al.*, 2014).

Phase three set out to collect and analyse empirical data on the PfR alliance, in six case study countries. The countries were chosen in dialogue with the PfR alliance. The main aim of phase three was the collection and analysis of a set of (missing) secondary and primary data. In this phase the research set out to get insights on:

- The different views or interpretations of stakeholders regarding PfR's ToC
- The integration of DRR, CCA and EMR
- The role of communities in PfR
- The engagement of (external) stakeholders in PfR
- The impact of the integrated approach on community resilience
- Opportunities and challenges of working in an alliance

In all six case study countries, independent fieldwork and qualitative data analysis took place in 2014 and lasted between 3 and 6 months. Per country around 250 respondents participated in the research in varying communities and provinces. In each country a number of sites were selected for in-depth study. The selection criteria for these sites represented: different composition of partners, different geographical areas and different themes. Data collection techniques comprised, amongst others, focus-group discussions, PRA-mapping activities (i.e. actor mapping), interviews and participant observation. The focus was on different levels of implementation of PfR: households, community and relevant administrative units. Other sources included comprised: data collected in communities (risk maps etc.), minutes of meetings, publications and documents of PfR and other agencies and institutions etc.

Primary data were transcribed, translated to English, checked, edited, interpreted and verified. Researchers were trained before departure and prepared for the fieldwork in which the conceptual framework and coding scheme were a guiding tool. In each country, a feedback meeting was held before departure, to reflect the findings with the country offices. Analysis was done at country level and resulted in country reports and briefs that were validated by country teams. A workshop was organised with all the case study researchers to exchange experiences and findings. In addition, a reflection workshop took place, during which preliminary findings were discussed with the PfR alliance members.

Finally, **phase four** brought together all gathered data. Based on the lessons learnt from the findings in the previous phases, it aimed to provide a cross-cutting analysis and key lessons

related to the relevance of the PfR approach, the contribution of the PfR approach and the institutional and technical dynamics of implementing PfR's approach.

During this phase, some of the most recent PfR reports were reviewed (i.e. PfR annual report 2014) and included in the analysis. This synthesis report and a research note were developed. The final PfR conference in October 2015, was an important moment to reflect and learn jointly with the PfR partners in order to capture the processes of PfR implementation.

While the findings were validated to be applicable to the entire process of PfR, it is important to emphasize that primary data gathering ended a year before the conclusion of the programme. This means that changes and results of the last phase may not be fully reflected in this report.

Having clarified the methodology of the research, the following chapters will present and discuss the findings related to the main research questions.

Chapter 2: The PfR Approach

This research aimed to find out how the PfR approach is received at the country level and if it resonates with local thinking, assumptions and needs. This chapter therefore looks at the Theory of Change (ToC) of PfR. The different views of PfR staff, community members and government officials are analysed concerning their understandings of the main obstacles and pathways to resilience.

2.1 PfR Theory of Change

Since PfR did not work with an explicit Theory of Change, we reconstructed it on the basis of PfR documents. The reconstructed ToC was validated by representatives of PfR. The Theory of Change of the PfR programme can be summarized as follows:

a. Communities face major disaster risks;
b. The reduction of these risks therefore requires strengthening community resilience. This means that communities need to be central in the programme;
c. In order to reduce people's vulnerability to the impact of hazards, it is important that they can anticipate, respond to, adapt to and transform disaster risk. Enhancing livelihood opportunities is an important aspect in this, which also motivates to invest in risk reduction activities;
d. In order to address and reduce the root causes of disaster risks, it is important to integrate ecosystem management and restoration (EMR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) into disaster risk reduction (DRR);
e. A successful integration of DRR, CCA and EMR requires working on different geographical scales (landscape level) and across time scales;

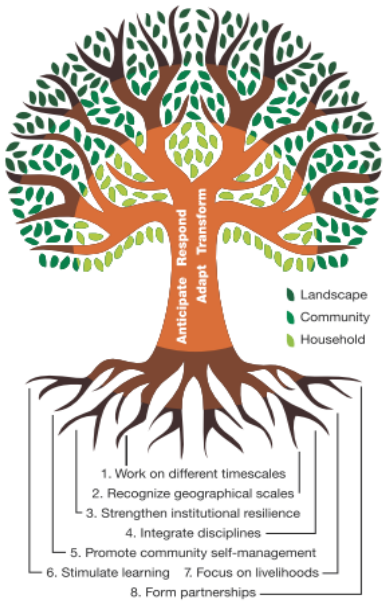


Figure 3 The PfR Resilience tree

f. The integration of different approaches to work towards community resilience requires strengthening the collaboration between multiple stakeholders across sectors;
g. Since 'disasters' are often the result of processes that are beyond the locality of the community and require solutions that are not in the hands of communities alone, it is important to involve stakeholders at different levels of society, including government, research institutions, and others;
h. need to be learning and adaptive.

This ToC represents the main PfR story line. Embedded in this ToC are the four building blocks and eight principles for operationalizing integrated climate- and ecosystem-smart risk reduction (PfR, 2012).

The PfR vision is based on the building blocks of "encouraging communities to **anticipate** the risks they face by building on existing capacities; **respond** when disaster strikes while maintaining basic structures and functions; then **adapt** to changing risks, and to a changing local situation and its livelihoods options, and finally **transform** themselves to address

underlying factors and root causes of risk, and be active partners for governments in implementing DRR" (PfR, 2012).

In addition, PfR actions are guided and inspired by the PfR principles, which are visible in figure 3 and explained in more detail in Annex I.

2.2 The obstacles to resilience

When exploring perceptions on the main obstacles to resilience of local PfR staff, community members and government officials in the six case study countries, we found that views diverged among the different groups of stakeholders. While there was also diversity within the groups, some tendencies could be identified. Those are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 Obstacles to resilience

Main tendencies in the perceptions of key stakeholders with regard to obstacles to resilience			
	PfR	**Communities**	**Government**
Obstacles to resilience	› Hazards › Environmental degradation › Lack of agency (aid dependency)	› Lack of resources › Socio-economic issues (i.e. unemployment, land conflicts) › Hazards › Environmental degradation › Lacking support of government	› Hazards › Environmental degradation › Lack of resources and capacity (human and financial) › Lack of concern/ wrong mind-sets of communities

Although various stakeholders used different terminology, it did become evident that in all case study context all stakeholders, identified natural hazards as key obstacles to resilience. In some cases they identified that hazards were exacerbated by climate change, and environmental degradation. All stakeholders acknowledged that these factors have adverse effects on the livelihood capitals of vulnerable people. This provides a strong common denominator in the PfR network.

A high number of PfR and government staff considered the 'mentality' of community members as a major obstacle to resilience. In Ethiopia, Kenya, Guatemala and Nicaragua, PfR staff felt that by being exposed to a long history of humanitarian aid delivery, communities had developed a passive attitude. It was felt that communities were anticipating external support, which they felt would subsequently 'resolve' the problems created by, for example, natural hazards. Some PfR staff and government actors would refer to this attitude with the (contested) concept of 'aid dependency'. For example in Nicaragua, PfR staff argued:

> *"Resilience depends on the attitude of the community: a resilient community takes an active approach towards working and organising itself. That is the problem here, since hurricane Mitch (1998), humanitarian assistance has been a means of subsistence for many communities"* (PfR Nicaragua staff, in Strauch 2015).

Community members, on the other hand, often mentioned structural (economic, environmental, social) vulnerabilities and socio-economic issues such as land conflicts or unemployment as key obstacles.

Communities and government representatives often mentioned that the government was not capable enough to enhance community resilience. Government officials ascribed this to a lack of municipal financial and material resources and human capacities. Communities on the other hand, often identified the lack of government support as a key barrier to enhancing resilience.

Another instance in which interpretations of the main obstacles to resilience of PfR and community members differed was in Kenya, where community members perceived conflict between warring tribes as main barrier to resilience. In Ethiopia and Kenya, human and livestock diseases were often mentioned as key barriers. The PfR teams, however, considered these issues to be outside of the PfR mandate.

2.3 Pathways of Change

Respondents were also asked about pathways towards resilience they identified and prioritised. Table 3, presents the generic findings on the main perspectives of PfR staff, community members and governments.

Table 3: Pathways to resilience

Main tendencies in the perceptions of key stakeholders with regard to pathways to resilience			
	PfR	**Communities**	**Government**
What/ How?	› Empowerment and changing mind-sets, predominantly software but also hardware › Creating an enabling environment (commitment, structures, policies and plans)	› 'Hardware' support	› Both hardware and software
Who?	› Community driven › Government supported	› Government › NGOs › Community	› Communities › Government
When? **Where?**	› Long-term › Wider landscape	› Short-term › Community centred	› Short- and long-term – but often bound to political term › Municipality centred

For PfR staff, enhancing resilience is first and foremost about working with communities in ways that empower them. Proposed pathways of change (POC) range from creating awareness to increasing people's skills, knowledge and strengthening their organisational structures. This being said, pathways to resilience for PfR also include diversifying livelihoods to gain in resilience towards shocks and stresses and regaining and fortifying a natural asset base. This incorporates adopting more productive, environmentally and climate-sound production techniques, conserving community's natural asset base and reducing risks and vulnerabilities in their environment. Additionally, to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities PfR staff stresses the crucial role of a political environment that is committed and that facilitates processes. Creating an enabling environment is hence necessary for

community-level initiatives to succeed. PfR therefore worked intensively with the levels of government that are closest to the communities, strengthening their institutional resilience.

Just like PfR staff, government officials referred to the need to 'change mindsets' and capacitate communities. However they often had a more 'traditional' approach to working with communities. This leans more towards 'teaching new attitudes' as opposed to starting from community's needs and empowering them. For example, in Ethiopia, local *woreda* and *kebele* government officials related that: *"changing people's' attitude and awareness levels was less problematic than addressing their poverty. When new attitudes are needed, those can be 'taught'"* (Desportes, 2015, p. 33).

Instead of starting from community needs, government programmes often come with pre-designed agendas that are implemented in communities in a top-down manner, (supposedly) teaching community folks new behaviours:

"I've seen families that received 25 chicken, a couple of pigs, a cow and they were given the means to build a hen house etc. And what I've seen is that they ate the chicken, killed the pig and sold the cow. It all depends on a change in attitude" (Local government official in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

Moreover, apart from software, government officials usually also expected direct, material support to the municipalities and communities from PfR. The same holds true for communities, who usually preferred tangible support rather than receiving trainings. These expectations have created various challenges for project implementation, especially during the start-up phase. In Guatemala, for example, some communities demanded specific material support from PfR and refused to participate in the project when the materials were not provided. This was also confirmed by the Mid-term review, which stated that *"sometimes actors expect to be paid for their engagement"* (PfR, 2013, p. 18). It has to be emphasised that this was especially the case in the beginning of the project, as we also found evidence of community members changing their mind about this and becoming more appreciative of the 'soft' support aspects of the programme.

In the Philippines, communities mostly identified infrastructure or material support (i.e. the construction of evacuation centres) as most useful in needs assessments. However, PfR strongly values 'software' in order to build resilience (intangible goods such as increasing knowledge and skills and changing mind-sets). As a result of this discrepancy between pathways of change, most community project proposals were turned down and in some cases, community members lost their interest to participate in the project. Also in Nicaragua, the local government was very critical towards PfR in the beginning, as they expected direct material aid instead of software activities. However, discrepancies between the Theories of Change of the different stakeholders were found to become less as the programme evolved over time. The gradual change of mind-sets became for example evident in Kenya:

> *"We don't want to be reliant anymore, we want to do it ourselves, help other people. That is what makes us happy. Also, we have children, and we cannot expect aid to come forever, hence we better rely on ourselves"* (Community member in Kenya, Faling 2015).

While communities, and to some extent governments, generally preferred tangible transfers as part of the project when PfR started, all six case studies showed that appreciation of 'soft' approaches grew markedly over the project period. A progressive convergence of the

different ToCs occurred when the project unfolded.

An example from Nicaragua:

> *"One mayor said in the beginning: don't talk to me about risk management, bring me houses, bring me projects, the communities need something else, not only capacity building. Now his vision is very different, they see that the project is already bearing fruits"* (PfR Nicaragua staff, in Strauch 2015).

This quote illustrates how PfR manages to take local governments and communities on board. It also shows positive results of training and collaboration - local stakeholders and community members are gradually convinced and adopt PfR thinking. Projects seemed to be most successful in terms of community acceptance and participation if they manage to bridge differences in the programmes objectives and community's expectations. Micro-projects in Guatemala and Nicaragua for example, were experienced to be ideal 'trade-offs' because they combined community empowerment with material transfers and livelihood improvements.

2.4 Summing up

The key findings on the Theories of Change are summarized in figure 4:

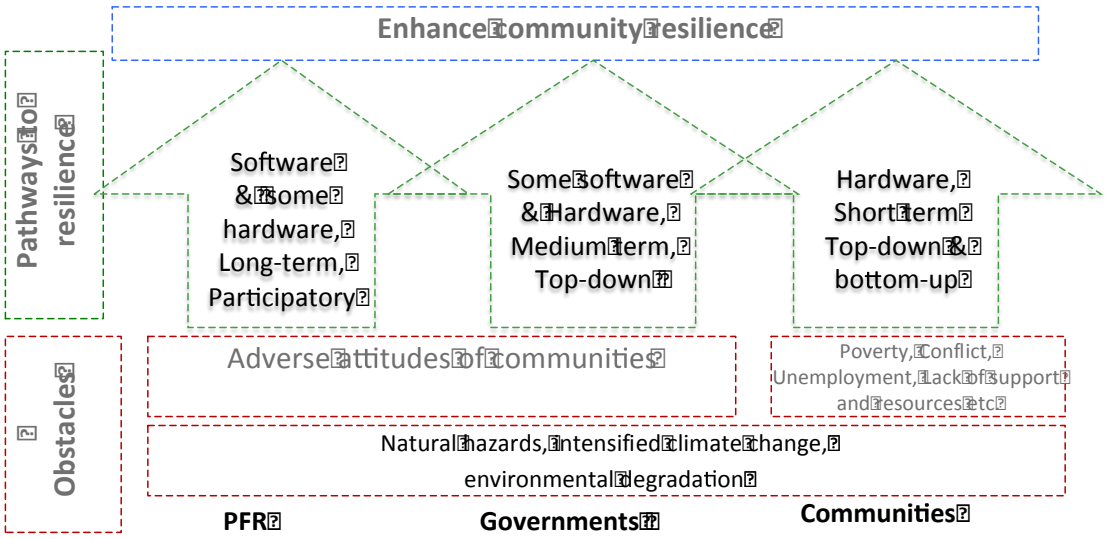


Figure 4 Key stakeholders perspectives on obstacles and pathways to resilience

Although similarities were predominant, perspectives of the key obstacles to resilience often diverged between PfR and communities. Eye-catching was that especially in-country PfR staff and government authorities felt communities' mind-sets were a key barrier to resilience, whereas communities pointed to their vulnerabilities stemming from poverty, conflict and environmental degradation. Moreover, some of the key obstacles to resilience identified by communities fell out of the scope of PfR such as conflict, health issues and livestock diseases.

There were also differences in pathways for building resilience. While PfR activities tend to have a strong 'software' focus and are aimed to contribute to sustainable, long-term solutions that take a wider landscape into account; communities and local government officials generally prefer more immediate, local and tangible 'hardware' support.

These examples bring about some questions regarding participation. PfR advocates that communities must be in the driving seat of resilience, yet this creates tension when the objectives of PfR do not match the views and expectations of communities. In practise it seems, that PfR has adopted an approach where the alliance drives the process, hoping to make communities 'ready' to take over the steering wheel.

There were positive indications during the fieldwork that PfR was convincing in showing the merits of the approach, as the programme unfolded.

Chapter 3: The PfR Approach in Practise

Following the eight key principles of the PfR, this chapter explores how the PfR approach has been translated into practise. It first discusses how PfR works on different timescales, across geographical scales and how they integrate disciplines. Thereafter their focus on livelihoods, their approach to promoting community self–management, learning, partnerships and institutional resilience is discussed.

The chapter aims to provide an overview of PfR and is mainly descriptive in nature. Chapter 5 will further analyse and discuss how PfR has affected community resilience and what challenges are being encountered in practise.

3.1 Working on different timescales

Responses to disaster have long been merely reactive, where activity followed the occurrence of a disaster. For PfR a paradigm shift from post disaster response to proactive disaster risk reduction includes working across timescales. This becomes particularly important when taking the effects of climate change into account.

To enable adaptive planning, PfR works on different timescales. Several strategies were employed to translate this principle into practise. Although far from exhaustive here are some examples.

Through better use of climate information, PfR aims to anticipate extreme weather events in the short-term (6-10 days weather forecasts), mid-term (seasonal forecasts) and long-term (long term projected changes in climate) (PfR, 2012).

EMR and CCA project components served to make communities aware of the long-term consequences of ecosystem restoration and adaptation efforts. EMR benefits – for example from reforestation – are mostly tangible in the future. Additionally, communities diversified their agricultural production – and therewith invested in future improved harvest outcomes. Risk reduction measures, such as avoiding to plant crops in places prone to flooding, were generally adopted by communities as a result of capacity building activities. In Nicaragua for example, communities already suffer from severe effects of climate change (drought) and were generally found to understand the need to adapt their agricultural practices to the changing climatic conditions:

> *"With the monoculture of maize and beans, there was a total failure during drought, we had no food. With the diversification we now have alternatives: if I cannot harvest one I can harvest the other. And we also have fruit- and forest trees for firewood. There is already a big change because today we have fruits, wood, yucca, quequisque, chaya – everything*" (Community member in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

In employing more long-term strategies, PfR staff from Kenya stressed the importance of combining activities with long- and short-term outputs to encourage participation:

> *"It is not that [long-term measures] are difficult to sell; it is only that you also have to address the immediate needs of the community. As long as that is secured, the communities will partake in the intervention. Otherwise communities will not have the motivation to participate, even if they understand the importance. This is a difficult environment, so we need to meet the immediate needs of the community as*

well" (PfR Kenya staff, Faling 2015).

Additionally, community-based early warning systems (EWS) are considered an innovative approach to integrate CCA into DRR. The combination of traditional early warning systems and improved access to climate information aims to enable communities to enhance their planning (PfR, 2012).[4] In some cases PfR have successfully set up small scale EWS such as pluviometers to collect rainfall data to inform sowing decisions or local early flood warning systems. In Ethiopia, for example, farmers from Ibnat collect rainfall data using rain gauges. This informs whether the soil is moist enough for sowing, what seeds should be sown and if investing in fertilizer is necessary to increase soil moisture. Overall, the focus has been almost exclusively on short-term forecasts. Seasonal forecasts and longer-term trends have been more challenging to incorporate in interventions.

Another strategy is the application of traditional knowledge into Early Warning systems. Communities are motivated to learn from the past in order to anticipate hazards in the present, and adapt to changing future risk. The country cases show that the most effective tools include participatory capacity and vulnerability assessments and strategies to include indigenous best practises and knowledge. When communities are made aware of the climatic and environmental changes, and the possibility to adapt to them, they can use (traditional) approaches like collecting water during the rainy season and planting indigenous seeds (that are adapted to the local context).

3.2 Recognize geographical scales

PfR aims to recognize broader geographical scales on which "drivers of vulnerability", are manifested and expand their focus by encompassing the wider landscape and ecosystems (PfR, 2012). In order to work across geographical scales, it has become good practise in many countries to take the watershed or a river basin as the basic unit of planning for disaster risk reduction and environmental management and not (only) the administrative units (district, province). This landscape level approach is increasingly promoted by governments and the international community, as it recognizes the fact that root causes for a hazard can be far away from the actual impact of the same hazard (for example decreased water inflow caused by irrigation schemes upstream). In case study countries such as Nicaragua and Ethiopia the landscape level approach was already a cornerstone in many NGO and government policies. This gave an impetus to PfR, that offered a practical approach to put landscape or watershed planning into practices.

The findings show that working across geographical scales, has enhanced the integration of activities across the landscape. Partners have engaged with different groups at different levels and have made an effort to connect stakeholders within and across landscapes and river basins. For example in Kenya, PfR has worked with 13 mid- and downstream communities in the Ewaso-Ngiro River basin and succeeded in setting up an umbrella organisation that unites CBOs along the river: the Waso River Users Empowerment Platform (WRUEP). The WRUEP now serves as a platform for communities along the river to collectively express their concerns and engage in implementing various joint activities - such as the Camel Caravan (see p. 24) (PfR Kenya 2015).

[4] PfR also promotes the so called "early warning, early action" approach. This includes investing in early warning (EW) systems so that their early action (preparedness and mitigation/prevention) are suited to face the growing risks of extreme weather events.

Moreover, with a lot of community-based sensitisation and networking activities with local government units, people do realise, that because they are closely linked together, it is important to address problems holistically and more systematically.

> *"First we had training about how to manage the river. If you pollute the river – you will affect the people that live downstream. When did we know that? You know what we did before? We put poison to kill the fish. And we threw garbage into the river. We didn't care to protect the environment, we did not care to cut the trees, to burn and pollute the water. Now we protect the river Tapacalí and care for the people living downstream. This community will be better, reforested, because reforestation is for the long term - although we may not see it our children and grandchildren will"* (Community member in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

3.3 Integrating disciplines

Core to the PfR programme is the assumption that if disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA) and ecosystems management and restoration (EMR) are implemented in an integrated manner, it creates a significant leverage beyond implementing these approaches separately. DRR will be more effective if weather and climate information and status of ecosystems are included in both risk assessments (address environmental degradation as root cause of risk) and risk reduction measures (restore ecosystems for improved livelihoods and resilience). An integrated approach is expected to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to deal with hazards, short term weather events and long term climate change impacts, and environmental degradation (PfR Indonesia and Philippines, 2014, p. xii). To be able to work with such a complex approach, PfR combines the strength of humanitarian, development and environmental organisations working in partnership.

In order to work towards integration, interventions work along three strategic pillars (programme goals) namely: 1) Strengthen community resilience, 2) Increase the capacity of civil society organisations and 3) Make the institutional environment from international to grassroots level more conducive. To reach the programme goals, PfR partners have translated the integrated approach into various activities that are implemented in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. Figure 5 summarizes some of the main strategies.

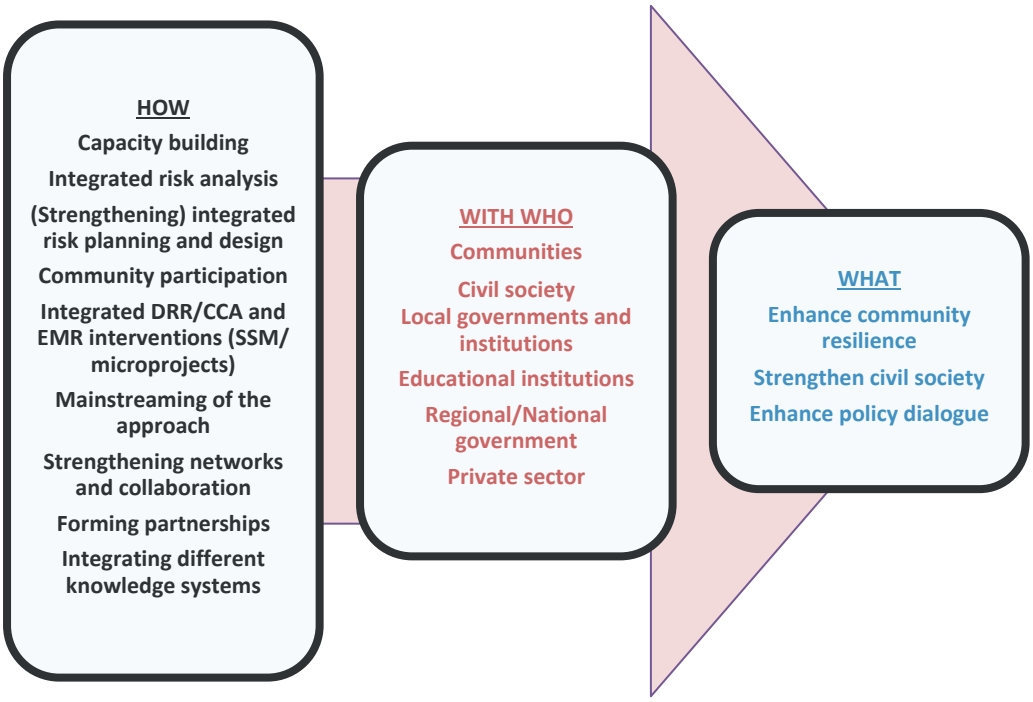


Figure 5: PfR working strategies

At the country level, it is evident that the integrated approach is widely appreciated and that it finds broad recognition among stakeholders. Especially towards the end of the programme, we can observe high levels of acceptance of the approach by local partners. Most organisations have (partly) institutionalized the approach and all have expanded their methodological toolbox:

> *"The strength of PfR is having organisations of different strands. In this kind of consortium, not all people are doing the same thing; it consists of like-minded people, but different aspects that complement each other. Then you learn"* (PfR staff in Kenya, in Faling 2015):
>
> "*Before we were mostly experts in ecosystem-based adaptation, now we're also integrating other approaches (...). Through the interaction with humanitarian organisations, WI was able to learn more about socio-economic themes. And learn from their methodologies such as the VCA and CVCA, we can combine these tools with ours that are more ecosystem-based*" (PfR staff in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

According to their experience and expertise, PfR partners have translated the PfR approach in different ways. The country cases covered in the empirical part of the research showed that in most situations, partners' entry point was through the approach with which they were most comfortable. From there, they integrated the other disciplines. Some partners started for example with disaster preparedness activities and later included additional components like greening activities. Others used specific programmes as entry points. Levels of integration varied from integrated planning exercises to areas where activities are piled up in parallel interventions, combining activities from different approaches at community level. For example: the construction of a small bridge (DRR component) was complemented with the reforestation of the riverbanks (EMR component). A restored lagoon (EMR) also serves as a water reservoir for periods of drought (DRR/ CCA) and aims to generate an income for communities through tourism (livelihoods component). There were other

examples of successfully implementing the different components in an integrated project, such as illustrated in Box 1 for the case of Guatemala.

Different approaches towards integration

The bio-rights approach proved highly effective in providing communities an incentive to invest in integrated DRR activities. In Guatemala, Wetlands International and CARE jointly implement activities that combined DRR, EMR and CCA measures with bio-rights microfinance funds. Based on their needs, communities developed a proposal for a micro-project. After approval from PfR the communities organize themselves to constitute the workforce, they receive trainings and CARE/WI provide a loan for project implementation. By building for example their own stoves or shelters, the communities develop a sense of ownership and protection for their new infrastructure or assets. Communities groups repay their loan by engaging in ecosystem-based risk reduction measures, such as reforestation, protection of water resources, etc. Overall, in comparison to other PfR communities, bio-rights communities in Guatemala proved to have a good understanding of the integrated approach and worked intensively with PfR. (Based on Dávila Bustamente 2015).

Box 1: Bio-rights approach in Guatemala

3.4 Focus on livelihoods

Frequent hazards and/ or degraded ecosystems are often an already lived reality for many communities. Addressing livelihood needs thus often automatically involves an integrated approach. For many PfR partners, a livelihoods approach therefore served as a starting point for integrating DRR, CCA and EMR activities. This was done by performing community assessments, and by subsequently operationalizing interventions departing from communities' livelihood needs.

For example, climate-smart disaster risk reduction in a livelihoods context is achieved by introducing drought-resistant crops, establishing family gardens or enabling the development of irrigation systems. Similarly, environmental management simultaneously aims to strengthen livelihoods, immediately by compensating community members for their efforts in planting trees, and in the longer run by livelihood prospects expected from reforested areas or mangroves, soil conservation and environmentally friendly farming techniques. Additionally, approaches that combined DRR/CCA/EMR objectives with improved livelihood outcomes, such as the bio-rights approach (see above), proved successful in providing immediate incentives to communities.

Linking DRR/CCA/EMR objectives to livelihoods outcomes proved more challenging in an urban context than in rural areas- as experienced in the Philippines. Especially the EMR component was found difficult to operationalise in the urban setting. In the end, PfR Philippines decided to focus on garbage separation and disposal without additional concrete livelihood activities.

3.5 Promote community self-management and stimulate learning

Community participation lies at the heart of the PfR programme. For some PfR partners, 'community involvement' was even the key distinguishing trait to PfR, more than the integrated approach, and participation was for these partners the most important component to advocate for.

Overall, the research identified that in the vast majority of the PfR, activities were properly grounded in the communities. In most countries, there was a high level of participation of community groups throughout project implementation. Many PfR partners implemented an approach in which participation was cumulative (in this research referred to as a cumulative participatory approach, figure 6). Communities were actively involved all along the project continuum, from VCA's, planning, implementation and the monitoring and evaluation of activities. Organising and capacity building are seen as the catalysts for empowerment and often form the basis for community participation.

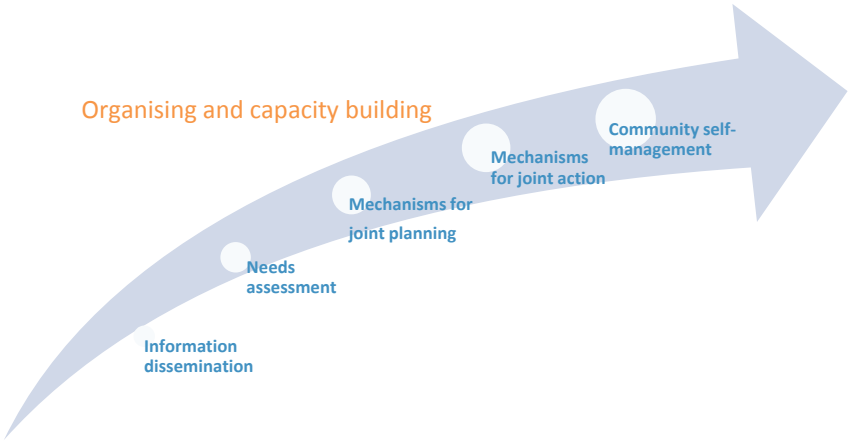


Figure 6: Cumulative participatory approach

Access and cooperation was generally done through (reinforcing) existing (community) structures[5]. This enhances the chances for sustainability, as local structures will remain in place after the programme phases out.

Crucial for the success of the participatory approach is the emphasis put on learning throughout the programme. Capacity building and training form the basis of PfR's work with communities and aim to place communities in the driving seat of their own development. Trainings about DRR/CCA/EMR are common during the inception phase of community projects. During project-implementation, mostly practical trainings directly linked to project implementation are the norm. In many countries such trainings were delivered in farmer-field-schools. Those link theoretical and practical components: Participants are 'learning by doing' – putting for example soil conservation activities directly into practise in their own plots. "*You have to translate the theory into practise, if not it's just all dead papers*" (Community member in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015). Other innovative educational tools were participatory video and educational games to raise awareness about DRR, CCA, EMR.

Emphasis was also put on stimulating learning between stakeholders. PfR enabled contact within and between communities and with local district governments. This implies peer-to-peer but also top-down and bottom-up learning. Regarding learning between alliance partners (also see 4.3.), "writeshops" were conducted in all regions. These were an important strategy to help partners to systematise their knowledge, revise and summarise their achievements and document lessons learnt (see PfR 2011; climatecentre.org/publications/case-studies).

In any case, the participatory nature of PfR stands out as a major added value of the programme. This is quite remarkable, as most PfR countries have a long history of participatory development. However, the specific areas of PfR intervention have often been sites of conflict and/or disaster and do therefore have a history of high aid density and/or relief assistance, which is often organized without much participation. In these contexts (i.e. Kenya, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and Guatemala), the community-driven nature of PfR is very

[5] i.e. Community Development Coordinators (COCODE) in Guatemala; Cabinets of Family, Community and Life in Nicaragua; Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) committees in Ethiopia.

impactful. By lobbying for the participatory approach, PfR contributes to a shift in governance thinking away from a paternalistic approach – as illustrated by the following quote from Nicaragua.

> "*The project works in a very different way than other projects, we're not going to say: 'I'm bringing you this I'll make you that', no, the communities analysed: 'what we really need is this, with these funds we can do this and we are going to contribute that'. This programme has taught communities to be proactive: how to analyse their environment, their needs and how to describe and take them to the municipal and departmental level or seek the support of an NGO. And how to manage the implementation of their own project. This is a strategy to throw down the walls of paternalism*" (PfR staff in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

3.6 Strengthening institutional resilience & forming partnerships

To strengthen institutional resilience, PfR has engaged and formed partnerships with multiple stakeholders including governmental structures (from local to national), academic institutions, CSO's CBOs, (I)NGOs, private sector, schools, religious and meteorological organisations. This has both enhanced the institutional resilience of external partner organisations and of PfR partners themselves.

Above all, the engagement with external stakeholders had two main reasons: 1) finding support for project implementation and 2) lobby and advocacy. Concerning the former, the findings show that cooperation has enabled PfR to operationalize the PfR approach, especially given its novelty and complexity. This aspect will be discussed more in detail when unpacking PfR's capacity to relate to external stakeholders in chapter 4.5. Concerning the latter, lobby and advocacy was considered an important strategy to ensure leverage and sustainability of the approach. Efforts to engage with the government have focussed on multiple levels with varying impacts. While there is extensive collaboration with local governments, higher levels of governments are rarely addressed.

3.6.1 Lobby and advocacy

"I learn how to approach the government from my field facilitator and it helps to build my confidence" (Community member in Indonesia, in Srikandini 2015).

Camel Caravan to help save the Ewaso Nyiro River

In an initiative to raise awareness about the situation of the Ewaso-Ngiro River, PfR Kenya supported the Waso River Users Empowerment Platform (WRUEP) (see p. 17) in mobilizing a 'Camel Caravan for Climate Change Adaptation' in 2013 and 2014. Protesters walked 250 km along the Ewaso Nyiro River banks for 5 days to sensitise key stakeholders on the importance of protecting and conserving the Ewaso Nyiro River Ecosystem that supports over 3 million Kenyans. The campaigns also challenged the national and county governments to reconsider the negative environmental and social impacts of upstream developments in Ewaso Nyiro River, such as huge water intakes by the tourism and agro-industry and a planned mega-dam. The campaign not only managed to bring together warring ethnic groups in the river basin but also engaged civil society, the private sector, the local and national media and the government to support the Ewaso Ngiro River communities' cause. As a result of the 2014 Camel Caravan, the Governor of Isiolo and his deputy promised to support the 2015 campaign and make it a cultural and tourism event for the county. The two leaders also promised to facilitate talks between the communities and the National Water and Pipeline Corporation on the construction of the mega-dam and to support eco-system improvement efforts across the river basin (PfR Kenya, 2015, p. 21).

Box 2 Camel Caravan in Kenya

The nature and character of advocacy in the different countries varies as it is very much shaped by the political culture and social system of each country. On the one hand, in a number of countries, for example Indonesia and Ethiopia, recent policy changes have paved the way for an integrated vision on disaster risk reduction. Such political interest in integrated risk management has facilitated the work of PfR. On the other hand, a number of countries present a challenging political environment for CSOs or NGOs aiming at influencing decision makers or bringing certain issues into the public debate. The L&A component is therefore sometimes perceived as an objective imposed from above that is difficult to realise: "*even my boss was asking why are we planning this if government is not accepting, why is it a strategic objective. I told him, it is one of the pillars that PfR wants. So we cannot avoid it*" (PfR staff in Ethiopia, in Desportes 2015).

Indeed, in many countries we can observe a "shrinking space for civil society". Governments have introduced reforms to restrict civil society space and public debate and are generally suspicious of (I)NGOs. In some PfR countries, it is close to impossible to approach higher government officials.

On the other hand, in most countries, strong connections were found between PfR partner organisations and local level governments. Rather than focusing on political change-oriented advocacy and campaigns targeting the central government, PfR chose a bottom-up and collaborative approach to lobby and advocacy. Or as a field officer in Ethiopia describes: doing 'invisible politics'. In general, PfR partners aim to affect change from below by enabling local politicians to affect change from below (bottom-up L&A):

> "*Our strategy is to transfer knowledge through municipalities. Local governments that are already empowered can transfer to other governments. Not we as RC, CARE, or WI are going to convince the ministers but we strengthen local governments and create spaces, like forums, with local and national authorities so that they can talk to them themselves*" (PfR staff in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

Where the situation permits and initiatives emerge for more explicit political action, PfR has also engaged in these. Kenya forms an illustrative example as described in Box 2. However, overall PfR rarely engages with more explicit or confrontational politics. In some countries,

the Red Cross in particular was cautious to be involved in such political activities.

On a local level, PfR chose four key strategies to engage with local governments: strengthening institutional capacity, joint implementation, joint planning and supporting governments with the implementation of their activities.

Concerning the former, by building capacity and technical skills among local government officials, PfR expects to contribute to more fundamental changes in the future. To reach joint implementation, PfR involved the government in project implementation at community level. In several cases, the government also contributed financially to activities of the programme, for example in Nicaragua and Ethiopia. This strategy has strengthened local government's ownership of the programme. It also had the effect of strengthening the linkages between communities and local governments by bringing them together during project activities. Joint planning was also performed which entailed that PfR supported local governments with mainstreaming the integrated approach in their plans and strategies, or even developing them jointly. Finally, PfR partners base their work on helping to implement what has been approved by the government, offering what government actors and ministries cannot achieve by themselves (i.e. organising and training community based DRR committees; developing school safety plans and emergency drills).

The Strategic Inter-Institutional Agenda in Guatemala

The lack of inter-institutional coordination in Guatemala, both at national and regional level, poses a significant challenge to achieving an enabling environment for integrated risk management. PfR Guatemala therefore set out to increase the coordination between key institutions by involving them in developing a Strategic Inter-Institutional Agenda (SIA) that draws out common responsibilities, tools and an action plan for addressing DDR, EMR and CCA in an integrated way. Through personal meetings with government officials and the organisation of dialogue events and workshops with the participation of local and national officials, the PfR were able to advocate for the SIA and tune it towards the needs and priorities of the targeted institutions. The SIA became official with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and is expected to promote vertical (national-to-local) and horizontal (inter-institutional) integration of DDR, EMR and CCA efforts.

Crucial for the success of the SIA was that PfR managed to engage officials across all levels of government. Further, positive results from PfR field activities were instrumental in fostering political interest in the integrated approach and because of an internally aligned political advocacy strategy PfR partners were able to combine their organisational strengths and prioritise in their work (Source: Singüenza, R. *et al.*, 2014)

Box 3 Advocacy in Guatemala

In cases where the national government is approached, forms of engagement are similar to the local level: PfR partners usually avoid sensitive issues and focus on collaboration, capacity building, networking rather than political change-driven advocacy (i.e. organising workshops, conferences, presenting PfR experiences, publications, engaging in policy dialogues). However, engagement with national level government officials remained rather limited in the case study countries. From the countries included in this study Guatemala forms an inspiring exception, where the PfR partners drafted a strategic inter-institutional agenda (SIA) to align the plans and actions of the key government actors (see box 3).

The avoidance of sensitive issues, because of political restrictions in the country of operation or because of mandate of the implementing organisation, may have the effect that PfR offers (participatory) technocratic solutions to vulnerability, rather than addressing the (political) root causes of vulnerability. In other words, it can deter the PfR objective to transform, by enabling communities to address underlying factors and root causes of risk, and be active partners for governments in implementing DRR.

3.7 Enhancing community resilience

The final objective of the PfR is to enhance community resilience. Given the time of this research, the real impact remains yet to be seen. Establishing long-term impact requires continued and long-term monitoring.

The case studies made it evident that, except for the limited focus on health, PfR has addressed what Twigg (2012) refers to as the key characteristics of community resilience. Of Twiggs resilience characteristics, the main focus was on enhancing human, social and political resilience and the focus has mainly been on software interventions. In the course of the programme, we also see more activities focusing on enhancing natural, physical and financial resilience.

Overall, enhancing human resilience and changing mind-sets came forward as the main outcome. This included the transfer of knowledge and concrete skills to communities (i.e. ecological farming techniques or first aid training), which was meant to result into mentality change and subsequently new practises. There has indeed been an observable change, with communities becoming more proactive, self-reliant and more encouraged to learn and get organised. Moreover it resulted in an increase in environmental consciousness of communities. Being aware of the importance of protecting and restoring the natural environment for secure livelihoods and for reducing climate change and risks. Community members increasingly diversified their livelihoods. Strengthening social capital was sought through the formation of numerous committees and through the strengthening of organisational structures. A common side-effect of these many group activities, was more connectedness and collaboration with peers and a wider support system. Political resilience was enhanced through capacity building and resulted in increased fostering of interaction between communities and local authorities. Interestingly, growth of political capital was more reported by PfR staff, less so by community members themselves.

The enhancement of physical resilience was mainly a result of small-scale improvements, with strong links to other resilience aspects. An example is the provision of improved stoves. These led to better health and were better for the environment (reduced cutting of trees) but also allowed for addressing gender issues, and saved energy and time. The enhancement of natural and financial resilience is a long-term process, outcomes remain to be seen. Financial resilience does partly result from for example group/village savings and loans (i.e. Ethiopia and Indonesia) and cash-for work schemes (i.e. Guatemala, Ethiopia). In Ethiopia for example, savings prevented pastoralist households from selling their cattle at disadvantageous prices in times of need. Financial gains also partly result from livelihood diversification activities, those remain, however, pre-dominantly small-scale, subsistence activities with challenges to access markets (i.e. fish farming in Kenya; flower growing in Nicaragua; soap and honey production in Ethiopia).

3.8 Summing up

A few concluding remarks can be made when reflecting on the main insights gained on the PfR approach in practise. Generally speaking the PfR approach was well-received, perceived to be logical and valuable and has proven its significance. The approach is relevant, enables integrated planning and project design and especially when a livelihood perspective is integrated into the approach. In addition, the community-based approach was highlighted as significant and even innovative in some areas of intervention, with outcomes on civil society strengthening and capacity building. The level of understanding and integration of the PfR was strengthened towards the end of the programme.

There were also challenges. Despite high levels of acceptance, the actual translation of the approach into ("integrated") activities in communities and societies proved challenging, and had varied outcomes. Especially in the first years, a lack of understanding of the approach could lead to unrealistic expectations and hence disappointment. Given the complexity and scope, the approach requires high levels of supervision.

Chapter 4: PfR's Institutional Dynamics

A central idea of the PfR programme is that the creation of partnerships among organisations with different approaches (environmental, developmental, humanitarian) will make responses more effective at the local and national level as the different organisations learn from each other, integrate their approaches, share expertise, and complement each other's work. As alliance building was initially mainly donor-driven it is interesting to ask: how do these institutional dynamics work out in practise?

As analytical framework for looking into the institutional dynamics of PfR, the chapter uses the Capabilities Framework of Keijzer *et al.* (2011). The framework suggests that there are five basic capabilities ('5Cs') that together enable an organisation or alliance to achieve its development goals. Those include the capability to act and commit, deliver on development objectives, adapt and self-renew, relate to external stakeholders and achieve coherence (see Chapter 1). The 5Cs are used to analyse factors that enable or obstruct the working of the alliance in the case study countries.

4.1 Capability to act and commit

The capability to act and commit concerns the alliance's capacity to work properly, plan, take decisions and act on these decisions collectively. It concerns the framework around which the alliance is organised and which keeps the partnership functioning. In the case of PfR the following factors were found to be of particular influence on the capability to act and commit: the organisational set-up of the alliance, the cooperation between and commitment of partners, the geographical design of the programme and the coordination of the alliance.

4.1.1 Organisational set-up

The organisational set-up and the choice of PfR partners were initially heavily top-down, as they were designed and chosen as part of the proposal to the donor, which was mainly produced by the Dutch alliance partners. An interview respondent in phase 1 and 2 of the research emphasized: *"Everything was produced here* (referring to the Netherlands) *and not in the country teams, some were forced to work together. We should start from the needs and collaboration in countries, instead of forcing it on them."* (Hilhorst et al. 2014, 37)

Working in partnership with different organisations requires extra coordination efforts. Partners are required to meet regularly, align strategies and plan and report jointly. Therefore, there are varying degrees to which the alliance is perceived as beneficial. While in Kenya, for example the added value of working together with different organisations was highly appreciated by all partners; in Indonesia and the Philippines, the alliance was interpreted as 'forced marriage'.

A key challenge to the capacity to act and commit as an alliance, was the partnership building process and the complexity of the organisational set-up - as illustrated by PfR staff from Kenya:

> *"At some point, we would think that the PfR is not moving, and this is because there is consensus building, there is joint planning, there is ensuring that things move together in a synchronized manner. There is a lot of talking, there are many board room discussions and agreement building meetings. There is that part to it, causing things to move slowly"* (in Faling 2015).

PfR aligns several organisations with different organisational structures, mandates and approaches. This creates complex processes that sometimes delay project implementation. Different administrative and financial systems of the organisations, for instance, hamper the financing of joint activities.

Furthermore, the alliance members all have their unique organisational set-up. The Red Cross exclusively works with national Red Cross societies, CARE and Cordaid work with local country offices and local implementing partners. WI has its own staff working from country and/or regional offices and is present in most PfR countries. The RCCC mostly sends staff to the countries for a short duration for trainings. This leads to differing expectations, especially regarding the role of WI, and the RCCC in particular.

Additionally, the Red Cross works with large teams of volunteers, whereas the other organisations are predominantly working with paid staff. The Red Cross therefore often had a larger presence in communities. This sometimes caused friction or even competition between partners.

Furthermore, each alliance partner decided to involve local implementing partners, who then became part of the PfR alliance in the country and also profile as such – without the other alliance partners having a say in it. In some countries this has created tensions due to conflicting mandates of organisations.

All in all, it is fair to say that the PfR programme's complexity meant that the inception phase-where most energy was usurped by the formation of the alliance, the familiarisation with the approach by staff, and the development, training and internalisation of the approach, took several years out of the five year programme period.

4.1.2 Partners' cooperation and commitment

There were varying degrees to which partners committed to joint planning and implementation. In most countries partner organisations translated the PfR approach into practise according to their own mandate and expertise and did not develop joint strategies. With limited initial joint planning, joint implementation became challenging in the first years.

> "*In the beginning, the concepts were not introduced strongly. Each organisation interpreted and implemented the programme differently. It makes us struggle*." (PfR staff in Indonesia, in Srikandini 2015).

During the implementation of the activities in the communities, collaboration between partners could have been much stronger. This holds true for the majority of countries. Especially at community level, alliance partners worked mostly independent, implementing the programme in parallel to each other. Activities were not decided on jointly, but were rather the result of community action plans and adjusted to partners' on-going programmes and past experience.

Collaboration rather happened on a macro (political advocacy) than on a micro (community) level. Partners for example organised joint networking events and conferences. In Guatemala partners successfully aligned their political advocacy strategies to jointly advocate for closer inter-institutional collaboration regarding integrated risk management

(see box 3). In the other countries, however, partners stressed that a common roadmap defining national level advocacy was missing.

In general, harmonisation around the integrated PfR approach took a long time to materialise. Some organisations had a long history in their respective country and had previously developed approaches that they invested in and had branded. This influenced organisations to maintain and build on what they had already introduced in the communities and with their stakeholders.

Overall, the good functioning of the partnership depended on partners' (voluntary) cooperation and commitment. PfR staff in the Philippines explained their vision of how cooperation could have been stronger (Leung 2015):

> *"…there could have been a working group from the very beginning. To look at specifics, to come up with one strategy, one approach for all the activities that you are implementing. Even in different areas. This working group should sit together and discuss, for example: the contingency planning should look like this, this is how the participant should look like. And this is how the output should look like. So that even though you go to different areas, you still expect the same output."* (PfR staff Philippines, in Leung 2015).

In other words, a stronger, more binding framework to ensure commitment and clarify roles, responsibilities and forms of engagements within the alliance in each country could have been beneficial.

4.1.3 Geography

Research revealed different findings related to the issue of geographical disbursement and cooperation. For example in Indonesia and Ethiopia, implementation sites were wide apart and to travel between different programme sites can take up days. In these sites cooperation of alliance partners at community level was limited. In Nicaragua, project sites were in close proximity to each other, but cooperation in the field was however also limited.

Nevertheless, in Guatemala, partners were also geographically dispersed but this did not seem to be a limiting factor for collaboration (at least on the national level). As explained by a staff member:

"*Guatemala is a big country with significant distances among our working areas, and certainly being in an alliance is not easy. However, we are ready to travel any distance and have full disposition to meet because we believe in this alliance; united we find strength*" (PfR staff in Guatemala, in Dávila Bustamente 2105)

PfR partners often mention geographical dispersion as a major limiting factor in collaboration. However, our findings are mixed and point to a lesser importance of this issue, compared to the issue of coordination addressed below. As for the Guatemala case regular meetings and a strong commitment from partners made collaboration possible

4.1.4 Coordination

Throughout the course of PfR, the need to actively shape relationships between organisations with diverse visions, rules and practises was evident. A major finding in this respect is that an in-country coordinator, dedicated full time to PfR, is essential for the good

functioning of the alliance. This person should always function and work on behalf of the whole consortium (PfR). Coordination at regional instead of country level, as for example in Guatemala and Nicaragua, was deemed insufficient. In general, the presence of a national coordinator, knowledgeable about IRM, representing all organisations, played a constructive role in facilitating alliance-building processes.

The permanent presence of a country coordinator also helped to tackle the complexity of the programme by facilitating learning process between organisations. In Indonesia, for example, joint learning was hampered by high staff turnover in the position of a learning coordinator (part of the country coordinator position)

Where national coordination was lacking this also influenced other capabilities, such as the capability to adapt and self-renew (facilitate learning and exchange processes between partners) and the capability to achieve coherence (encourage collaboration and mediate conflict).

Overall, concerning the capability to act and commit, we can observe that most organisational challenges were identified in the beginning of the programme and that partners have tried to redress the shortcomings. Where collaboration has been weak, regular meetings have been set up or national coordinators have been employed. Nonetheless, the capability to act and commit as alliance has remained limited due to a lack of joint planning, sharing of roles and responsibilities and a binding framework.

4.2 Capability to Deliver

The capacity to deliver on development objectives relates to the ability of the alliance to ensure that it is producing what it is established to do. This relates to the ability of the alliance to have access to financial, material and knowledge resources. Findings from the research suggest that there are two interrelated factors that affect the alliance's capacity to deliver: the in-country presence of the partners and the ability to operationalize the integrated approach.

4.2.1. In-country presence

When PfR selected countries to work in, it opted for countries where multiple partners had a presence or were implementing programmes. In none of the countries, all five partners were present on the ground. CARE, NLRC and Cordaid had a permanent presence in most countries. WI was an implementing partner in four out of six case study countries, two of which (Guatemala and Nicaragua) were coordinated by a regional office. RCCC mainly provided external technical support. The RCCC maintained a different vision on capacity building and knowledge transfer than the other partners. According to the RCCC, assistance should be short-term and supportive, rather than continuous and directive (like humanitarian organisations). Especially field staff emphasized that they felt the need for more continuous support from the RCCC. The treatment of climate change adaptation as a separate issue to be facilitated by a special organisation led sometimes to confusion over the question if and how adaptation activities differed from activities already geared to disaster risk reduction.

The EMR and CCA components, attributed to WI and RCCC respectively, were as mentioned, physically less present in some countries. During data collection, many interviewees expressed they had experienced a lack of support to facilitate the ecosystems and climate aspect. For example a PfR staff member in the Philippines emphasized:

> *"A lot of feedback we received [from the Netherlands], for example in the midterm it was mentioned that EMR was not visible. My response to that is that "you designed the alliance in such a way that you did not ensure that EMR thinking is there. At the beginning of the project there was training for the staff, what is EMR.... but later on, somebody with EMR view should be present at important events. For example, when you design a baseline survey, somebody with EMR thinking perspective should look into that design to ensure EMR will be looked into. […] Every time someone from Wetlands comes in, they say that EMR is not present. That is too late. If you want to contribute, you need to give something concrete"* (PfR staff Philippines, in Leung 2015)

In countries where WI was not an implementing partner (for example Ethiopia, Philippines) and only provided technical advice and capacity building, some partners felt that support was minimal. Especially difficulties with identifying EMR projects appropriate for the urban environment were reported. In Ethiopia, some interviewed partners also agreed that the added value of selective WI involvement had been minimal. However, given an already strong EMR focus of government programmes, partners were already familiar with EMR. In Nicaragua, an in-country EMR expert was recruited a bit further in the process, this significantly contributed to EMR advances.

Overall, the capability of PfR to deliver as individual organisations was higher than as a country-based alliance.

4.2.2. Operationalization of PfR approach

Findings from interviews indicate that the PfR approach in general is highly appreciated. However, given the complexity of the approach, building the human resources to operationalize concepts took a long time and was a challenging process for local partners.

National-level PfR partners perceived there was a discrepancy between the complexity of the approach and the level of support provided to in-country partners to translate it into practise. Many criticized a lack of technical guidance and asked for more support to develop concrete field activities.

In most countries, confusion existed about what an integrated approach really entailed in practise. In the end, much was done through 'learning by doing' and trial and error testing of activities. This enabled the learning process, yet took a disproportionate amount of time and resources. As explained by PfR staff from Kenya:

> *"In the learning process we really wasted a lot of resources; that is how you learn. This programme, with different approaches under one project, implemented in one community, is a bit challenging, and it was a whole experience we learned from […] It was a bit difficult, and we were in a trial-and-error-mode and process. So I think up to mid-2013 it was mainly a learning phase for us"* (PfR staff Kenya, in Faling, 2015).

In Ethiopia, partners did not always take into account the wider landscape and longer time scales, which caused for example the setup of an irrigation project without sufficient water supply. This example shows that embarking on an integrated path with incomplete knowledge may result in the need to readdress some measures in the future as they prove to be inefficient as environmental conditions change (PfR, 2013).

Nevertheless, at the time of the research, a high level of understanding and ownership of

the PfR vision and approach could be observed. Overall, on the job trainings, assistance and regular information flows from CTNL to in-country partners would have been useful to address the practical implementation, but partners managed to deal with knowledge gaps by drawing on external knowledge resources (see below).

4.3 Capability to adapt and self-renew

The capacity to adapt and self-renew concerns the learning ability of the alliance and its capacity to analyse trends, use opportunities and adapt and transform accordingly. Therefore, the next sections details factors that have enabled or obstructed learning within and between the different organisations. Among those are: the ability of the partners to learn from the PfR programme and knowledge sharing within the alliance.

4.3.1 Learning from and within PfR

Overall, PfR has provided a great space for learning for the different organisations. The research found, that learning takes place especially within organisation that adopt ideas from the partners within PfR and incorporation of new tools[6]. The integrated approach has expanded and enriched the methodological toolbox of the partners. As explained by field staff from Nicaragua:

> *"In our work we are all experts in a specific field, but with PfR we broadened our thinking - to understand that the environmental management part, for example, is closely linked to climate change, and that it also helps to reduce disaster risks. For us as technical staff the project has been a huge learning process because we have seen how the themes are integrated (...) The RC has learned a lot from the PfR approach, the RC has always worked with disaster risk prevention and also climate change adaptation programmes, but it has never been seen working with an ecosystem approach - this is an enrichment for the institution. There has been an impact within the organisation, the staff and the volunteers, and a strengthening of communities, institutions, and decision makers. We all learned a lot, now for example we see the impact of climate change in a different way: Before we knew it was the fault of the emitting countries, now we know that we are also contributing, and how it affects us and how we suffer. For a long time we thought that climate change is only more heat, we didn't see everything"* (PfR Nicaragua staff, in Strauch 2015).

Various internal learning processes were initiated, including for example this study (since 2013, see numerous reports), write shops (see also section 3.1), exchange visits and the analysis of how partners had adjusted their assessment tools to an integrated approach (see the report on "Integrating climate and ecosystems into community risk assessments"). Through PfR, the institutional capacity of the different organisations has been enhanced. Partner organisations have embraced the integrated approach and gradually institutionalised it in their own organisations at varying levels. Individual organisations often adapted their own approaches towards more integrated strategies.

[6] See for example Bachofen *et al.* (2014) about how partners revised their traditional community risk assessment processes to account for climate and ecosystem-related factors.

The value of learning from each other was for example emphasized by staff from Kenya and Indonesia:

> *"…for the staff it is a great learning experience. We would not be able to incorporate an environment-friendly approach by ourselves, but in the alliance we manage to integrate both the environment and the climate in our disaster-risk reduction programme. I now see things in a different way. You know that an approach is successful once the community appreciates it, and even owns it"* (PfR Kenya staff, in Faling 2015).

> *"One of the benefits of working with the consortium is the opportunity to learn from each other*'' (PfR Indonesia staff, in Srikandini 2015).

However, some countries also experienced difficulties with identifying issues for inter-organisational learning when their mandates and expertise were similar. WI and RCCC were often mentioned as having a specific contribution to the partnership, whereas the other three organisations were considered to be largely overlapping in their expertise.

In the eyes of respondents, knowledge sharing was at times also impeded because of the lack of institutionalized and regular means of communication, such as a newsletter or a joint PfR Dropbox with relevant documents.

Additionally, a number of interviewees observed a tendency towards competition between the partners of the alliance that hindered knowledge sharing:

> *"Organisations seem to be rather jealous of their information and safeguard their own ways of working"* (PfR staff in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

> *"It could be obstructing when you try to compare, try to compete. The paradigm, the way they would deal with each other could be improved"* (PfR staff Philippines, in Leung 2015).

Finally, collaborations with knowledge centres and educational institutions were key for gaining new knowledge and enabling PfR partners to translate the complex approach into practise. For more details see section 4.5.

4.4 Capability to achieve coherence

The capability to achieve coherence within the alliance depends mainly on the strength of the alliance's joint identity, principles and direction, which are followed and known by the staff. For PfR the following two points were influential: the ownership of the PfR approach and the challenge of aligning different organisations with diverging mandates, backgrounds and organisational characteristics under one PfR umbrella.

4.4.1 Ownership of PfR approach

Because of the complexity of the programme, ownership of the PfR approach among partners took time. Not only did partner organisations need to deal with PfR requests, formats and tools, they also had their own organisational demands. In addition, it was considered difficult to integrate all the different components of the resilience vision, including: building blocks, principles, strategic directions, thematic fields, minimum standards and project indicators.

> *"of course we understand about geographical scales, we work in river basins for a long time and we already apply this way of working to our interventions; community self- management is part of our methodology as an organisation so it does not come new to us. Now, I would really appreciate a clear explanation on what the building blocks are for, how can we apply them on the field, as well as what is the view in Holland about resilience, perhaps then we can be more PfR oriented than what we do at the moment"* (PfR staff in Guatemala, in Dávila Bustamente 2015).

Despite these challenges, towards the end of the programme we can observe a high level of coherence and identification with the PfR identity and approach.

4.4.2 Diverging mandates

Organisations with fairly different characteristics, mandates and visions have united in PfR, to jointly tackle resilience in an integrated manner. Findings from the different countries suggest that this at times poses a challenge in terms of aligning strategies, sharing a common vision and forming a common PfR identity, especially when it comes to lobby and advocacy.

The Red Cross, for example, needs to respect its Fundamental Principles including neutrality and impartiality. Therefore the organisation is careful with lobby and advocacy and can be reluctant to be associated with political activities. Other organisations have a different relationship with the government, or are not as reluctant to challenge political actors. At times, this complicated joint profiling.

> *"…sometimes for advocacy for example you cannot target what you really want because you have to agree on the consortium level. You have to define only the minimum"* (PfR staff Philippines, in Leung 2015).

> *"The NRC has more experience with working with other Red Cross national societies. It is easier because as a global movement they have the same vision and mission. Working with other NGOs or other partners implies adapting to the mission and vision of these partners. For us as RC it is very important to comply with the 7 principles of our society, but other partners may not have a problem with this, they don't have problems with advocacy and can lobby more easily than us. I think this has been a challenge. The principles put us in a particular situation at national and international level"* (PfR staff Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

4.5 Capability to relate to external stakeholders

The capability to relate is about building and maintaining networks with external actors. Partnerships with multiple agencies at various levels were crucial for successful project implementation as expertise was provided and strengths were complemented by the PfR partners. PfR has implemented activities in partnership with the government, community-based organisations, schools, academic institutions, religious organisations, meteorological institutions, and the private sector. This has enhanced the knowledge base of PfR, improved implementation, and assisted sustainability, joint action, advocacy and capacity development.

Of the partnerships, especially collaborations with knowledge centres and educational institutions were key for gaining new knowledge and enabling PfR partners to translate the complex approach into practise. Many PfR partners have teamed up with universities. This

enabled PfR partners to find new knowledge and input and hence to reach their project goals. Universities have supported PfR in developing planning tools and capacity building instruments. Some have also developed university courses that are now replicated in other programmes. Further, collaboration offered PfR the opportunity to mainstream the approach and reach 'future decision makers' as universities included PfR experiences in their curricula.

Overall, forming partnerships has been a strong component of PfR in all countries. Relations to external partners allowed PfR to operationalize the integrated approach more profoundly and it included a win-win effect for all parties. Especially the cooperation with academic institutions allowed for mutual learning and formed an evidence-base for advocacy. Partnerships are, however, usually formed on an organisation-to-organisation basis. It is difficult to develop a partnership with PfR as a consortium owing to its lack of legal recognition. Moreover, co-operation with the private sector remained fairly limited

4.6 Summing up

Findings from this qualitative study show that the PfR alliance partners experienced the integrated approach to be very relevant. PfR showed that it is possible to align NGOs under one agenda – this is very relevant for harmonizing development efforts by different actors. Moreover, it has provided the space for an immense learning process for all organisations.

PfR has had a long start-up period, when the alliance was set-up in a top-down manner and country programmes had to find out how to shape the alliance. The development of PfR was hindered by the fact that different programme components were associated with different organisations with separate mandates, leading to some gaps between disaster risk reduction and livelihoods and the fields of environmental management and climate change adaptation. In the course of years more technical and institutional support was arranged. Strong, alliance-level in-country coordination was forwarded by respondents as the key to most effectively manage the opportunities and complexities that come with the large alliances and its networks.

A major strength of PfR was the learning capacity of the alliance, that enabled increasing levels of integration and direction throughout the years.

Chapter 5: PfR's Outcomes on Community Resilience

After having described our findings on how PfR has worked and having analysed the institutional dynamics, this chapter builds on both sets of findings to discuss how PfR interventions enhance community resilience and what challenges are encountered in doing so. We will discuss several themes, including the integrated approach, the incorporation of the four elements of anticipate, respond, adapt and transform, community participation and ownership, creating an enabling environment for resilience, and the question of sustainability of the programme.

5.1 Integrated programming

The research finds that the integrated approach of PfR, in which the importance of cross-sectoral programming and of bridging the gap between humanitarian assistance, developmental and environmental activities is emphasized, is relevant and innovative. It is especially fruitful for addressing issues at community level in a holistic way.

Even though people at times, did not always understand the nitty-gritty of integration, we often found that communities started to connect the different issues, like in the following quote:

> *"I do not quite understand adaptation to climate change, but if I read on the internet, I understand that what I do as a human, worsens the wealth of the land, so it is important to reconstruct the ecosystem"* (Community member in Guatemala, in Dávila Bustamente 2105).

On the alliance level, we find positive outcomes in terms of cross-sectoral learning. While the integrated approach was often described as complex and challenging to start with, in-country PfR partners have increasingly adapted their thinking and tools towards a more integrated way of programming for community resilience. Overall more than 60 local organisations are now viewing risks in a more integrated light. This stands out as a major achievement of PfR. Additionally, partners have engaged with and trained a large number of stakeholders from governments, civil society, knowledge institutions and the private sector. PfR has had an extensive reach and has made an important contribution to scaling up a more holistic approach to community resilience.

However, some challenges remain regarding integrated programming.

In many countries, implementing an integrated approach was done by layering the implementation of activities in the same geographic location, or in other words, 'doing a bit of everything in one community'. Whereas this has brought about positive outcomes, the programme has not always found the synergy of truly integrating the components. Scholars such as Frankenberger *et al*. (2014, p.10) emphasize that 'truly integrated activities' may require more than simply combining cross-sectoral interventions in either time or space, because such approaches do not necessarily result in synergy. To some extent, this layered approach towards integration can be attributed to the process of realising a complex programme with a long inception phase where support and technical advice on the integration slowly materialised. Generally speaking, three PfR alliance partners have a strong background in DRR; for these agencies – and especially their country-based partners - CCA and EMR were rather novel concepts and considered difficult to translate into concrete activities. Especially with regards to climate change adaptation, findings show that it was not clear for some PfR field staff, what CCA would add to DRR. DRR is already increasingly relying

on weather forecasts, and hence CCA solutions confusingly resembled the known.

The 'artificial' separation of DRR/CCA/EMR by matching the disciplines with specialised partners, to some extent hindered full integration of these domains. The fact that different domains (or disciplines as they are called) of DRR/CCA and EMR were dealt with by different partners made them appear as separate, rather than as integrated. In practice, EMR and CCA also concerns disaster risk reduction and may address livelihoods and vice versa DRR often incorporates elements of CCA and EMR. As somebody explained during the validation workshop it was as if an integrated set of activities "was first disaggregated to be then reintegrated". The matching of 'disciplines' with specialised partners (CCA with the RCCC, and EMR with WI) underlined the 'artificial' separation of the different elements.

5.2 Anticipate, Respond, Adapt and Transform

In addition to integrating 'disciplines', PfR also aimed to build the resilience of communities by strengthening their capacities to: anticipate, respond, adapt and transform.

To strengthen capacities to **anticipate** and **respond** at the household and community level PfR partners have promoted initiatives that strengthen risk reduction and coping mechanisms. These aspects are the core of many PfR activities and projects. From the findings it can be concluded that these capacities have been further strengthened.

According to PfR, they aim to strengthen **adaptive** *capacity* at the household and community level, PfR's resilience capacity–building initiatives help households and communities to reduce their vulnerability to future risk and to the changing local situation and its livelihoods options (PfR, 2012).

Efforts to strengthen adaptive capacity have mainly included activities to diversify and strengthen livelihoods, amongst others through the adoption of climate-smart and environmentally friendly agricultural practises (agriculture was the main activity in most sites of implementation). The outcomes included the transfer of practical skills to communities (i.e. ecological farming techniques, honey production, soap production) but were also successful in fostering a change of mindsets with communities becoming proactive, self-reliant and encouraged to learn and get organised. We also observed an increase in environmental consciousness of communities. In different areas, we found communities more aware of the importance of protecting and restoring the natural environment to secure livelihoods and reduce climate change and risks.

We will later come back to the question if efforts towards anticipate, respond and adapt also led to transformation, i.e. enable addressing underlying factors and root causes of risk, and be active partners for governments in implementing DRR. Here, we can conclude that the activities to anticipate, respond and adapt were predominantly positive, although challenging issues came up.

Working across geographical and time scales

Working across geographical and time scales, was highly appreciated yet also raised substantial challenges.

With regards to geographical scales, PfR partners in the field offices emphasized that a landscape approach requires many resources; initiatives over a vast geographic area and collaboration with a large number of actors.

Partners often indicate that they do not have budget to address issues transcending the community level. Many activities are therefore limited in scope. Some, for example WRUEP in Kenya, manage to tackle this issue by engaging with platforms that group together various stakeholders. In Ethiopia, geographical scales were found to be relevant in the conceptualization of the project, yet in practise the focus was almost exclusively on communities. Finally, risk and hazard mapping activities mostly concentrated on the community level instead of the wider landscape.

In different countries, staff of PfR was grappling with the difference between the time-scales used in disaster preparedness and the ones for climate change adaptation (see also PfR, 2013, p.13). This is reflected in community's limited understanding of CCA measures. For example:

> *"The component that is a bit more complicated to understand for communities is CCA. They are aware that there has been a change in the climate (...) the challenge is that communities have not reached the point of defining actions for adaptation. We are seeing it now with the drought. The INETER said in the beginning of April/ May that the rains would not be good. So people were warned, but it was too late to prepare and people didn't know what to do. So we are with this problem now, the cattle is dying, etc."* (PfR Nicaragua staff, in Strauch 2015).

Measures to adapt to climate change were often equalled to EMR activities to tackle environmental degradation. In 3 of 6 country case studies, reforestation seemed to be the panacea for everything and sometimes led to unrealistically high expectations, because of oversimplified messages conveyed to communities. In Kenya, for example, some community members were convinced that tree planting around the community would bring back the rains and that within a few years their surroundings would be all green - even though they lived in an extremely arid area:

> *"I dream about the whole village being green. Our family does not have to go far away from home anymore for grazing our animals. We will find enough pasture in our village, and we will be able to stay together, with our livestock"* (Community member in Kenya, in Faling 2015).

Also in Nicaragua, community members expected high outcomes from tree planting:

> *"With reforestation we are going to live better because there won't be any natural disasters anymore, no drought, and we will have a better biodiversity"* (Community member Nicaragua, in Strauch 2015).

These false expectations of communities were – depending on the context - related to different factors, including lack of knowledge among staff members, over-enthusiasm and hence over-selling the approach in training communities, a lack of ideas for concrete CCA and EMR activities, or high levels of staff turnover.

Finally, we found the confusion around time scales partly related to a flaw in the PfR narrative, a similar framing problem as with the integrated approach, dealt with in the previous section. In the narrative of PfR, time scales are mainly related to climate change adaptation. In reality, the dimension of the time-scale is more cross-cutting than the framing of PfR seems to suggest. CCA requires a long-term strategy, but so do environmental management and DRR-oriented livelihood projects that aim to change agricultural practise to introduce resistant crops or make agriculture less rain-dependent.

Early warning, early action

The early warning - early action component proved to be complex and difficult to translate into practise, beyond the short-term early warning for imminent disasters. Our findings affirm the PfR Mid-term review (2013, p. 12) statement that: "Early warning, early action is an issue that proves to be difficult in all countries." This report identified as the main bottlenecks:

a. Information available but not shared between partners or not trickling down from national/regional to local levels.
b. Climate change is often used as a term to refer to various issues, also when these issues are not directly related to climate change
c. (Technical) information needs to be interpreted for the local level (how to read and how to access).
d. Early warning does not always translate into early action. Motivating communities to undertake early action (in case of hurricane, typhoons, flooding) is sometimes a challenge, as people hesitate to leave their belongings/house and do not want to compromise their livelihoods

PfR wants to work with different sources of information and combine scientific and local knowledge in forecasting. Authorities were found to sometimes be reluctant to use local knowledge-based early warning messages (see also mid-term review PfR 2013).

> *"we don't really have means to act against drought. The only way is, if living close to the river, we can farm without needing rain. Then stock that. [...] We give information to the woreda office, but we did not get any information on drought. Drought and the time of your death are the two things, which cannot be predicted. We pray that there is no drought"* (EW committee member in Ethiopia, in Desportes 2015).

On the other hand, local people sometimes tend to distrust scientific information, while indigenous/local knowledge may not always be sufficient or valid anymore. The trust in scientific information (provided by the government) may quickly evaporate when forecasts prove unreliable. A farmer in Ethiopia, for example stated that he took proactive action according to the forecast transmitted by the government. The forecast, however, proved wrong and he acted in vain, leading the farmer to the conclusion that *"we replaced God by meteorological forecasts, that was a mistake"* (Desportes 2015).

This is all the more complicated because detailed meteorological information for the local level does not exist. In Guatemala, for example, meteorological centres are not able to provide micro-climate information since every area has very specific climate characteristics. There may also be a lack of technical knowledge to interpret the information. Partners in Ethiopia for example complained about the 'confusing graphs' provided by the RCCC, which non-technical staff cannot interpret. Ethiopian field staff also remarked that forecasts were too coarse, the November 2014 forecast for instance did not point to above average rainfall in the north of the country, a worst case-scenario which actually impacted harvesting activities, and for which little preparations were made.

The lack of timely and available weather forecast information and/ or the inability to interpret available data had the result that some of the PfR interventions were not climate-proof. In Ethiopia, for example, a well was not yielding enough water during the dry season, as dug during times with higher water tables. In RACCN project sites in Nicaragua, vegetable gardens were promoted as CCA measure to guarantee food security in times of drought.

However, most of the seeds were lost due to intense rains following a drought period – posing the questions if vegetable gardens represent an adequate method for adaption to climate variability.

5.3 Community participation and ownership: enhancing community resilience

As elaborated in chapter 3.5, the participatory nature of PfR stands out as the major added value of the programme for PfR staff and communities. Partners have put a strong emphasis on initiatives to strengthen community self-management in programme design and implementation.

This strong added value is remarkable, as most PfR countries have a long history with participatory development. The specific areas of intervention, however, have often been sites of conflict and/or disaster with a history of high aid density and/or relief assistance. In these contexts (i.e. Kenya, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and Guatemala), the community-driven nature of PfR is very impactful.

Positive outcomes of community involvement were found in all countries. Overall, community participation has resulted into increased project effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Projects were (cost-) effective because communities contributed with their labour force, money or other material resources. Efficiency increased because communities were consulted during the planning of the project, which ensured that projects were properly grounded in the local context. They were also involved in the management of the implementation and operation, which made sure that projects responded to real needs. Additionally, the projects usually organized the community, building on local structures. Many communities affirmed that the social capital in the community has been strengthened. For example in Guatemala, 79% of the people interviewed (N= 139), affirmed that the programme had helped the community to organise. This is also essential when it comes to sustainability.

Overall, participants are involved in and contribute to the programme, which in turn builds their capacities, skills and competencies. This – however – does not necessarily mean communities are significantly empowered in the sense that they are able to gain or seize more power through collective social action. In other words, while participation has been high, self-reliance and ownership is still limited. The 2013 midterm corroborated that:

> *"although communities have been participating in the risk assessments, there is still limited ownership of some target communities [...] they are not yet able to carry out a risk assessment and to develop, implement and monitor the action plans by themselves and to generate support for their plans"* (PfR 2013, p. 5).

While partners have put a lot of effort and dedication into guaranteeing participation, research at community level confirmed that this relies on intensive facilitation and monitoring by PfR staff members.

In several countries, a small number of communities received a lot of attention, often through projects of different PfR partners. The level of success in these communities is much higher than in other communities that had to rely more on their own resources. These 'pet-communities' provide great examples of what can be achieved through the integrated approach. They also show that there are major challenges to mainstream and up-scale the PfR approach, as it is not realistic to provide similar levels of facilitation to all implementation sites.

In some countries, inclusion of marginalised groups and achieving a gender balance posed a challenge. In Kenya, an (unintended) consequence of placing community members in the position of co-designing the programme was that the elder and most powerful men in the community decided over the distribution of assistance. In one of the villages women complained about not receiving any assistance because they lacked male relatives who could represent them in the CDC meetings. Marginalized groups (esp. the poorest, women) were hence not structurally part of all community activities (Faling, 2015).

Another challenging issue is the political nature of community-based organisations, such as in Nicaragua:

> "Political mandates may intervene in the work because the community organisations are closely linked to political institutions. The leaders select their people, but there are also people from other parties in the community" (PfR staff Nicaragua).

Overall, it was found that *committee participation* most often did not equal *community participation*. Committees influence election methods, function as decision makers on programme elements and often choose the participants for the project. Additionally, committees often function as channels between PfR and the community – this can have negative effects when communication within communities is not functioning properly. In several countries, cases were reported where information had not been passed on by leaders to community members.

Participatory needs assessments

Because of the context-specific and dynamic nature of resilience, PfR has prioritized contextualized approaches to identify needs and risks. These surged from integrated risks and needs assessments at community level. The comprehensive assessments were key in understanding the relationships between the obstacles to resilience (risks and vulnerabilities) on the one hand, and the pathways to resilience on the other. Outcomes of these assessments were used to develop (often with the participation of the community) action plans that identified strategies and interventions for enhancing resilience. Main outcomes of activities at community level are hence related to the specific objectives formulated in community action plans. Examples are: improved livelihood outcomes through establishing a coffee plantation; reduced risk through building a bridge; enhanced food security through establishing fish farming etc. The approach of starting with the needs and perspectives of the communities was crucial to the programme. At times however, disappointment and demotivation was identified. This was often due to a lack of explanation about project and programme decisions that followed the needs assessments and due to unrealistic expectations about community-level results.

5.4 Creating an enabling environment for integrated risk management

A crucial component in the PfR strategy – especially to strengthen transformative capacity - is to create an enabling political environment for integrated risk management. According to PfR, *"through policy dialogue, empowerment of communities and access to knowledge, institutional arrangements can be changed to the advantage of vulnerable groups"* (PfR, 2012). As mentioned in chapter 3, one of the most important forms of engagement with governments has been to strengthen the human capital of local institutions.

In countries where PfR has engaged in building the capacities of communities and local

(government) institutions, an increased understanding of Integrated Risk Management was cited. In Kenya, for example, 'social fortification' activities helped community organisations to start advocating for themselves.

Local actors also value the planning tools created jointly with PfR. For example a local government officer in Nicaragua emphasized:

> "With PfR we developed the watershed management plan of the river Tapacali. All the local actors (municipalities, cooperatives, etc.) participated. Within our planning for this year, we will organise talks about watersheds and climate change so that people know the sub-basin" (officer of municipality in Nicaragua, in Strauch, 2015).

This improved knowledge is expected to benefit the process of developing and planning projects and programmes for resilience building. The close engagement with local-level institutions in most countries suggests that a sense of local ownership over resilience-building activities has been built, which could support more sustainable resilience interventions.

However, the challenge related to scaling up, was clearly recognized in all countries. There was evidence of change in the knowledge of local governments related to integrated risk management, but this had rarely reached the level of influencing policies and increasing dedicated spending (see also PfR 2014, p. 14).

The approach of PfR rests on the assumption that capacity building processes at the local level engender processes of change. However, interviews with local governments made it clear the possibility for new knowledge to bring about change on the ground often depends on the existence of a budget. In the case-study countries, interviewed officials stressed that they did not have the resources to translate capacity building activities into practise and keep track of community activities. This phenomenon has been described as 'sitting on a dry desk' (Therkildsen, O. and Tidemand, P. 2007). In Indonesia, for example, there is a well-developed policy for disaster risk reduction, with a strong decentralized component. Although the government has reserved a percentage of GNP for disaster risk reduction, none of these resources are allocated to the decentralized governments (Srikandini 2015).

A key limitation of PfR is that the alliance, due to a number of reasons, largely fails to reach key 'national' decision makers. Although PfR in Guatemala booked successes on a national level (the strategic inter-institutional agenda), in most other countries, actions mainly targeted government officials at the local level. Therewith PfR was not able to reach those with decision-making power over polices and budgets. The expectation of many in-country PfR partners is, that strengthening the capacity of local governments would sequentially lead to changes at higher levels.

There is no track record in the six country studies that sustains this expectation. In reality, replication or up-scaling depends on whether lower-level government representatives will advocate for the approach and push it forwards. This is often hampered by high turnover in the government. Another issue is that centralized governments provide little room for manoeuvre to local government to take initiatives and adapt approaches that have been dictated from above: "In the long term politics don't depend on the mayor, but on the central level. They have their municipal plans" (local government official in Nicaragua, in Strauch 2014). In general, the research finds that "bottom-up advocacy" does not replace working with higher-level governments.

Another point for consideration is PfR's approach towards governments. In countries where the space for civil society is shrinking, PfR's non-confrontational, collaborative approach to lobby and advocacy has proven effective as it allowed access to local governments and communities. To maintain good relations with the government, PfR partners usually refrained from publicly addressing political causes of vulnerability. Especially the Red Cross, adhering to its principle of neutrality, was hesitant to publicly address political issues, insisting on working 'diplomatically'.

Underlying (political) causes of structural vulnerability have hence been toned-down in PfR's advocacy and capacity building activities. Capacity building efforts have mainly focused on more technical issues without addressing root causes of risks and vulnerability.

5.5 Transformation and sustainability

Finally, we raise the questions whether PfR has achieved transformative outcomes (defined by PfR as being able to address root causes and work effectively with government partners) and whether these are sustainable (whether they are durable beyond the lifetime of PfR).

The case studies bring out that, except for activities specialised on health, PfR has addressed all of, what Twigg (2012) refers to as key capitals of community resilience. The main focus of PfR was on enhancing human, social and political resilience. This focus on software components has enhanced communities' awareness and knowledge about risks and ways to anticipate, respond and adapt to them. However, their capacity to truly adapt and transform into resilient communities is usually largely hampered by unchanged structural causes of vulnerability such as poverty or conflict. In general, communities continue to be highly vulnerable to weather conditions and continue to have highly precarious livelihoods. The findings raise the question: what kind of resilience can be reached with the small-scale measures that are being done, in view of hazards and other challenges communities are exposed to?

PfR has been most successful in a number of communities where big impacts were achieved with intense facilitation, raising further questions of sustainability, replicability, and up-scalability. The idea that resilient communities will advocate with authorities has to some extent been realised, yet has also not resulted in transformative policies for a number of reasons including the lack of room for manoeuvre (politically and financially) of local governments. Collaborative efforts can more effectively improve transformative capacity at regional and national levels, as was the case in Guatemala, however, divergences in organisation's mandates often hampered joint national advocacy. All in all, we may conclude that there are challenges to the sustainability and transformative potential that PfR had in the countries of research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion & Recommendations

This final chapter provides the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the PfR research. We start with a concluding review of our findings per research question.

6.1 What does the PfR approach entail and how is it translated into practise?

In chapter 2, we have reconstructed the Theory of Change of the PfR, taking into account the different principles and building blocks defined by PfR. We then analysed how different stakeholders of the programme, i.e. PfR staff, local government and communities concur or discord with the elements of the ToC.

We found a growing and strong common denominator among the stakeholders in identifying natural hazards, intensified by climate change, and environmental degradation as key obstacles to resilience. We also found differences. A major difference between community members and other stakeholders is that communities tend to emphasize the structural causes of their vulnerability, whereas PfR staff and local government tend to put more weight on adverse attitudes of communities.

With regards to pathways of change, we also found some different views, with communities and sometimes governments (depending on the country) expecting more substantive aid and PfR and sometimes governments focusing more on capacity development (human, social and political capitals). We also found a different attitude towards communities, where PfR staff aims to make communities the driving force in resilience, whereas governments sometimes define an interest in educating communities to adopt the policies pre-defined by the government. A major achievement of PfR is that these differences have in many places been overcome in the course of the programme with many more stakeholders getting enthusiastic about the PfR approach, including local government actors and communities.

In chapter 3 we have described what the PfR approach entails in practise. We generally found that the PfR approach was well appreciated and valuable and had proven its relevance, especially at the community level. The most successful activities were those that included community based planning and project design and incorporated a livelihood perspective into the approach, for example providing families with micro-credits. We were surprised to find the large appreciation for the community-based approach of PfR, which was often singled out as the most outstanding aspect of the programme. Even though all countries have been engaged in participatory development for decades, the sites of intervention were often in areas of recent disaster where the population was more exposed to relief programming without much participatory value. Engaging in PfR therefore required a shift in the way of thinking of stakeholders, who instead of receiving or distributing e.g. food items, faced the prospect of taking ownership of resilience programming.

In general, we also found a large level of PfR activities and thus buy-in of local governments, and less so at higher levels of government.

6.2 How is the institutional component translated into practise?

Chapter 4 presented finding on the institutional component of the PfR alliance. A main finding was that all stakeholders were convinced of the relevance of PfR, and increasingly so throughout the years. PfR has had a long start-up period, when the alliance was set-up in a top-down manner and country programmes had to find out how to shape the alliance. In the course of years more technical and institutional support was arranged, although this was

repeatedly and on all levels raised as a point of concern. A complex programme like PfR needs time to settle and 5 years is actually a brief time-span for such a complicated programme.

PfR has shown that it is possible to align NGO agendas under one banner – this is very relevant for harmonizing development efforts by different actors. The extent to which the partners actually worked together (through joint planning or joint implementation of activities) and learnt from each other varied per country and was often more limited than expected. This did not take away some levels of mutual learning and the adoption of the PfR approach across the organisations, even though different organisations had their own emphasis.

PfR partners have shown to be very strong in engaging and maintaining their network of stakeholders, such as the formation of collaboration with academic institutions and the collaboration with local government.

6.3 Major strengths and opportunities of the PfR approach

There are a number of outstanding features of the PfR approach in practise.

Firstly, the integrated approach combining DRR, EMR and CCA, and incorporating different time and geographical scales, has been convincing to the different stakeholders, has increasingly been understood and accepted in communities and reaped results in many different project activities.

Secondly, the approach has been most successful in those instances where the PfR partners were able to address DRR/EMR and CCA in combination with livelihood programmes, providing tangible benefits to communities.

Thirdly, PfR has been successful in and highly appreciated for its approach of engaging with community participation and making communities the key actor in the implementation of the programme, amongst others through participatory needs assessments.

Fourthly, the partnerships forged by PfR with knowledge institutes and government actors have been productive and led to collaborative activities in the communities.

6.4 Major weaknesses and challenges

There are also a number of challenges in the PfR approach and programme. Not surprisingly, these weaknesses often represent challenges within the strong aspects of the approach.

With regards to the integrated approach, there are challenges with the integration of the components and the scales.

Integrating DRR, EMR and CCA is complex and took time to realise. The fact that the different components were associated with different alliance partners has at times hampered the integration. Local partners predominantly work on the domain of their alliance partners, and we found many instances where activities were not integrated but layered.

Integrating geographical scales has been broadly taken up, in many areas we found stakeholders subscribing to the importance of landscape and river basin planning, and

sometimes this was even incorporated in standing government policy. Here, the problem is mainly in the implementation, requiring vast resources and coordination. In practise, however, a large majority of PfR activities did not surpass the community level.

With regards to the livelihoods component, we found that projects worked best when balancing 'soft'- and 'hardware' components. There have been discrepancies between different stakeholders' perceptions of pathways to resilience. Communities tended to emphasize the structural causes of their vulnerability and expected 'real' (tangible) support for their livelihoods. On the other hand, PfR staff assumed that communities' mind-sets were a major obstacle to resilience. Projects that combined tangible livelihood interventions with strengthening human, social and political capitals formed therefore an ideal balance between diverging perceptions of pathways to resilience, this was particularly evident when working with the micro-project and bio-rights approach. However, in countries were software approaches were strongly prioritized, needs for 'tangible' livelihood support continued to be under-addressed and at times caused frustration or unwillingness to participate among community members.

With regards to community participation, questions were raised about the durability and up-scalability of the community driven process towards resilience. Successful cases of community-led programmes invariably required intense facilitation, resulting in a restricted number of highly successful communities, and a large majority of communities where ownership continued to be an issue.

With regards to partnerships, especially with local government, questions were raised to the effect this would have for the resilience of communities. While there was a large buy-in to the PfR approach, local governments in many countries did not put the ideas into practise (joining the programme but not take initiatives to expand it to other areas), did not have the freedom to make policies unless dictated by higher levels of government or did not avail of the resources to invest in communities' resilience (sitting on a dry desk).

6.5 How did the PfR approach enable community resilience?

Chapter 5 discussed how PfR enhanced community resilience. A major issue we found is that, although PfR has made significant and relevant contributions towards building community resilience, true outcomes of the efforts often remain yet to be seen. Communities continue to be highly vulnerable to weather conditions and continue to have highly precarious livelihoods.

PfR's analysis, that resilience programming requires landscape-level, large time-frame, and integrated approaches is well-founded, but is difficult to translate into practise in a five year, modest programme. The notion that communities learn to advocate for structural solutions with the government does not yield results when local governments are incapable of realizing substantial programmes. Lobby and advocacy with national government, on the other hand, has thus far not been a strong suit of the PfR programme.

The experiences with PfR also raise questions regarding the politics of resilience. The resilience paradigm mobilizes stakeholders to embark on integrated approaches. Foremost, it emphasizes the capabilities of communities, which is appealing and realistic as communities often need to fend for themselves. The resilience approach has to some extent replaced earlier approaches that focused on the structural causes of vulnerability that are beyond the power of communities. A risk of the resilience paradigm is that it backgrounds these structural causes and people's rights to be protected by their government, and hence

enables governments to shy away from their responsibilities. This would eventually lead to an abandonment of communities instead of support.[7] Shrinking space for civil society and the a-political mandate of particularly the Red Cross have been additional factors in how PfR has often refrained from politicising vulnerability. One of the questions raised by the experiences of PfR is whether the resilience approach needs to be complemented with a stronger emphasis on the structural causes of vulnerability, and how to further the advocacy (or activist) power of communities to realise resilience by combining their own efforts with addressing external obstacles to resilience and bringing governments and other outsiders to take responsibility in addressing vulnerability. This is an important prerequisite to bring about the transformation envisioned by PfR.

6.6 Are findings context specific or generic?

Although the many country specific characteristics have been highlighted throughout the report, the presented findings are quite cross-cutting and general. While community based activities need to be responsive to the local context, the previous sections have outlined the more generic issues for PfR resilience programming.

In PfR reporting, the geographical division of PfR in different countries is often presented as an explanation of the level of integration of the programme. The idea being that where areas of intervention are far apart, this would hamper integration and collaboration. We found this factor to be less important than assumed and we found that the extent and quality of the coordination of the programme was a much more decisive factor to explain country differences in collaboration, commitment, implementation and effectiveness. Larger differences were identified with regard to lobby and advocacy. In some countries partners face political restrictions and require more tailor-made approaches to deal with that.

6.6 Limitations of the research

The research was originally set out to be organised around two periods of fieldwork, at the beginning (2011) and end of the programme (2015), which would have allowed a strong evidence base in analysing the development of the programme through time. Due to time limitations (a late start of the whole research project), resource restrictions and practical problems, this was not feasible. Instead, we have done the fieldwork in the fourth year of implementation (2014), allowing us to see the programme in action. This means that we had to reconstruct the past on the basis of interviews. These may naturally have been geared to provide meaning to the present. We have aimed to overcome this by triangulating information by interviewing different categories of stakeholders, cross-checking this with documents (secondary resources) and prolonged stays in specific sites, where conditions permitted this.

The research was done in 6 of the 9 PfR countries and did not cover Uganda, Mali and India. We meant to include India as a case study, but this was not possible after the visa application of the researcher was rejected. Fieldwork in India could have changed some of the findings, because the PfR in that country builds on a longer history of planning at landscape level and according to PfR reports, the geographical scale dimension is therefore better addressed in this programme.

[7] See for example Miller, F., H. Osbahr, E. Boyd, F. Thomalla, S. Bharwani, G. Ziervogel, B. Walker, J. Birkmann, S. Van der Leeuw, J. Rockström, J. Hinkel, T. Downing, C. Folke, and D. Nelson 2010. Resilience and vulnerability: complementary or conflicting concepts?. *Ecology and Society* **15**(3): 11. [online] URL: http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol15/iss3/art11/

The research did not cover the international lobby and advocacy work of PfR, which has already been well documented by the PfR. In international arenas, the grounding of PfR in country-based community level programming provides the alliance with a strong record to be an effective actor in advancing integrated resilience approaches in global policy and practise.

Key findings and recommendations

1. The resilience approach is relevant for its integrated nature and the focus on communities, yet risks to background the structural causes of vulnerability and the rights-base of populations to be protected by their government.
   Recommendation: PfR ties its resilience approach more explicitly to vulnerability and rights-based approaches.

2. Most successful were activities that combine DRR, EMR and CCA with tangible livelihood projects.
   Recommendation: PfR maximizes the possibilities to incorporate tangible livelihood projects in its programmes.

3. The PfR approach is highly relevant to communities and stakeholders, yet the framing of the approach is complex (many principles, building blocks, dimensions), also because of the (artificial) separation of domains and time frames.
   Recommendation: PfR revisits and simplifies its frame, and reduces the emphasis on matches between domains and mandates of alliance partners. PfR identifies still existing knowledge gaps among partners (especially concerning CCA/EMR) and organizes follow-up capacity buildings to overcome the last thresholds for practitioners.

4. It is a strong suit of PfR to build on existing community structures with the caveat that this risks reproducing existing inequalities.
   Recommendation: PfR needs to emphasize inclusion in its programmes and monitor and address problems of inclusion and exclusion at community level.

5. The PfR approach is complex in its incorporation of many stakeholders in programming. As a result, there was a long inception phase, and 5 years appears to be a short time frame for such a complex programme.
   Recommendation: PfR ensures in the next phase to build on and consolidate achievements of the first phase. From the start it takes a more participatory approach with the country teams and makes clear, country specific agreements on a modus operandi.

6. Coordination has appeared to be a key factor in the success of PfR.
   Recommendation: PfR ensures that country-level coordinators are available full-time and capable to act independent of the different alliance partners.

7. The emphasis PfR put on learning throughout the program was strongly valued on all levels and by all partners, however more could have been reached.
   Recommendation: PfR maintains a focus on learning and from the beginning includes country specific learning plans.

8. Local government often lacks power to enable community resilience
   Recommendation: PfR incorporates the issue of local government in lobby and advocacy and rethinks the expectations invested in local government that underpin its approach.

9. National government turns out to be a powerful actor in the enabling environment of communities and trickling-up of the PfR approach from local to national government has not been realised.
   Recommendation: PfR steps up its efforts to engage in dialogue with national governments to enhance enabling policies and programmes for resilience.

References

Anderson, A. 2006. *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change*. New York: Aspen Institute.

Bachofen et al. 2014. "Integrating Climate and Ecosystems into Community Risk Assessments. Examples and lessons leant from the Partners for Resilience programme." http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/files/PfR%20Assessing%20Assessments%20Final.pdf

Dávila Bustamente, M. 2015. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Case Study of PfR Guatemala." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

Desportes, I. 2015. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Case Study of PfR Ethiopia." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

DFID. 1999. "DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets." DFID.

Faling, M. 2015. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Case Study of PfR Kenya." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

Flick, U. 2002. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Srikandini, A. 2015. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Case Study of PfR Indonesia." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

Hewitt, Kenneth. 1997. *Regions of Risk. A Geographical Introduction to Disasters.* Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.

Hilhorst, D., C.W.J. de Milliano, M. Faling, and M. Dávila Bustamente. 2014. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Results Phase 1 and Phase 2." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

IFRC. 2012. "Characteristics of a Safe and Resilient Community. Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Study. ARUP International Development - September 2011." IFRC.

Keijzer, Niels, Eunike Spierings, Geert Phlix, and Alan Fowler. 2011. "Bringing the Invisible into Perspective Reference Document for Using the 5Cs Framework to Plan, Monitor and Evaluate Capacity and Results of Capacity Development Processes." ECDPM Maastricht Netherlands.

Kumar, Somesh. 2002. *Methods for Community Participation: A Complete Guide for Practitioners*. Illustrated edition. London: ITDG - Practical Action.

Leung, Y. 2015. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Case Study of PfR Philippines." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

PfR. 2011. "A New Partnership for Resilience." Partners for Resilience. http://www.partnersforresilience.nl/about-us/Paginas/home.aspx.

———. 2012. "A New Vision for Community Resilience." Partners for Resilience. http://www.partnersforresilience.nl/about-us/documents/pfr-resilience-vision.pdf

———. 2013. "Midterm Review – key findings, recommendations and priorities". Partners for Resilience.

———. 2013. "Putting community resilience into practice". Partners for Resilience. http://www.partnersforresilience.nl/about-us/documents/nlrc_pfr_vision%206p%20web.pdf

PfR Indonesia and Philippines. 2014. "Creating new paths to resilience: Experiences from Indonesia and the Philippines". Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre.

International Institute of Rural Reconstruction. Philippines. http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/files/PFR/Creating%20New%20Paths%20to%20Resilience%20final.pdf

PfR Kenya. 2015. 'Building Resilient Communities: Case studies from PfR Kenya'. Red Cross/ Red Crescent Climate Centre. http://climatecentre.org/downloads/files/PfR_Kenya_web.pdf

RCCC. '*Minimum Standards for local climate-smart disaster risk reduction*'. Red Cross/ Red Crescent Climate Centre. http://www.climatecentre.org/resources-games/minimum-standards

Sarantakos, Sotirios. 2005. *Social Research*. 3rd ed. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Singüenza, R. *et al.* 2014. A national collaborative model to promote local resilience: The Strategic Inter-Institutional Agenda in Guatemala. Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre.

Stelmer, S. 2001. "An Overview of Content Analysis." *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* 7 (17).

Strauch, L. 2015. "Learning from and about Partners for Resilience. A Qualitative Process and Impact Study. Case Study of PfR Nicaragua." Unpublished internal document: Globalisation Studies Groningen.

Twigg, John. 2007. "Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community. A Guidance Note." A guidance note Version 1. London: Aon Benfield UCL Hazard Research Centre.

———. 2009. "Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community. A Guidance Note." A guidance note Version 2. London: Aon Benfield UCL Hazard Research Centre.

Van Leeuwen, M. et al. Integrating ecosystems in resilience practice: Criteria for Ecosystem-Smart Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. http://www.wetlands.org/Portals/0/WI-Eco%20Criteria%20Brochure_web.pdf

Annex I The PfR Principles

The resilience tree reflects the eight principles that guide PfR's actions.

1. **Work on different timescales**, in order to incorporate the effects of climate change
2. **Recognize geographical scales**; PfR expands their focus by encompassing wider ecosystems
3. **Strengthen institutional resilience**; PfR aims at changing institutional structures, and acknowledges connections with other communities, and with governments and agencies at different levels
4. **Integrate disciplines**; PfR connects different disciplines including development, disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA) and ecosystems management and restoration (EMR) through support of other stakeholders and communities
5. **Promote community self-management**; PfR puts communities at the center and attempts to build on their capacities
6. **Stimulate learning**; PfR has a strong learning culture in its programme and alliance work
7. **Focus on livelihoods**; PfR aims to empower communities to strengthen livelihoods
8. **Form partnerships**; PfR (amongst others) connects with private and public actors, to yield maximum impact