

# How to make a city liveable for women and vulnerable groups?

## Addressing issues of gender equality and social inclusion in design

### Oxfam Perspectives and Experience

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# Structure

- Introductions and questions
- The risk of being gender blind
- The risk of not hearing people's voices and priorities
- Implications for design
- The role of a development bank
- Commentary and feedback
- Questions and discussion

# Quiz time?

- Are car seat belts gender neutral?
- Have you heard of 'SP3'?
- Is a transport pricing system with one fare that covers 2 bus journeys gender neutral?
- Are you familiar with the phrase 'nothing about us without us'?
- If all the unpaid care work done in the world was priced, would the total value be the same as:
  - 43 x Apple (the largest company in the world)
  - 10 x PHP economy?

# Quiz time?

- Are car seat belts gender neutral? NO: designed for men
- Have you heard of 'SP3' = Building Resilient Urban Communities (Community Led Projects)
- Is a transport pricing system with one fare that covers 2 bus journeys gender neutral? NO: particularly beneficial for women
- Are you familiar with the phrase 'nothing about us without us' – rooted in the disability movement, but more widely applicable.
- If all the unpaid care work done in the world was priced, would the total value be the same as:
  - 43 x Apple (the largest company in the world) YES
  - 10 x PHP economy?

# Gender neutral or gender blind?

- Decisions are made on data, women are invisible in much data
- Decisions are made by those with power, women have less power

Safety belt, air conditioning... cost benefit analysis, location of water access points, location of toilets, wheelchair access, washing lines, lighting and security, need for shade, need for playspace, which market sector has opportunity to grow....

e.g.

Green spaces and marketplaces in Abbottabad and Sialkot CRP.

Cost benefit analysis and the formal economy

Transport in Sri Lanka

Toilets, lighting and security

Going beyond gender neutral:  
challenge social norms



## Examples of differential exposure to/experiences of risk

These are examples of the ways different social groups' perceive and cope with risk:

- In Niger, women were the only group to identify diseases that affect poultry as one of the most important threats in their community, because chickens are among the few resources they control and use for income generation. Selling (or eating) poultry is often the first line of defence for households facing a crisis.<sup>12</sup>

# Whose voice is heard? And listened to?

- Planning for people without their voice: goes wrong and is wrong
- Designing with people:
  - Better design – more sustained, more effective, more impactful
  - Better dialogue – that will sustain
  - Empowers people – new information, understanding of how to influence.

What counts as a ‘successful resilience project?’  
According to Oxfam’s Resilience Framework it is a project that builds 3 capacities (see diagram). This can only be done by engaging with them.



# Practical implications

## The **HOW**

- Understand gender differences: in livelihoods, power, markets, norms
- Building in community planning: time, adaptation
- Ensure women participate: design so they can
- Build dialogue: get planners to listen, talk, reflect

## Adapting the **WHAT**

- City planning and investment to alleviate unpaid care: laundry points, bus routes and fares, child care services and facilities, wheelchair access. Cost benefit analysis with a difference.
- Lighting and infrastructure access

## Going beyond:

Mitigate vs adapt: women engineers, women board members, work with men too.



## Vulnerability and risk assessment



### At a glance

A holistic approach to understanding vulnerability, wherein key actors collaboratively design and implement programmes and resilience building initiatives.

### Overview

### What it does

### The Knowledge Group

Oxfam's **Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (VRA)** tool develops a holistic, landscape-wide understanding of vulnerability and links up actors across various levels of governance to jointly identify and analyse root causes of vulnerabilities for distinct social groups and later design programmes and risk reduction initiatives accordingly, ensuring that they are equitable, gender-sensitive and effective.

Attention to historical and evolving power dynamics is fully embedded into the design of the VRA, primarily through the convening of a **Knowledge Group** to inspire and drive the analysis.

The VRA methodology has been implemented by Oxfam and its partners in twelve countries and by other aid and research organisations, such as the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the University of Cape Town and the University of Botswana.

[Download the document](#)

Update: The VRA is also available as an online toolkit. Visit the [The Vulnerability & Risk Assessment Online Toolkit](#).

# Role of a development bank?

- Not an NGO!
- Need partnerships
- Adapt what counts as success
- Look at speed/phasing
- Deliver benefits to technocrats, mayors, leaders, Project Officers

Professionals benefit from dialogue!

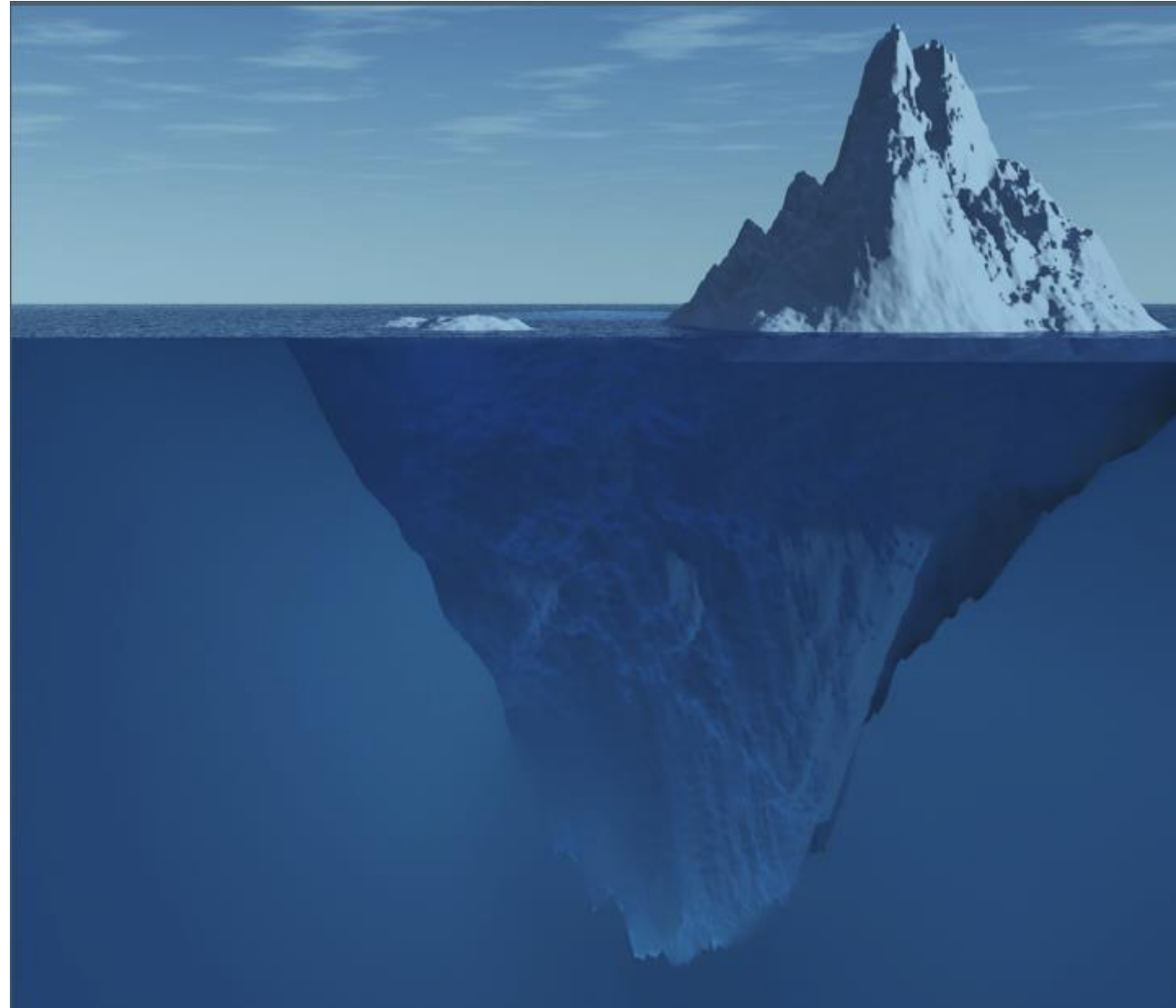
*“As an ecosystem scientist, with a strong ecological bias, I acknowledge a major change with my perspective on research consequent to the ASSAR project. I now find great pleasure and satisfaction in applying my ecological knowledge in engaging with communities (...)*

*ASSAR transformed me into a biophysical researcher who works directly with humans within their ecosystems to enhance uptake of research outputs and outcomes.”*

Prof. Hillary Masundire, University of Botswana



What you  
cannot see  
does  
matter!



# Thank you!

A few links

Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Toolkit: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/our-approach/toolkits-and-guidelines/vulnerability-risk-assessment>

Oxfam's Conceptual Framework for Women's Economic Empowerment: <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620269/gt-framework-womens-economic-empowerment-180118-en.pdf?sequence=7>

Tools for Women's Economic Empowerment, including Gendered Market Mapping: <https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/wee-resources/index.html>

The Future is a Choice: Oxfam's Resilience Framework: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/thefuture-is-a-choice-the-oxfam-framework-and-guidance-for-resilient-developme-604990>

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# Annex

- Some examples and evidence from participatory and gendered Oxfam projects in resilience and markets.

# REE-CALL: Resilience through Economic Empowerment, Climate Adaptation, Leadership and Learning

## Key Facts

- Bangladesh
- Multiple actions
- Including CBOs: worked with 800 CBOs in 14 districts
- the formation of community-based organisations (CBOs) by community members themselves.
- An Oxfam Case Study comments on this aspect of the project by noting, '...although these varied in performance, they did create space for joint discussion, decision-making, and action (such as facilitating savings and access to loans), and for holding local governments to account. These structures have also boosted women's confidence and participation levels' (Barakat et. al. 2017: 4).

## Lessons

- Technology AND voice, not technical solutions. Women got ipads, which they used for weather information AND for networking, peer learning, accessing officials.

- 81% of the women interviewed felt the project had increased their skills, confidence and power.
- Almost all groups said they had linked with local authorities, putting pressure on them to address immediate problems' (Barakat et. al. 2017: 5).

The Final Report of REE-CALL notes:

- 'the project had contributed in initiating an increase of women's skills, confidence, and power, as well as in women's respect' (Nishat 2017: 63)

# ACCRA: Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance

## Key Facts

- Worked with governments in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Uganda to support cross-sectoral and participative decision-making,
- developed game for local government decision-maker
- Joined up planning
- DFID funded, 2013-16

## Lessons

- A successful project may not get financed for a second phase!

The evaluation report notes that innovations were found and ‘...ACCRA has proven its unique ability as a “systemic intermediary” in transforming governance relationships, for example, successfully building bridges between its three focal ministries where in the past there has been poor coordination ... This has led to more joined-up programmes on the ground (e.g. mainstreaming DRR into woreda annual development plans)’ (Colvin and Mukute 2018: 8).

# ASSAR: Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions

## Key Facts

- 5 years, 7 countries, 17 partners
- 1 of 4 CARIAA programmes (wider consortium), DFID-research funded
- Barriers and enablers to effective adaptation for vulnerable and marginalised communities in 2030s
- Prosopis management in Ethiopia. Prosopis identified as an issue after rounds of discussions with stakeholder and scoping research. Developed impact chain to identify desired impact. Over 12 months, seven collaborative and participatory workshops with communities, and government and NGOs to identify the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to managing Prosopis juliflora and the likely winners and losers if implemented. Outputs are specific interventions identified by communities, and process improvements for future intervention design.

## Lessons

- It is possible to get technicians, researchers, scientists and policy-makers to listen and respond to local people's needs and voices.
- The value of Oxfam challenging and changing how decisions are made; who makes decisions, making connections

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# Community-led Resilience Planning (aka Building Resilience in Urban Communities in Asia)

## Key Facts

- ADB Project, implemented by Oxfam (SP3 of CCRUTF) October 2017-21
- 4 countries: Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar
- Community-led resilience plans and community led projects, with municipalities.
- Eg drainage, solid waste management, green space, evacuation and DRRM, fish landing spot, planting
- Piloting different approaches in ADB: demonstrating how community-led resilience plans complement mainstream infrastructure loans

## Lessons

- Why and how to engage communities in what is usually top-down planning by mayors, municipalities and development bank.
- The infrastructure spend is small, but it creates new dialogues and perspectives.
- Building community management – eg of disaster risk and evacuation, in Malay Aklan.
- Gender and diverse views matter. Eg. Abbottabad: solid waste management is dire, but need for a secure market place for women came out as key to resilience, because lack of mobility undermines their economic capacity.

# Meta-review of evaluations of 16 resilience projects

## Key Indicators that drive high resilience score

- Attitude to change
- Awareness or understanding of climate change
- Access to extension or other state services
- Participation in community groups
- Adoption of innovative practices *other than those promoted by the project*
- Participation in community-level decision-making
- Adoption of disaster preparedness practices
- Access to early warning information
- Awareness of local community disaster preparedness/management plan