Griffin nrm
ABN 67 088 471 523

Suite 15 Bailey's Corner Arcade
143 London Circuit
Canberra City 2600
Tel: 61 4 39305225

Independent evaluation of the Community-based Climate Change Adaptation Grants Program – main evaluation report

Plan International project site, Eastern Samar, Philippines

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Contents

Acronyms

AfP	Act for Peace
CAP	Community Action Planning
CBA	Community-based adaptation
CBCCAG	Community-based Climate Change Action Grants
CCA	Climate change adaptation
COP	Conference of the parties
CSO	Civil society organisation
CVCA	Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
NAPA	National Adaptation Programs for Action
NGO	Non-government organisation
PCVA	Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment
PNG	Papua New Guinea
SALT	Sloping Agricultural Land Technology
SCI	Save the Children International
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Commission on Climate Change
VCAN	Vanuatu Climate Action Network
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

Snapshot

Program	The Community-based Climate Change Action Grants (CBCCAG) program supports community-based adaptation (CBA) and mitigation activities in developing countries in partnership with non-government organisations (NGOs).
Lead implementing partners	The CBCCAG projects were managed by several lead international NGOs including Oxfam, CARE Australia, Save the Children International, Act for Peace, Live & Learn, The Nature Conservancy and Plan International, working with many other specialist and local partners.
Projects	1. ***Building Resilient and Adaptive Communities and Institutions in Mindanao*** (Oxfam – Philippines) 2. ***Assisting Communities to Secure their Environment to Climate Change*** (CARE – Timor-Leste) 3. ***Addressing Food Security through Improved Agricultural Practice in Green Islands*** (CARE – Papua New Guinea) 4. ***NGO Climate Change Adaptation Program*** (Oxfam – Vanuatu) 5. ***Pacific Island Communities Climate Risk Reduction*** (Act for Peace – Pacific Region) 6. ***Child-centred Climate Change Adaptation*** (Plan International – Philippines) 7. ***Building Resilience of Communities and their Ecosystems to the Impacts of Climate Change*** (The Nature Conservancy – Pacific Region) 8. ***Protection of Food Security through Adaptation to Climate Change*** (Live & Learn – Pacific Region) 9. ***Improving Land and Water Management to Reduce Impacts of Climate Change on Communities*** (Oxfam – Timor-Leste)
Total value and Duration	The total value of the CBCCAG program is $16.9 million over three years from 2011–12, implemented in South East Asia and the Pacific Region*. The grants form part of Australia's $599 million 'fast-start' commitment over three years (2010–11 to 2012–13) to assist developing countries to respond to climate change.

** Some projects were provided no-cost extensions to 2015-16 following events such as major cyclones*

Summary findings and recommendations

Communities participating in the Community-based Climate Change Action Grants (CBCCAG) program regard climate change in general, and adaptation in particular, as a priority. This priority ranges from extreme for communities living in areas experiencing acute impacts (e.g. the Marshall Islands and Isabel and Choiseul provinces in the Solomon Islands) to very high in communities experiencing a drying trend, less reliable seasons, large storms or floods (e.g. Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, Philippines and Papua New Guinea). In many communities, climate change is understood in terms of food and water security, and vulnerability to extreme weather, rather than as a global climate trend. But there is little doubt about the importance of these issues locally or the fact that climate change is emerging as a higher priority as awareness builds.

In some areas of the Pacific Region, adaptation is occurring at the extreme end, with communities needing to migrate from their homes. In other low-lying areas, there is a window of opportunity to avert this outcome. In many less vulnerable settings, there are substantial opportunities to build resilience through management of resources and productivity over time. The need for investment is now.

International investment in adaptation in developing and emerging economies increased dramatically following the United Nations Framework Commission on Climate Change Copenhagen Conference of the parties in 2010, which resulted in agreements by developed nations to provide finance to vulnerable countries. In our region, there was a particular focus on small island Pacific countries, judged to be among the most vulnerable and having the least capacity to invest internally.

Numerous programs were rolled out post 2010 in the Pacific Region to establish the science, monitor impacts, develop regional climate models, support national policy and adaptation investment plans, and test adaptation strategies. To date, while there have been many plans developed and technologies piloted, localised activity has been limited, and benefits to communities largely unmeasured. The CBCCAG program provided an opportunity to test a suite of options in a range of settings and build an evidence base for further action.

The CBCCAG program is best viewed as a snapshot in the longer-term development programs of the implementation partners and participating communities. In the three-year timeframe, partners took the opportunity to continue the process of integrating the risks of climate change in their work with communities to improve livelihoods and build resilience, and contribute to the global evidence base for community-based adaptation (CBA). This will be an increasingly critical part of community development work, as the impacts of climate change worsen in many areas.

The experience enabled partners and communities to build knowledge and skills about the risks and vulnerabilities posed by changing weather and climate in their local contexts, and to begin integrating this knowledge in community development planning systems and practice. For most communities, this meant taking account of the immediate risks and impacts in their resource management decisions. It also meant beginning the process of adaptation, including through more diverse and productive livelihood systems, more efficient use of resources and better management of productive ecosystems. In the short term, the benefits and outcomes are expected to support livelihoods and food and water security. In the long term, as knowledge and experience gradually develop, larger shifts in community production and management systems may be necessary to deal with worsening impacts.

Adaptation is a long term process. There are no shortcuts. In the CBCCAG snapshot, the process has just begun and must continue to fully capitalise on and add value to the achievements to date. Work should increasingly be tailored to local contexts and focus on deepening knowledge and experience in vulnerable communities. It should also document and build on the evidence base for robust, cohesive methodologies that can be applied in other communities and locations.

Lessons for future programs

During interviews and focus group discussions, the evaluation team took the opportunity to ask program partners to reflect on what was learned during their experiences with the CBCCAG program and what they would do differently next time. Their responses, augmented by a review of project reports, evaluations and case studies, represent a strong endorsement of the main approaches as well as valuable lessons for future programming.

Extend timeframes

The projects progressively built on the work, experiences and networks of partners in the target locations. They didn't start from scratch. In the timeframe available for implementation (less than three years), they were able to engage communities and build knowledge and skills about climate change risks and vulnerabilities. They facilitated participatory planning and community-led identification of options to build resilience and deliver short-term development benefits. They tested priority options and lay important institutional foundations for continued community engagement in adaptation planning and action. They also built advocacy skills and connections between communities and government.

However, the timeframe was not sufficient to fully test, monitor and document the options, allow successful activities to be widely adopted or achieve change and impact at scale. In livelihoods work, the timeframe only allowed for two growing seasons, and coherent results were only emerging as the projects came to a close.

Longer timeframes are needed in CBA to establish firm relationships with government and other partners, to influence local development planning, and to access funding streams for implementation:

> *'There are a lot of challenges happening, different parties and different views. We are only 1.5 years into the project – it's not long enough to bring about lasting change.'* – program partner, Oxfam, Timor-Leste (interview)

Deepen knowledge and experiences

Through collaborations with a range of partners, projects were able to achieve an extensive geographic reach and test approaches in several contexts. For example, Oxfam's project in the Philippines operated in 18 municipalities across eight provinces of Mindanao, where 12,000 households participated in risk assessments and training and 8,000 people were involved in livelihoods work. Oxfam's project in Timor-Leste targeted 132 communities in four districts. This strategy enabled projects to build a substantial evidence base within the target localities and for possible wider application, but also presented challenges of achieving depth.

For future work, the priority should be to build on these foundations of knowledge, awareness and skills, and emerging partnerships and networks with government. This will deepen people's experiences, continue to develop capacities of partners and communities, and enable results, outcomes and impacts to be monitored and documented over time.

Consolidate the evidence base

The projects have individually and collectively produced a large volume of material, such as case studies, evaluation reports, project reports, think pieces, videos, training materials and manuals. These are currently housed in different locations. Some have begun to consolidate their approaches and experiences into 'models' for wider use.

All of this material is useful, but it must be consolidated, analysed and made available to achieve the value-add offered by the program-level investment. This value lies in informing future programs and contributing to the global discussion and methodological development in CBA. With many projects operating around the world, and with a particular focus of global activity in the Pacific Region, it is important that the knowledge is shared and duplication and overlap are avoided.

Continue the community development lens

Projects provided access to scientific knowledge and technical expertise relevant to climate change via a range of connections (through the lead partners, local government extension workers, partner country technical agencies and external experts). The community development lens adopted by the project teams enabled the knowledge and skills to be introduced in the context of development issues that are important to communities (e.g. food and water security, health and income).

This approach was appropriate and successful. The natural resource management, resource use efficiency and ecosystems services technologies/mechanisms introduced by the projects provided options that were complementary to achieving resilience in existing livelihood systems.

Communities took ownership and consolidated new knowledge with their extensive local knowhow to discuss their vulnerabilities and identify priority options for reducing the risks and building resilience in their lives and livelihoods. They tested options and adopted new technologies to improve productivity, use resources more efficiently and diversify and insure their livelihoods in a changing climate.

Deepen technical knowledge and skills

Technical expertise was often essential in this process to ensure that communities had good information on which to base their decisions, especially in relation to new technologies. Without adequate expertise, activities invested in by communities may not be proportionate to the risks, deliver the best benefits in the short term or impact longer-term resilience. This risk will reduce as communities learn more about climate change and gain knowledge from testing a range of options.

Reliance on local technical expertise is often not enough to meet the needs of communities for good information and advice. Local extension workers should be engaged so that they can benefit from knowledge and capacity building, but additional specific expertise is commonly needed. Consortia such as those in the CBCCAG program are well placed to access specialist expertise from within their organisations and through their networks.

Knowledge alone will not create change. Care is needed in introducing it. Knowledge tends to be sought after, can confer social status and can impact on the dynamics of communities. In some cases, this can be positive, for example in engendering respect and bringing women to leadership roles, and in creating local champions. However, it is not until a critical level of knowledge and awareness is achieved that change will occur: the knowledge becomes imbedded, individuals invest and new approaches are adopted. This process takes time – often many years.

Find/build knowledge brokers

Getting access to climate change information for communities is difficult. Information is commonly housed with different agencies and information management systems are disjointed between national and local levels. Language and literacy barriers, and poor communication technology, limit its accessibility. Where climate change information is available, it is often in scientific forms and highly technical. Technical agencies lack capacities to tailor it to audiences, particularly at local levels.

Finding effective ways to translate complex technical information into forms that make sense in the local context is essential in the ongoing development of community awareness and adaptation skills. The projects played an important role in brokering knowledge across the technical divide, making it available in forms that could be applied in local planning.

The role that informed children and youth can play as climate change messengers in their communities was demonstrated, and is likely to become increasingly effective as climate change is gradually integrated in school curricula and across the formal education system. In the

meantime, the role of knowledge broker needs to be filled. Local civil society groups are well placed for this role but need a greater depth of knowledge and skills to fully function as brokers to and from communities.

Foster in-built resilience

Communities have extensive, deep knowledge about their resources and how best to manage them to sustain their livelihoods. In the target locations, communities have witnessed recent weather-related changes and have taken steps to adjust. They are best placed to identify livelihood options and ways to adapt, and can do this when provided with sufficient knowledge about the risks and technical advice about options. The approaches employed by the projects enabled communities to take on board new knowledge in the context of their local knowledge and traditional knowhow.

In many cases, the livelihoods of communities are already diverse and contain in-built resilience to unreliable rainfall and extremes in weather, having evolved through the collective wisdom of famers dealing with droughts and floods, poor seasons or late wet seasons for many centuries. Climate change brings greater intensity and less reliability to these events that farmers need to factor in to their planning. Communities need timely access to good information (short-term forecasts etc.) and an understanding of likely future trends so that they can adjust. This in-built resilience is fundamental to adaptation. Within it, there are substantial opportunities for improving efficiencies of resource use (e.g. water) and productivity and diversity of production systems to boost livelihoods and resilience.

Over time (sooner rather than later in some locations), the impacts of climate change will challenge livelihoods that are resilient today. Extreme floods and droughts already do, for at least a period of recovery. Adaptation in some contexts means or will mean migration to less vulnerable areas. Community-based approaches need to be adaptive to these different contexts, acknowledging that communities will need external investment and support to avoid the worst impacts and manage extreme risks.

Work within local governance structures

Communities tend to be organised around the issues that are of concern to them (e.g. farmer groups, water groups and church groups). Working within these structures is an effective way of engaging, although it is often necessary to also create new spaces for engaging groups such as women, children/youth and people with disabilities in forums where they feel more comfortable and able to contribute. These forums must be connected to mainstream community decision-making and development mechanisms to be effective.

Community organisations are commonly linked into local government development planning systems (e.g. through dedicated community development programs) and can access funds. While many local governments prioritise income-generating activities such as small-scale construction, roads and water supply through these links, they have an additional opportunity to integrate community priorities to build resilience to climate change. Moreover, they would benefit overall from taking account of weather and climate risks in the activities they fund.

Engage inclusively

Within community governance structures, there are opportunities to engage inclusively. This is important because different groups in the community have different vulnerabilities and skills, which all need to be represented and taken into account in community resilience building. Otherwise some major risks and opportunities will be missed.

Working with traditional mandates can be effective (e.g. engaging village chiefs and convincing them to encourage participation) but may not generate the demand or space for ongoing participation. Targeting activities to the specific roles of groups that find it difficult to engage through traditional decision-making platforms seems to be effective. For example, working with women to develop and diversify kitchen gardens, strengthening their marketing and financial

skills to generate and manage income from surplus produce, directly benefits women. It also benefits the wider community through women's roles in family nutrition and health, and in providing funds for children's education, arguably one of the most effective adaptation options currently available to many communities.

Applying similar approaches should be tested for engaging people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. All have roles in the community that will be important in developing resilience, and require specific support to reduce their vulnerabilities and risks.

Be realistic about partnerships with government

Partnerships with government took longer than expected to establish and yield results. Getting engagement in project activities can be achieved through mechanisms such as working groups and committees, but maintaining connections with communities and ensuring that these partnerships offer benefits both ways is challenging. In many target locations, local government is the most appropriate level to partner with, having the mandates for community development. However, local governments commonly lack skills and resources to support CBA, and are more concerned with short-term local development issues, often dictated by political administrations. Longer-term issues tend to be given lower priority. Climate change is rarely integrated in local development planning and accessing budgets for implementation is difficult.

Wherever possible, it is important to work with existing community development planning systems, facilitating adaptation planning as part of these processes and not as separate exercises. In some locations, this approach has enabled access to mainstream community development funding programs for implementation of resilience-building activities. Working outside these systems can achieve success if local government champions emerge and support project activities, but this is unlikely to be sustainable.

Engage at complementary scales

Community development work is by its nature small scale and local. Engagement with government provides mechanisms for scaling out successful approaches to other communities and areas. The private sector also offers potential for supporting scaling out.

In engaging with government and the private sector, as well as looking for wider adoption, it is important to seek out opportunities to build climate change into planning and development systems at different scales. Otherwise, the work at community level can be undermined by failures to address larger systemic issues (such as flood control infrastructure) and development that works against community resilience.

Complementary development at community, local and landscape scales can reinforce resilience building in communities, for example by providing communities with infrastructure (e.g. roads, flood control and water supply) that they need to secure their livelihoods, and ongoing access to weather and climate information and skills. With the private sector, there are opportunities to collaborate on supply chain development to support community resilience (e.g. in supply of organic pesticides and fertiliser, seeds for drought-tolerant plants, and equipment for conservation farming) and opening up markets for diversified cropping systems and new enterprises.

While many target locations are a long distance from these outcomes, advocacy, demonstrations and facilitating representation from communities are all helpful towards achieving them.

Continue the consortium model

Partners engaged through consortia found the model to be efficient (with lead agencies providing administrative functions, leaving local partners to get on with implementation) and effective (enabling sharing of tools and skills, and capacity building for local partners). Constructive upfront discussions between partners at design stage would help to coordinate and make the best of their different roles and skill sets.

Build local capacities

The consortium model will be even more efficient and effective as more and more responsibility can be handed to local partners. Building their capacity will help to ensure that the work continues and is responsive and relevant to local needs. It pays off in the long run even if costly to start with.

Supporting local partners through good coordination, sharing of new methods and technologies and providing access to wider networks is an effective ongoing role for international NGOs to play.

Coordinate monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

Monitoring and reporting of results for each project was conducted to meet reporting requirements. End-of-project evaluations were also carried out, which assessed progress against outcomes and objectives. Some projects built MEL capacities in local partners.

However, at both consortia and program levels, MEL needs to be coordinated to ensure consistency and coherence of reporting across the projects and to provide data that can be aggregated under program-level outcomes. A program MEL framework developed under a clearly articulated theory of change would be useful in guiding the development of project MEL systems. At project level, it is important that all implementation partners are across the system and have access to specialist MEL expertise if needed. Baselines are essential, in addition to regular systematic monitoring. A balance of stories, case studies and anecdotal evidence with data on productivity and adoption rates, for example, is needed to inform evidence-based reporting.

Someone in the consortium/partnership should have responsibility for coordinating monitoring, collating results and providing reports to managers. These should inform project and program-level reporting of progress against objectives and, where feasible, document development impacts and benefits to people. Dedicated resources are needed for this role.

Project partners appreciated opportunities provided for reflection and learning. These included peer-to-peer and cross-country exchanges within projects, and the Nepal workshop, bringing partners together. There is widespread agreement that, given the remarkable synergies and possibilities for value-adding between projects, there should be more of these opportunities in future programs, both within projects and across the program. They should be properly resourced, facilitated and structured as learning activities to share experiences, lessons and approaches.

Findings and recommendations

Finding	Recommendation
The CBCCAG projects built knowledge and understanding of climate change in vulnerable communities, and connected them with external knowledge networks. They facilitated participatory assessments of vulnerability and adaptive capacity, and provided mechanisms and tools that enabled communities to discuss and identify options for building resilience through improved livelihood productivity and diversity, productive management of ecosystems and more efficient use of resources. They provided resources for testing priority options and opportunities to share knowledge and experiences with other communities. CBCCAG partners became engaged with the expectation of a future phase. While this was never guaranteed, there is general agreement that further work is needed to secure sustainability of project approaches and lasting impact for beneficiaries. Strong foundations of knowledge, skills and capacities have been established but, less than three years in, they are not established enough to see the outcomes and impacts of these achievements. The least useful action at a program level would be to stop now, while there is so much opportunity to consolidate, continue and build on successes and established partnerships, goodwill and networks.	***Keep going:*** Invest in a further phase, building on the partnerships and achievements to date, adjusting pathways to impact and approaches based on lessons learned. Continue the approach of integrating climate change through a community development lens, focusing on the issues concerning communities, such as food and water security, health and incomes, that provide benefits in the short term as well as resilience to the specific impacts of climate change.
The projects enabled communities to access information and expertise to take the risks of climate change into account in their planning. It proved challenging to get beyond the basic facts of climate change and provide ongoing access to information such as accurate forecasts and projections. Providing cost-effective technical expertise to inform development and testing of adaptive livelihood options to reduce risks was also a challenge. This expertise is critical in cases where new technology and production methods are introduced and for ensuring that options are feasible and effective.	***Go deeper:*** Deepen community understanding of the risks that changing weather and climate poses for their lives and livelihoods. Keep working on enabling their timely, ongoing access to good information such as forecasts and warnings so that they can incorporate it into their planning and investment. Look for opportunities and partnerships to broker knowledge, and for translating and making complex technical information accessible to communities in forms that make sense and can be applied in their livelihood systems. Try to ensure that the knowledge is integrated in community knowledge systems (e.g. for food and water security) and is not disconnected from decision-making processes. Always tailor communication to the education and technology levels of communities; engage them in its production. Look for partnerships that can help to build technical skills locally over time, including in local government extension services, and to support extension centres (such as climate

Finding	Recommendation
	centres and field schools) as their capacity to provide accurate, timely, relevant information to communities gradually develops.
Projects have enabled communities to consider and discuss potential climate change risks in the context of their knowledge systems. Rural communities are experienced in dealing with weather variability, having coped for centuries with poor seasons and false starts to wet seasons, floods and droughts. Their livelihood systems contain important sources of in-built resilience.	***Integrate science and traditional knowledge:*** Continue and enhance the integration of scientific and technical knowledge for understanding and managing the risks of climate change with community knowledge of their environment, their development context and their livelihood systems. Communities are best placed to develop adaptive options, initially from within their livelihood systems, when they are provided with a reasonable depth of understanding of the risks and likely impacts of climate change. Work with local partners to understand these systems before new technology and options for reducing the risks of climate change are introduced, so that they can better identify ways to meet local needs. Continue to incorporate traditional knowledge and practice in assessments of vulnerability and adaptive capacity, and facilitate the use of local resource governance mechanisms and jurisdiction.
Projects have built community confidence in managing their understanding of the immediate risks of climate change (e.g. variable and extreme weather). Levels of confidence and organisation have increased, leaders have emerged and people feel better prepared.	***Work with community governance structures:*** Continue to provide facilities for communities to organise around climate change issues. Make sure these are connected to mainstream community development planning groups and systems (e.g. farmer and water groups) and that the knowledge and experience are integrated, informing the decisions of these organisations. These connections can be mutually reinforcing, providing knowledge and capacity building across sectors and interests.
Within the structures of community governance, the projects provided facilities and mechanisms to encourage inclusive participation in project activities. This is critical to effective climate change adaptation because people's vulnerabilities and roles in the community vary. Unless they are represented and engaged, some major risks, opportunities and skill sets may be missed. Successful mechanisms were demonstrated for including women, and for child-led and child-centred approaches. There was less progress in ensuring participation of vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities. Effective mechanisms for women's engagement included women in project activities and focused activities on their roles (e.g. as kitchen gardeners). They worked within accepted community norms while providing opportunities for women to produce and sell more, and	***Tailor activities to the needs, roles and skills of different groups:*** Ensure that the vulnerabilities of all groups in the community are fully appreciated, discussed and assessed. Provide opportunities/spaces for all groups to access the knowledge they need for these discussions. Make sure there are mechanisms to connect these with mainstream community development decision-making. Focus resilience-building activities on the roles of groups that may not be active in traditional decision-making in communities, providing opportunities for them to understand and discuss the risks within their particular circumstances, and to come up with ways to reduce the risks and contribute to the resilience of the whole community. Include child-led and child-centred approaches to engage children/youth in vulnerability assessments, adaptation planning and local action. Their inputs are unique and essential to overall community resilience. Specific expertise and methods are needed for this, including different media and forms of communication that 'speak to' children and

Finding	Recommendation
manage finances, with benefits for them and their families. The skills and enthusiasm of children/youth as messengers and advocates for climate change was demonstrated, and their participation in local planning facilitated. Their contributions will increase over time as their knowledge and skills deepen, including through the formal education system. Child-led/child-centred approaches were successful in harnessing their natural curiosity and enthusiasm for an issue that will affect their lives more than any other. They bring unique perspectives and powerful skills and approaches to advocacy, particularly when communicating to their peers.	harness their creativity. Form partnerships to provide these. Provide opportunities to connect children to wider knowledge networks and access to ongoing education about climate change where possible (e.g. through mentoring and courses) while the formal education system matures.
Projects facilitated on-ground testing of options for building community resilience. This is essential to the ongoing development of knowledge and experience locally, and to the eventual establishment of robust and effective options for adaptation. Projects introduced technology and methods, particularly around resource and ecosystems management, which were appropriate and had strong methodological linkages to reducing risks of climate change (e.g. more efficient water use, control of erosion, and improved productivity of fisheries). More time is needed to test these and other options in their different contexts and settings, and to build community experience in adapting them within their livelihood systems. A stronger knowledge base is needed to underpin community decisions to ensure the options are proportionate to the risks and are effective locally. This is a prerequisite to adoption – when communities and individuals integrate the knowledge, change and invest.	***Deepen community experience of options for adaptation:*** Continue community-led testing of options for reducing the risks of climate change in their livelihood systems and, over time, for adapting these systems. Look for partnerships to support these options and for development of innovations. These should include partnerships with government through complementary planning and development. These partnerships can provide essential infrastructure and services, and facilitate access to water, markets and mechanisms such as technical assistance/ incentives, seed funding, market regulation and trade agreements. Partnerships could be established with the private sector to provide for the genuine engagement and the rights of producers. These partnerships can support supply of inputs for conservation farming, integrated pest management and low-cost, efficient water and fuel technology. They can also open up markets to a more diverse range of produce. Partnerships could also be forged with research for development agencies, actively engaging them on the ground to monitor and assess different options, and to inform their research. This will make their research more relevant and responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities.
The projects engaged local government in activities through various mechanisms, including technical working groups and planning committees, and through advocacy to take the voice of communities to local development planning systems. There were many successes and examples of leadership emerging and support for project activities. There were instances where local government officials remained	***Engage with local government early and on multiple fronts:*** Begin engaging with local government at the start of activities. Work with their local leadership to ensure that project activities are coordinated with other work in the local area and to ensure that officials are fully across the project. Keep them regularly updated. Engage technical officials in capacity building around climate change. This will take time to develop and will not be sufficient in many areas to support the ongoing needs of

Finding	Recommendation
engaged with the participating communities, and of commitments to fund activities. But limited capacities and resources to invest at local government levels challenge this engagement and make it difficult to sustain. Sustaining it in community development in general is difficult enough, but is particularly challenging for climate change adaptation, which tends to sit outside local government planning systems and funding streams, and is at best beginning to be integrated through disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs. Sources of funds are available, however, and are likely to increase as donor investment in adaptation ramps up.	communities for technical assistance, especially as climate change impacts worsen. However, it all helps and is an effective way to engage officials with communities, and for them to hear community voices. Support this capacity building by providing other opportunities for technical officers to build their skills, for example through mentoring, formal training courses and professional exchanges, so that they can more effectively support community needs. This is an ongoing process that requires sustained investment, education and training. Connect community planning for climate change adaptation to mainstream local government community development programs. This is challenging and requires dedicated effort, but working outside these systems is not sustainable and is unlikely to deliver ongoing benefits for communities. Start small, for example by facilitating integration of community vulnerability assessments in local construction planning, so that community road projects are designed to withstand weather, and supplies provided through agriculture programs suit changing weather conditions. This means working with officials such as engineers, agronomists and natural resource managers (where they exist) and not just extension workers. Opportunities are emerging in some places to integrate through DRR programs, although these too are commonly disconnected from mainstream development budgets, and dedicated DRR program budgets (where they exist) tend to be small and lack transparency.
CBA and resilience building can be effective in reducing the risks of climate change and people's vulnerabilities locally. However, because of the nature and scale of climate change impacts, resilience building requires coordinated action at larger scales (e.g. whole watersheds, coastlines and ecosystems) and across jurisdictions. The CBCCAG program is well positioned to play an important role in providing an evidence base. It demonstrates the development and economic benefits of resilience building at community level and the potential transformative impact if these efforts are complemented in development planning across scales.	***Look for partnerships to deliver complementary development at scale***: Climate change plays out across landscapes and ecosystems and many of the risks such as large floods, drought and drying conditions are best addressed at this scale. If they are not addressed at this scale, the work of communities (e.g. small-scale flood protection, sea walls, new water supplies, and new production technologies and systems) can be quickly undermined. Where it is achieved, however, the impact can be truly transformative. Firstly, the landscape scale processes must be understood, requiring specialist technical expertise, which is rarely available locally. Then it entails establishing cooperative networks across communities and local government administration areas, far beyond the scope of communities to achieve. Civil society can play a role through advocacy and its own extensive networks, including with national/provincial government, development banks and donors.

Finding	Recommendation
The CBA model – generally used across the CBCCAG program – works on a widely deployed theory of change. It builds knowledge and skills around climate change impacts and vulnerabilities; facilitates participatory planning to identify adaptive action; provides resources to test these; advocates and engages with government to build local capacity, influence development decisions and access resources for implementation; and creates networks for wider adoption. This theory is effective to a point but faces challenges in defining genuine pathways to impact at scale. Change is complex and highly iterative. It is not achievable in a short project timeframe. The CBCCAG program offered a unique opportunity to test this model (with many individual project differences) across a wide geographic reach and in a range of cultural settings and contexts. Collectively, the projects have built an extraordinary evidence base for CBA. Models are emerging from within individual projects and across consortia of like-minded partners. Right now, it is dispersed, housed with different partners and documented in a range of reports, case studies, videos, think pieces, manuals and models.	***Consolidate the CBCCAG evidence base on community-based climate change adaptation across the projects:*** Analyse it and document outcomes, experiences and lessons to see if it is possible to define 'models' and approaches that can be shared to inform future programs and the global methodological discussion on CBA. Make the evidence base available and accessible. This evidence base also offers a wealth of knowledge to inform discussions about entry points for climate change in community development, complementing knowledge from adaptation efforts around the world. Properly analysed, it could inform our understanding of what 'resilience' means in community settings, how it relates to short-term development benefits and how investment might need to be ramped up to deal with worsening impacts. The CBCCAG evidence base is of particular value in the context of the Pacific Region, home to many of the world's most vulnerable areas and to millions of at-risk people who have not benefited from the industrial and resources booms that fuel global climate change. It offers rich, in-depth experiences and lessons to guide the next wave of donor investment.
Lead partners in the CBCCAG program took opportunities to build on long-established relationships with local partners and previous phases of related work in the target areas. In some cases they advanced to new locations, taking lessons and experiences to apply in other settings. In others they built on previous planning exercises and vulnerability assessments to deepen the experience of partner communities and their engagement in resilience building. At a practical level, this allowed key staff to be retained, lessons consolidated and methods refined. On the ground, it meant that there was continuity of effort and a greater depth of knowledge built, with positive outcomes for local partners and communities.	***Don't start again:*** Build on the achievements in the project locations. Deepening the knowledge and experiences of communities and local partners will enable the evidence base and good practice generated by the CBCCAG program to be adapted locally for wider application.
The projects formed partnerships for implementation managed by an experienced lead organisation. The consortium model, while challenging in terms of coordination, proved effective for a number of reasons. It was efficient in that the lead organisation provided administrative support and project management, allowing local	***Continue the consortium approach***: It is an efficient implementation method with large potential benefits for all partners. Ensure that roles and responsibilities of partners are clear upfront. Provide mechanisms for collaboration and synergies in the way different partners work (i.e. not just working

Finding	**Recommendation**
partners to get on with their work on the ground. It enabled access to specialist skills through the lead agencies and specialist partnerships, and sharing of methods and approaches. It facilitated capacity building of local partners through mentoring and training in climate change but also in aspects of project management (e.g. financial management). These skills have enabled partners to access funds from other sources to continue the work. It connected local partners to wider networks and ongoing access to knowledge. There were also some weaknesses and missed opportunities (e.g. consortium-level monitoring and evaluation; collaboration on activities; and coordination across a large number of local partners).	separately). Engage all partners in the design process, agreeing on objectives, outcomes, budgets and pace of implementation. Jointly develop a project-wide monitoring and evaluation system. Ensure it is structured to report against program as well as project objectives and outcomes. Provide dedicated resources and expertise to coordinate regular monitoring, analysis and reporting. Provide a range of opportunities for cross-learning within and between communities and across project countries. Local partners highly value these.
The consortium model will be even more efficient and effective as more and more responsibility can be handed to local partners. Building their capacity will help to ensure that the work continues and is responsive and relevant to local needs. It pays off in the long run, even if costly to start with.	***Build local partner capacities:*** Supporting local partners through good coordination, sharing of new methods and technologies, and providing access to wider networks is an effective ongoing role for international NGOs to play.
The responsiveness and flexibility of DFAT program managers was valued by the implementation partners. This enabled project teams to adjust the designs and implementation schedules as appropriate along the way. As accredited organisations, the lead agencies are experienced in project management and appreciated the trust shown. This contributed to the success of the program. Implementation partners found the design guidelines, and the guidance provided by DFAT on safeguards, to be clear and relevant for the context of the work. The design workshop in Hanoi was useful. Posts were variously engaged. Implementation partners valued active engagement by Posts. Post is seen as having an important role in brokering relationships between civil society organisations (CSOs) and government, and in connecting projects with other elements of the in-country aid program to achieve synergies and avoid overlap. The Nepal workshop was widely appreciated but partners and the program would have benefited from more opportunities for cross-learning and program-wide sharing of skills, methods and experiences.	***Provide support for program managers:*** Provide clear directions on DFAT requirements and design guidelines. Enable input from Posts and DFAT sector specialists (where these still exist). Provide opportunities for Post to engage (e.g. by giving Post a role in program management and cross-program events, and sharing progress reports). Develop a program-wide monitoring and evaluation framework, setting out program objectives, outcomes and indicators, and a coherent theory of change. Provide regular opportunities for cross-learning across the program and feedback to implementation partners on program-level progress. Extend these to include opportunities for sharing of skills and methods, including professional placements, peer-to-peer exchanges and methodology workshops. Enable regular cross-program communication and exchange (e.g. through a program website or blog). Provide resources for consolidation and analysis of the evidence base across the program to inform future programs and wider methodological development in CBA.

Background

Purpose

This report presents the findings of an independent evaluation of the Community-based Climate Change Action Grants (CBCCAG) program. The evaluation was commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in May 2015 to assess whether the component projects have performed well and have resulted in the intended objectives of the program and the outcomes of the individual projects.

The evaluation was also intended to draw out key lessons and inform DFAT thinking regarding the scope and priorities of any future funding to the sector beyond the life of the current program.

CBCCAG program

The CBCCAG program ($16.9 million over three years from 2011–12) co-invested with a range of non-government organisations (NGOs) including Oxfam, CARE Australia (CARE), Act for Peace (AfP), Live & Learn, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Plan International (Plan) and Save the Children International (SCI) to implement projects to:

1. Increase the resilience of communities in developing countries to the unavoidable impacts of climate change; and
2. Reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions while also contributing to development priorities in target communities.

The program forms part of Australia's international 'fast-start' commitment of $599 million (2010–2013). It builds on Australia's previous support for community-level adaptation activities in developing countries and complements Australia's support for small-scale community-based work through the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Program.

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation encompassed nine projects funded under the CBCCAG program:

1. *Building Resilient and Adaptive Communities and Institutions in Mindanao* (Oxfam – Philippines)
2. *Assisting Communities to Secure their Environment to Climate Change* (CARE – Timor-Leste)
3. *Addressing Food Security through Improved Agricultural Practice in Green Islands* (CARE – Papua New Guinea)
4. *NGO Climate Change Adaptation Program* (Oxfam – Vanuatu)
5. *Pacific Island Communities Climate Risk Reduction* (Act for Peace – Pacific Region)
6. *Child-centred Climate Change Adaptation* (Plan International – Philippines)
7. *Building Resilience of Communities and their Ecosystems to the Impacts of Climate Change* (The Nature Conservancy – Pacific Region)
8. *Protection of Food Security through Adaptation to Climate Change* (Live & Learn – Pacific Region); and
9. *Improving Land and Water Management to Reduce Impacts of Climate Change on Communities* (Oxfam – Timor-Leste).

The terms of reference for the evaluation set out four key evaluation questions relating to effectiveness (the extent to which outcomes have been achieved), relevance to the project context and needs, impact and management:

1. **To what extent have the CBCCAG projects combined to contribute to building the resilience of communities to the impacts of climate change while also contributing to development priorities in the target communities?** Did the projects achieve their individual end-of-project outcomes?
2. **Did the CBCCAG projects take the right approach?** Did they meet the needs of our counterparts? Were they aligned with Australian Government priorities? Are community-based adaptation (CBA) programs an efficient use of funding?
3. **What were the key instances of success and sustainable change achieved under the CBCCAG program and what enabled these to happen?** Examples of their key achievements and what enabled them to happen. Examples of evidence of changes influenced by the programs being embedded into policy and practice.
4. **How well were the CBCCAG projects managed on a project-by-project basis and at the program level? What key lessons were learned?** Was expenditure to budget? Was there sufficient flexibility in how systems and process were applied? Was risk monitored and managed effectively? Were relationships managed well? What key lessons were learned about the delivery approaches?

These questions formed the basis of program-level reporting. They guided development of a series of more specific project-level questions, which provided data that could be aggregated to program level.

Audience

The primary audience for the evaluation's findings contained in this report are staff of the DFAT Climate Change Branch, the program managers who commissioned the evaluation as part of their quality assurance process, and relevant DFAT Posts to inform future programming.

The NGOs managing the projects are an equally important audience, having an interest in the outcomes and lessons as they apply to the design and implementation of comparable future work.

Communities and other implementing partners also have a stake in the evaluation and its outcomes, and will be consulted where possible.

Team

The evaluation was conducted by a specialist team from Griffin nrm Pty Ltd, comprising:

- Dr Kate Duggan (climate change specialist); and
- Bruce Bailey (monitoring and evaluation specialist).

The team adopted a collaborative approach, working with program and project managers to develop and conduct a constructive evaluation process so that the outcomes are as useful as possible for these audiences.

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team thanks the project partners for their kind assistance in providing reports, case studies and interviews for this evaluation. In particular, we acknowledge the Plan/Save the Children International (SCI) team in the Philippines, and the Oxfam team in Timor-Leste for hosting extraordinary field visits.

Evaluation methods

Evaluation standards

The methods for the evaluation were designed to meet current DFAT standards[1] for:

- Enabling a collaborative approach
- Meeting the needs of the primary audience according to the terms of reference
- Encompassing a range of data collection methods and triangulation across different methods to corroborate findings
- Addressing privacy and ethical issues
- Providing professional analysis and assessments; and
- Offering independent advice and recommendations.

Methods of inquiry

A detailed evaluation plan is attached at Annex 1.

The evaluation employed various methods of inquiry to examine:

- **Progress** against project objectives and contribution to program outcomes
- The **relevance** of the investment locally and in the broader context
- The **effectiveness** of the development processes employed – skills, knowledge and capacity building, partnerships and collaborations
- The **efficiency** of the investment and management arrangements
- The **sustainability** of outcomes; and
- **Lessons** – what worked, what didn't and why.

The evaluation also examined progress and lessons in relation to:

- **Inclusive development –** were marginalised and vulnerable members of the community included, such as women and girls, and people with disabilities? Were appropriate guidelines and standards for inclusive development met; and
- **Safeguards** – were people's natural and cultural assets and values protected? Were relevant local and Australian safeguard standards met?

The methods of inquiry included:

- A review of program and project documents including program guidance to the NGOs, approved project designs and recent progress reports and evaluations (including the review of the related Vietnam program mid-term evaluation)
- Interviews with the DFAT program managers in Canberra and at Posts
- Interviews with project managers and stakeholders for each project
- Site visits to two selected projects and in-depth interviews with Post program staff, implementation teams, partners and beneficiaries; and
- A focus group discussion of preliminary findings.

A list of people interviewed for the evaluation and participants in focus group discussions is attached at Annex 2.

[1] Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2014, *Detailed Description of Standards for Evaluation Plans.*

Community adaptation pathways

The evaluation adopted a 'pathways to community adaptation' approach to inquiry, acknowledging that the ultimate goal of the program is a long-term undertaking and that the projects are expected to contribute to its attainment in measureable but incremental ways. This approach views the development process in three phases:

Skills, tools and capacity building	**Policy, planning and enabling**	**Adoption, implementation and scale out**
This phase is facilitated by the implementation team and is expected to take up the bulk of available time and resources. It engages and empowers communities with the attributes, knowledge, skills and tools they need to understand and manage the risks climate change poses to their lives and livelihoods, in ways that benefit them directly in the short and long term. This phase enables communities to identify risks and vulnerabilities, solutions and strategies, and test them out. It positions communities to take the next steps towards engaging with networks and politically, to influence policy, planning and resourcing for local implementation of strategic action.	This phase is facilitated by the implementation team and their boundary partners (or change agents), to connect communities with government and civil society organisations to bring the voice of communities about climate change adaptation to policy, planning and programs at a more strategic level. There may be evidence of project activities and interventions influencing change in the way development planning is conducted at community and larger scales, for example in the information and strategies available to communities and in the networks and resources supporting community planning.	Project outcomes may not yet be evident at scale but there may be evidence of this emerging, for example if networks are fostering and advocating their wider application, and mobilising resources for testing/implementation by other communities or agencies.

These phases map out a plausible pathway to impact for communities engaged in building adaptive capacities, reducing the risks of climate change and building resilience. The evaluators examined evidence of causal linkages between activities of the implementing team, the changes in behaviour of boundary partners or change agents, and the potential benefits for participating communities.

The approach enabled the evaluators to map out the expected pathway to impact and make informed judgements about where projects had got to and the likely future impacts on beneficiaries. It also established the critical activities and changes that occurred along the pathway, what worked well and why, and what fell below expectations. This analysis will highlight valuable lessons for future programming.

The linkages between the three phases are critical. The evaluation examined the role of the projects in creating these, and looked for evidence of networks, partnerships and institutional mechanisms (policy and mandates) that could be expected to mobilise resources for wider application and impact of program outcomes in future.

Indicators

Headline questions and indicators were formulated for each development phase, creating the basis of the evaluation questions and reporting on progress against program objectives and outcomes (Table 1). Headline questions for the evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, inclusive development, safeguards, management and governance, and sustainability – are shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Headline questions and indicators for each development phase and associated program outcome

Development phase	Program outcome	Headline question	Indicators
Skills, tools and capacity building	Community self-organisation and capacity to anticipate and adapt to change and/or mitigate emissions locally are enhanced.	*To what extent did the projects build resilience in communities while contributing to development priorities in the target communities?*	***Indicator 1:*** *Knowledge and skills are built and shared in participating communities*
			Indicator 2: *Communities are empowered to take ownership of the problem, to lead, plan and develop their own solutions*
			Indicator 3: *Communities are engaged with government and civil society to mobilise knowledge and resources, and advocate for change*
Policy, planning and enabling	Community, government and civil society development planning systems are modified to support adaptation/mitigation planning and strategies	*What are people doing differently as a result (e.g. planning and allocating resources)?*	***Indicator 4:*** *Local action plans and/or agreements are produced to reduce local climate risks and vulnerabilities*
			Indicator 5: *Government and/or civil society policies, planning systems and mandates are modified to integrate new knowledge and solutions*
			Indicator 6: *Resources are made available for implementation*
Adoption, implementation and scale out	Community-based strategies for adaptation/mitigation are adopted, adapted and implemented in other vulnerable communities	*How have communities benefited (e.g. enhanced adaptive management)?*	***Indicator 7:*** *Adaptation strategies are tested and modified to reduce local climate risks and vulnerabilities*
			Indicator 8: *Adaptation strategies are adopted and scaled out by other members of the community and other communities*
			Indicator 9*: Cross-scale networks are expanded to mobilise knowledge and resources*
			Indicator 10: *Programs are coordinated across scales and jurisdictions to ensure complementary action at different scales*

Table 2: Headline questions for the evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Headline question
Relevance to partners and the Australian Government	*Did they meet the needs of partners? Were they aligned with Australian Government priorities?*
Effectiveness of approaches	*In terms of delivery approaches, what worked well and why; what didn't work so well and why?*
Efficiency of approaches	*Are CBA programs an efficient use of funding? Could the outcomes have been achieved with fewer resources? How?*
Inclusive development	*What strategies were employed to ensure that marginalised members of the community, including women and girls, and people with disabilities were included in project activities and can benefit from the outcomes?*
Safeguards	*Was the impact of project activities on people's natural and cultural assets assessed? In the case of potential negative impacts, did the project managers comply with local and Australian environment protection law?* *Could the activities result in resettlement or social upheaval? If so, did the project managers comply with local and aid program standards to protect people and their assets?*
Management and governance	*Were the management and governance arrangements appropriate for the activity designs; did they deliver the outcomes effectively?*
Sustainability	*What evidence is there that the outcomes are sustainable beyond the life of the projects? What is enabling and hindering this?*

Limitations

The evaluation methodology was designed to provide the best possible information in the available timeframe and resources. However, there were limitations that could impact on the findings:

- **Time and resources:** the rigour of the data gathering and analysis processes was constrained by the time available.
- **Judgements:** the evaluation was limited to rapid qualitative methods of inquiry, and rely on the professional judgement of the evaluators to interpret stakeholder perspectives.
- **Access:** the program covers a vast geographic area and the evaluation team could only expect to gather indicative perspectives from a limited range of stakeholders/locations.
- **Measurement:** the evaluators primarily relied on evidence collected from project managers and stakeholders to assess compound indicators such as 'capacity', 'knowledge and awareness' and 'empowerment'.
- **Attribution:** the projects were implemented in a complex context in which multiple factors contributed to and/or detracted from the anticipated changes, making definitive attribution of changes to particular interventions challenging.

The 'enhancing community pathways to adaptation/mitigation' approach adopted in the evaluation lessened many of these limitations by examining evidence and causal linkages between project activities/investment and likely outcomes in the immediate and longer term.

Program description

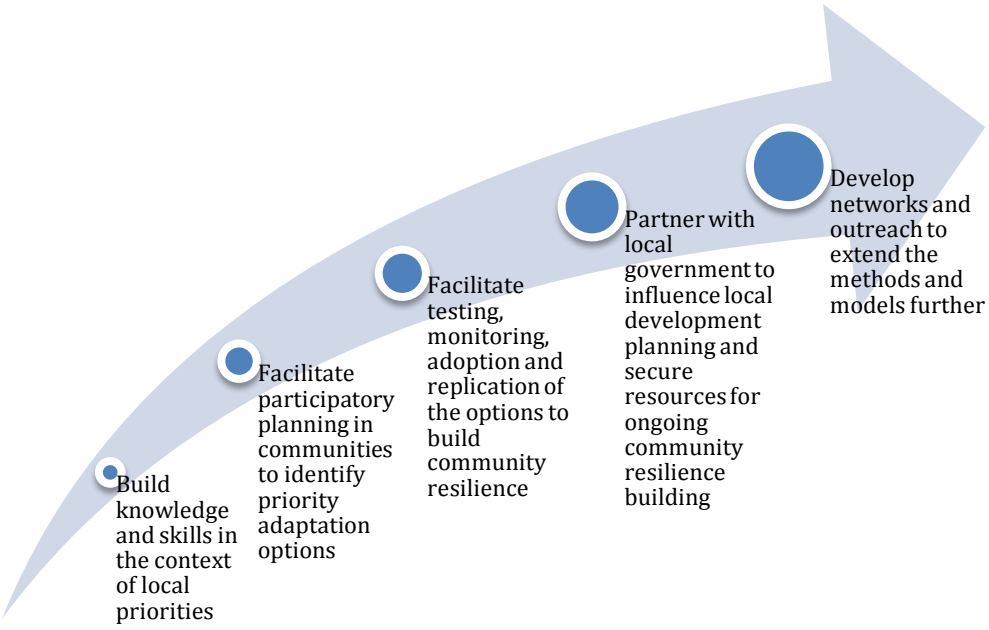
Development priorities

In instructions to proponents, DFAT required that activities developed under the CBCCAG program should:

- Promote local community ownership, improve coordination of responses, align with local and national development, adaptation and mitigation priorities, and harmonise with other international, regional and donor work in the country, community and/or sector.
- Use existing community structures, involve local organisations acceptable to national and local authorities and be consistent with local and national development policies, particularly relating to climate change and DRR.
- Ensure members of the community understand and support the purpose of the activity and actively contribute to its development and implementation.
- Encourage partnerships between a variety of stakeholders – including, where possible, sub-national governments – that strengthen and build on local/regional partnerships. Ensure that the specific needs of men, women, children and people with a disability are addressed and that opportunities exist for women and people with a disability to participate as decision makers in determining objectives and types of activities.
- Aim to strengthen capacity within communities and community-based organisations and/or local NGOs to enhance sustainability of outcomes at the conclusion of the project.
- Ensure a rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation, including capturing a broad range of outcomes and including mechanisms for continuous reflection, learning and adjustment.
- Have clear learning objectives and strategies for communicating the outcomes of the activities to stakeholders.
- Demonstrate a commitment to development effectiveness, sustainability, tangible outcomes, quality, applying lessons learned and sharing lessons with other stakeholders.

Program theory of change

Although a CBCCAG theory of change was not clearly articulated at the outset, most projects followed a broadly common development theory, which aligns closely with conventional CBA theory:



Progress towards project-level objectives

The CBCCAG projects were each designed to meet a set of objectives and outcomes. While there were many differences and unique approaches, at a program level these fall roughly into five groupings (Table 3). Ratings of progress towards the objectives under the five groupings were determined from review of project reporting, evaluations and interviews.

These broad ratings suggest that achievements at project level have been most significant in the knowledge and awareness raising, skills and capacity building, community planning and testing out of options on the ground in participating communities. Good progress has been made to a lesser extent in the areas of engagement with government and outreach beyond the local areas.

Table 3: Rough ratings of progress against project objectives

Outcome area	**Progress towards achieving**
Awareness and capacity building, advocacy, producing knowledge, education and communication products for wider use	75%–100%
Integrating climate change risk assessments and resilience building into community planning, engaging vulnerable groups, assessing vulnerabilities, identifying actions to reduce risks and increase adaptive capacity, producing integrated community planning models for wider application	75%–100%
Testing out actions on the ground, monitoring and documenting outcomes for community resilience, demonstrating benefits within the community and to others	65%–80%
Engaging and influencing local government/national government, integrating community priorities into local government development planning, accessing networks and funds for ongoing action	50%–75%
Outreach and communication of lessons and outcomes in the local area, regionally, nationally and internationally	50%–75%

Progress towards program outcomes

Under the dual program objectives for community-based climate change mitigation and adaptation, CBCCAG adaptation projects were designed to meet three program-level outcomes:

1. **Community self-organisation and capacity to anticipate and adapt to change locally are enhanced.**
2. **Community, government and civil society development planning systems are modified to support adaptation planning and strategies.**
3. **Community-based strategies for adaptation are adopted, adapted and implemented in other vulnerable communities.**

Skills, tools and capacity building

Program-level outcome: Community self-organisation and capacity to anticipate and adapt to change and/or mitigate emissions locally are enhanced.

Headline question: *To what extent did the projects build resilience in communities while contributing to development priorities in the target communities?*

Indicator 1: *Knowledge and skills are built and shared in participating communities*

Knowledge and skills were built

The projects were effective in raising awareness of the risks of climate change through education, training, experiential learning and mentoring, and by connecting communities with specialist knowledge. Baseline surveys conducted by some of the projects indicated that while many people in the target areas had noticed changes in weather patterns, most had limited understanding of what climate change may mean to their lives and livelihoods in future, and how to respond:

> *'When I was first trained under the child-centred climate-based adaption project, I had no idea what climate change was. I was able to gain insight about the cause and effect of climate change, and what we can do to help lessen it.'* – youth participant, Plan/SCI, Eastern Visayas, Philippines (case study)

Respondents interviewed as the projects were coming to completion generally reported that they had gained knowledge about climate change, and an understanding that they will need to adapt (e.g. 95% of respondents could identify at lease one aspect of climate change and reported that their understanding had increased – Oxfam, Vanuatu). Most also felt more prepared as a result of applying their new knowledge to address the perceived problems, reduce the risks and recover (able to 'bounce forward' – Oxfam, Philippines).

The projects have begun an important learning process and have built demand in the communities. Evidence from evaluations, surveys and interviews indicates that whenever asked, people overwhelmingly state that they want to know more. Specifically they want to deepen their knowledge, particularly about how to anticipate the impacts, what to do locally to cope, and what additional support they may need to access.

Education and awareness materials and media were tailored to audiences

Pre-project knowledge and awareness varied across the suite of projects, with highest levels apparent where the impacts of climate change were already acute and donors were active in adaptation (including in Isabel and Choiseul Provinces of the Solomon Islands and in the Marshall Islands, where storm surges and high tides now wash over entire atolls). In other areas, such as Timor-Leste, people had noticed changes in wet season rainfall patterns and temperatures but had not necessarily connected these with a global climate trend.

Project teams generally tailored their education and awareness-raising activities to the knowledge levels and specific needs of their communities, and to groups within communities (e.g. to children and youth in the child-led and child-centred approaches employed by Plan and SCI). Local language was critical to success, while visual formats, creative media such as flip charts, posters, music and performance, and mass media such as radio, video and social media, were found to be effective in a range of contexts, including in the many instances where people lack access to online information. The communication methods and materials were most effective where community members were actively involved in their production and/or were able to adapt them to the local context.

The projects produced large amounts of education and awareness materials for application in participating communities and for wider distribution. Case studies, stories, videos, training manuals and materials are housed with the implementation teams and their partners. Much of this is available online, along with useful accounts of what worked well and what was learned.

These materials reflect a range of unique approaches but also many common themes and lessons across the projects. At program level, consolidating all of the publicly available educational material, reviewing it and making it more accessible to a wider audience would be a significant value-add. One example of this value-add in the program can be found in the Live & Learn project, which consolidated and distributed available information gathered from a range of sources to inform community choices about possible options and solutions (comprising 50 climate-resilient crop technologies).

Scientific knowledge and technical expertise were accessed

The projects accessed technical climate change information from a range of sources (in-house specialists, government agencies, scientific and academic institutions and local specialists). The consortium approach, employed by several of the projects, provided access to technical expertise for local partners from within the international NGOs.

Teams found it difficult to connect communities with these sources to provide ongoing access, especially in remote areas. Science agencies tend to rely on formal forecasting media and government agency networks to get this information out. But many remote communities lack facilities to access these networks.

There were also problems with the quality of information and in accessing technical expertise needed to interpret technical information locally. Some projects found it useful to channel technical information through existing and purpose-built extension facilities (e.g. rural training centres and climate field schools), providing famers with access to weather forecasts and offering complementary technical skills and advice (e.g. Oxfam, Philippines). Others engaged local extension officers in project activities.

In some cases, reliance on local technical officers was a weakness because of low capacities and skills, particularly in helping communities come up with effective livelihood strategies and options for dealing with impacts, including increasingly variable weather patterns. This expertise was found to be critical to success.

Scientific knowledge was connected with traditional knowhow

Communicating information about highly technical and complex issues like climate change presents significant challenges, both in interpreting the science for local contexts and in reaching and engaging audiences. Building on the past experiences of the partners, projects employed innovative communication methods, including a canoe voyage in the Pacific (TNC project), which took messages about climate change to very remote communities. The project reached more than 3,000 people and won a Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) environmental achievement award.

Another example is the three-dimensional modelling employed by TNC in vulnerable communities in the Pacific Region. TNC engaged communities in construction of a scale model of their coastline and landscape, enabling a discussion about the likely impacts of storm surges and sea level rise on their resources and assets. In these exercises, people took ownership and were able to add their local knowledge to a basic elevation contour model.

The project teams employed various other approaches to connect technical climate change information (e.g. projections and scenarios) with people's knowledge about their resources, how they are managed and the likely impact of changing weather and climate

on their production and livelihood systems. These systems commonly have in-built resilience and capacity to diversify (even if on a small scale). Both sources of knowledge are needed to inform identification of effective local adaptive strategies:

> *'We women spent most of our time working on our land to support out family. We know how to cultivate our crops and grow our food. However, over recent years, we observed changes in the weather and sometimes it affected our crop and we don't know why this is happening … we can work together with you to address our problem with our food gardens.'* – community participant, Punam Community, New Ireland, PNG, Live & Learn (case study)

For example, the Knowledge Hubs developed by Live & Learn in several Pacific communities reinvigorated local knowledge about food production in the context of a changing climate, leading to reintroduction of traditional crops that are less susceptible to some of the projected impacts:

> *'Our grandparents lived mostly from food provided by our forest and our surrounding environment. Few of these species are still used as food whereas most are no longer in use as food because we are relying on introduced foods. Through Live & Learn trainings we have realised and even recalled these species and brought them back. These will be established and help us in extreme climate and disaster events when other introduced species can't survive.'* – community participant, Panachais, Kavieng, PNG, Live & Learn, (case study)

By taking account of traditional knowledge, projects were in some cases able to harness local community traditions for managing resources in ways that could build resilience to the impacts of climate change. These included the use of traditional resource management regulations (*Tara Bandu)* in Timor-Leste (Oxfam) to protect ecosystems, enabling them to remain healthy and productive (e.g. by declaring marine protected areas).

Climate change information was linked to people's lives and livelihoods

The project teams found that people understood climate change when it was talked about in relation to their context and livelihoods, rather than as an abstract construct. Otherwise, communities tend to view the impacts as either temporary or beyond their control:

> *'Adaptation is difficult for communities to understand – so we talk to them about food security. The Ministry of Agriculture gives seeds that are better in the changing climate – they understand this. And vegetables – they see benefit as they can be grown for several months. You need to show short-term benefit.'* – implementation partner, Oxfam, Timor-Leste (interview)

People in general, and particularly those in poor communities, tend to focus on immediate concerns of food and water security, income, health and education for their families. For example, in areas that had recently experienced super-destructive tropical storms (e.g. Vanuatu and southern Philippines), project communities were dealing with recovery and getting their lives back on track over longer-term preparedness, risk reduction and adaptive action. Communities in drought-affected areas (e.g. Timor-Leste) were concerned with accessing secure water supplies and less so with investing in water-efficient technologies. People in very poor communities opted to invest in their children's education in preference to technology to boost and diversify their livelihoods.

The projects found that short-term benefits from climate change adaptation needed to be apparent in most contexts. Community engagement tended to drop off or was difficult to sustain unless these benefits were clear. Therefore projects found it effective to introduce climate change knowledge through the lens of these concerns, and did so generally in the context of 'resilience' – where strengthening the health and productivity of communities and their natural and cultural assets, while taking account of climate

projections, forecasts and other relevant information, is assumed to also build resilience to climate change impacts.

The program offers a wealth of experience and evidence about how resilience is interpreted in a range of communities and settings. For example, some projects developed frameworks for defining community resilience (including Oxfam's Resilience Framework) and applied these in their work with communities. Others sought to identify and test resilient livelihood options and technologies.

This evidence base, if collated and examined in some detail, could inform the active ongoing global discussion about what constitutes resilience to climate change impacts, and how this can be achieved as part of the 'long game', while acknowledging people's more immediate needs and whether we are doing enough in the short term to achieve it. These questions come sharply into focus in situations where, without substantial increases in targeted investment in adaptation in the immediate future, it will be difficult to avert mass migrations from areas that are already highly impacted.

Knowledge was shared and communities connected to wider knowledge networks

The projects employed a range of approaches to facilitate sharing of knowledge about climate change and community resilience within the communities, with other communities and to the general public. These included active advocacy and knowledge brokering, which were developed and promoted as core project objectives (Plan/SCI, Philippines); peer-to-peer exchanges between communities (e.g. farmer field exchanges); and demonstrations (e.g. TNC connected communities that successfully managed their fisheries through mechanisms such as marine protected areas with others).

Some projects established formal centres for knowledge sharing and collaboration (Knowledge Hubs – Live & Learn, Climate Change Centres – Oxfam, Vanuatu, and Climate Field Schools – Oxfam, Philippines) and community committees and networks (e.g. Disaster and Climate Change Committees – Oxfam, Vanuatu, and Community Facilitators Network – TNC):

> *'I'm happy to show by variety of crops for time of disaster grown around my house and share information on how to grow them with other farmers and establishment of the Knowledge Hubs to promote sharing of information, planting materials between farmers is a good idea.'* – participant, Temotu, Solomon Islands, Live & Learn (case study)

All of these facilities played a role in knowledge sharing, as well as providing access to wider knowledge networks (e.g. through connections to formal knowledge networks, and technical, disaster management and weather agencies). They also provided facilities for early warning systems and community-based weather monitoring, and served as community meeting places and evacuation centres in the event of natural disasters (e.g. in Vanuatu during Cyclone Pam, 2015).

Strategies were developed for ongoing knowledge and awareness raising

The knowledge centres and networks in their various forms are expected to help sustain the ongoing development of climate change knowledge and expertise for adaptation in the participating communities. Other strategies developed by the projects included building knowledge and skills of local partners (e.g. AfP, Oxfam, CARE and Plan) and their capacities to continue the work post-project, and working with the formal education system to incorporate climate change in school curriculum (Plan/SCI, Philippines).

There is evidence that local partners are integrating knowledge about climate change and tools for engaging communities in adaptive management in their local community

development processes. Some are actively seeking and attracting other sources of funding to continue the work begun under the CBCCAG program.

There is less certainty for the ongoing role of purpose-built climate change knowledge centres. While the centres enjoy a large measure of local support, they require resources that may be beyond the capacity of communities and need to be connected to local government funding streams.

There is potential for climate change knowledge to be integrated in the formal education system in the Philippines, as materials are rolled out provincially or nationally through the Plan/SCI project. This offers considerable promise for developing climate change knowledge in communities over the long term. One example developed for Grade 8 ('*Soaring High Above the Storm*') was reviewed for this evaluation. It is contextual (focused on typhoons using local examples) with quality, accurate, age-appropriate content. It could have application nationally (if mandated in the national curriculum) and be adapted for use internationally. As such, the kit could be a transformative achievement of the project and its impact should be monitored and documented to inform similar efforts in the Pacific and other regions.

Indicator 2: *Communities are empowered to take ownership of the problem, to lead, plan and develop their own solutions*

Leadership was built and champions emerged

Across the program, there are examples of empowerment and leadership emerging as a result of people acquiring and applying new knowledge about climate change. In some cases, leaders emerged from traditional community governance structures. For example, village chiefs were engaged and encouraged participation in project activities of the Live & Learn project in the Pacific Region. In other cases, leaders – among them youth and women – emerged from new structures, including youth advocacy groups through the Plan/SCI project in the Philippines; community Disaster Committees in Vanuatu through the CARE project; TNC's Community Facilitators Network in the Pacific Region; and savings and loans groups through Oxfam's project in Timor-Leste.

In some cases, objectives relating to community leadership in climate change were found to be overly ambitious (e.g. Live & Learn), needing longer timeframes to achieve them.

Communities became better organised to deal with the issues of climate change in their local areas as evidenced in the formation of community climate change centres and groups (e.g. CARE's Core Groups in PNG and water management groups in Timor-Leste). Many of these were connected with DRR groups, reflecting the synergies in approaches for addressing climate and disaster risks and reinforcing community capacities in both, and other community development groups. These connections will help to sustain climate-related groups and activities.

Climate-sensitive planning methods were introduced

The projects introduced a range of tools and methods to enhance learning in the communities. These empowered and encouraged people to think about activities and strategies that could help them understand and adapt to the impacts of climate change in their local context.

For example, methods were introduced for assessing vulnerability and adaptive capacity, such as CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA), Plan's Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment (PCVA) and the Live & Learn Food Security Assessments. Methods were also introduced to integrate climate change risk assessments in community planning, such as Oxfam's Community Action Planning (CAP) and AfP's climate change adaptation (CCA)/DRRM model.

The planning methods were applied in a large number of communities to identify and prioritise actions for building resilience to climate change impacts. As a result, people reported that they felt better prepared and able to develop solutions.

Participation and inclusive representation were facilitated

The planning methods were generally participatory, encouraging engagement and representation of different groups in the community (e.g. women, children/youth and disadvantaged and minority groups). Often these approaches are new to communities and could challenge traditional power and governance structures. Skilled facilitators were needed to overcome potential conflict and secure active engagement.

The projects reported that good engagement and participation were achieved in most cases, drawing on the local knowledge, networks and language skills of local partners. This outcome was enhanced through training in facilitation and participatory planning methods. Challenges included disruptions caused by disasters (e.g. Cyclone Pam, Vanuatu, 2015, and Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines, 2013) and competition with other local planning and development activities. (For many people, paid employment in government-funded local construction projects took precedence over participation in community planning exercises.) Project strategies to address these challenges included working within traditional governance structures to secure commitment, being responsive to community timetables, and scheduling activities to accommodate other priorities.

Integrated planning was enabled

Integrating adaptation planning with mainstream community planning systems was critical to success. Planning that operates outside these systems risks becoming marginalised and disconnected from community networks, resources and sources of funding beyond the life of the projects. Without these incentives, participation and engagement tends to be short-lived. Projects that built on their existing community development planning experience in the target areas, bringing tools for climate change risk and vulnerability assessments into mainstream planning systems, were able to *integrate* rather then *add on* climate change at community level.

The planning methods used by the projects, while individually different, shared many common features. In addition to their participatory framework, these features included tools to enable communities to assess their vulnerabilities based on available information about the likely impacts of climate change locally, and tools for analysing different management options in terms of livelihood and other local development benefits.

Community planning models were developed

Lead partners, using the evidence base developed through the widespread application of their participatory planning methods, began to define models for integrated CBA planning in a development context for wider application. These included CARE's model of climate change adaptation on small atolls developed in PNG; Oxfam's Road Map (Knowledge and awareness; Local governance; Livelihoods) developed in the Philippines; Oxfam's Resilience Framework developed in Vanuatu; Oxfam's CAP developed in Timor-Leste; and Afp's CCA/DRRM model.

At a program level, an in-depth review of the planning methods and these models is warranted to capitalise on the evidence base built across the CBCCAG program; contribute to ongoing methodological development in CBA; and inform future program designs.

Indicator 3: *Communities are engaged with government and civil society to mobilise knowledge and resources, and advocate for change*

While much can be done within communities to reduce vulnerabilities and build resilience, many, especially poor and highly vulnerable communities, will require external support. The projects all worked to establish connections with government to enable the voice of communities to be heard by development planners and policy makers. They also sought to facilitate access to knowledge networks and resources for further planning and implementation of adaptation actions in participating communities and beyond:

> *'We have a lot of lessons from Vanuatu that can influence change, but unless these lessons are echoed at higher levels, transformative change will never happen.'* – Vanuatu Climate Action Network Coordinator (case study)

Community advocacy skills were built

Knowledge brokers and advocates emerged in communities, notably in the case of the Plan/SCI project in the Philippines, for which child advocacy was a core objective. The project employed child-led and child-centred approaches, focusing on developing skills and capacities of children and youth to advocate for climate change action and to participate in local planning and action. The children have become skilled climate change advocates, effective in communicating their ideas and thoughts about local action through a range of media (radio, performance, posters) in their schools, communities and other communities, and especially to their peers:

> '*Learning about climate change, I can see and understand how it will affect our lives. Climate change will bring stronger typhoons and other extreme weather events. It will cause flooding and destruction of rice crops, which means loss of income and food shortage not only to my family but to others who depend on agriculture too. This message is what I want other children and adults to understand.'* – Aurora National High School participant, Plan/SCI, Philippines (case study)

The messages of the children were being heard by their parents, other children and communities – they complemented and reinforced the information from other sources including local government and NGOs. However, the children tended to advocate for local action and long-term mitigation, which adults found difficult to relate to, especially since many are still dealing with immediate issues of recovery and reconstruction of their lives and livelihoods post Typhoon Haiyan (2013):

> *'I know we still have a long way to go to inspire change … this is just the start of my journey to inspire change.*' – youth participant, band member and budding composer, Plan/SCI, Philippines (case study)

In other examples, groups formed and trained in communities (e.g. CARE Core Groups in PNG and Community Facilitators Network – TNC) and became extension workers, taking the training to other communities and working with church groups and schools, including to integrate the knowledge in school curriculum. Other groups (e.g. CARE Timor-Leste Water Management Groups and AfP Disaster Management Committees) were linked with counterpart groups in local government aligned with local government community development programs and mechanisms. The Knowledge Hubs developed by Live & Learn in the Pacific Region fostered collaboration and knowledge sharing within and between communities.

Networks and linkages with government were formed

Through these linkages and networks, most projects provided mechanisms that enabled community representatives to advocate to local and national government, including through forums for discussion of local concerns and priorities. Examples include the national Climate Resilience Conference, which brought together local governments in

the target areas with child/youth advocacy groups, and the CARE Timor-Leste National Conference on Adaptation, which led to the Dili declaration on Adaptation, which may be funded annually by government.

Often, implementation partners acted as 'brokers', channelling views from the communities to government at local and national levels. This occurred through new structures such as the Vanuatu Climate Action Network (VCAN), coordinated by Oxfam, which was successful in influencing national government policy, and the CARE Timor-Leste National Working Group on Adaptation, which emerged from the project Steering Committee. Existing networks were also used and strengthened (e.g. the DRR network from community to national level in Vanuatu – AfP).

Links were formed between community climate change groups and local disaster risk reduction officers, technical extension workers and planners. Projects engaged these people in training, knowledge and awareness-raising activities, and as technical support in community-based assessments and planning (e.g. in Technical Advisory Groups). In general, it was more productive to work with sub-national than national government as it is more connected, largely decentralised and has the mandates to support community efforts through local development planning and financing systems.

Evidence from reports, evaluations and interviews indicates that the projects have built confidence and skills by engaging local government in project activities in communities. However, significant challenges remain relating to technical capacities and accessing limited resources. Integration with local development planning systems has proven difficult, with many elements of climate change planning still sitting outside mainstream government processes (e.g. the National Program for Village Development, PNDS, in Timor-Leste).

Some projects (e.g. AfP in Vanuatu and Tonga) provided training and mentoring to local partners and communities in preparing grant proposals and project management, enhancing their capacity to access other sources of external funds (e.g. from other civil society groups and private sector). A small number of communities have gone on to apply for and achieve funding for climate change-related activity. Such skills will become increasingly valuable as sources of climate finance for adaptation expand through multilateral, private and philanthropic sources.

There are some good examples of champions emerging in local government who are actively supporting the projects and advocating for their continuation. Local government officials have become strong advocates for the Plan/SCI project in the Philippines. In Isabel Province, Solomon Islands, TNC's project – facing low local government capacities – engaged an environment officer who has transitioned to local government (with funding) and is now leading community awareness across the province.

However, in most cases projects were forced to work with government capacity issues, the limited sharing of knowledge between communities and government, and limited access to skills and resources for climate change adaptation (and community development generally) in the project locations. In many cases, expectations of engagement with government had to be scaled back. More time is needed to fully develop these relationships and networks, taking account of the pace of development in local government capacities:

> *'The Nissan Islands have nothing – power for one hour per day, no internet or transport etc.'* – implementing partner, Care, PNG (interview)

Success factors included:

- Engaging with local government early in the process

- Ensuring local government partners took part in capacity-building activities with communities
- Engaging with national government formally and early in the project; and
- Working with existing local government development planning and mechanisms, not separately.

Policy planning and enabling

Program-level outcome: Community, government and civil society development planning systems are modified to support adaptation planning and strategies.

Headline question: *What are people doing differently as a result (e.g. planning and allocating resources)?*

Indicator 4: *Local action plans and/or agreements are produced to reduce local climate risks and vulnerabilities*

The projects facilitated development of community adaptation plans to address climate risks and vulnerabilities, which were identified through participatory assessment processes. These plans were informed by technical and local knowledge gathered from within the communities and by accessing partners' technical expertise. The project teams developed a range of methods for dealing with climate change risks in a livelihood context and shared many common experiences. These included natural resource management, ecosystems and watershed approaches. All of these methods offer, at least in theory, ways to reduce risks. For example, healthy ecosystems are known to be more resilient to weather shocks and more efficient water use reduces the risks associated with drought.

Some action plans resulted from a systematic CBA planning process (e.g. Oxfam projects); others emerged from less structured community collaborations and discussions of options. In some cases, communities simply prioritised actions to address specific risks and vulnerabilities. The outputs included formal documented plans (e.g. TNC project Marine Protected Areas including a 50,000 ha area on Manus Island, PNG), traditional plans and agreements (e.g. for controlling resource use through mechanisms such as *Tara Bandu* in Timor-Leste) and community action plans. They included activities that could be implemented by the communities and other actions that would require access to support and resources from the projects, government or other sources.

Generally, the plans were produced with connections to existing community development structures (e.g. through chiefs, village councils and groups such as water and farmer groups) and therefore had some level of integration with mainstream community planning. Some plans were linked to closely related local government planning (e.g. disaster preparedness and response plans, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) plans). However, there was also a degree of disconnection from these processes, and a risk that the new knowledge and skills could not influence community development plans or planning processes beyond the life of the projects. While the quality of the plans was not assessed in detail as part of this evaluation, it is clear that they were strongly influenced by, and built on, previous work in the communities (e.g. in water and food security).

The projects built the knowledge base, facilitated essential connections and networks, and built capacities in risk assessment and planning. However, in these early days, it is fair to say that they continue to struggle with the complexity of climate change, to understand the risks and vulnerabilities and how they are linked to other drivers of vulnerability, to identify realistic and effective measures to reduce these, and prioritise between different options. Greater depth of knowledge and experience, and a suite of options supported by a sound evidence base, are needed to inform their decisions.

Indicator 5: *Government and/or civil society policies, planning systems and mandates are modified to integrate new knowledge and solutions*

Despite the many challenges around capacity and engagement, the projects had some successes in influencing government planning processes and development plans, especially at local level. Local governments have begun to alter their processes to take account of community-identified actions to address climate change risks and vulnerabilities.

Local governments have formalised some project mechanisms for engaging with communities in CBA planning, for example through ongoing support for Technical Working Groups (Plan/SCI, Philippines) and incorporating Core Groups in local governance structures in PNG (CARE). Community groups are also represented in government planning processes (e.g. ordinances for enabling participation of children and youth in DRR planning and formal partnership agreements on community adaptation signed between the Vanuatu Christian Council and three provincial governments – AfP). There is evidence that local government officials value these representations:

> *'Children are more active in identifying hazards with drawings and mapping – they can identify the hazards. They are more informed than us.'* – Vice-Mayor of participating local government, Plan, Philippines (interview)

As a result, local plans have been revised to reflect the views and priorities of communities/community groups (e.g. uptake of CAP activities in Timor-Leste – Oxfam, and integration of climate change in Ward planning – TNC). Resources have been allocated to further integrate project activities (e.g. through the funding of an environment officer to work with communities and draft an environmental policy in Isabel Province, Solomon Islands – TNC).

However, significant barriers remain in integrating community planning with local/sub-national government planning. These include defining the roles and mandates of government and civil society and coordinating the activity of many donors and NGOs active in climate change adaptation in some local government areas:

> *'Responsibilities are not clear – we need to set up a plan together and identify what activity will be done by whom. We have set up consultations with communities – this will involve everyone including CSOs. The next meeting will be for each member to define activities.'* – Department of Environment official in a project area, Oxfam, Timor Leste (interview)

In the project areas, donor activity ranges from near saturation (e.g. Marshall Islands), leading to 'project fatigue' in communities and stretching local government capacity, to relatively low levels.

Indicator 6: *Resources are made available for implementation*

Accessing resources through government development planning for climate change action also remains challenging. At local government levels in particular, the planning processes tend to sit outside mainstream development planning, disconnected from local development budgets and other resource allocation mechanisms. Even in cases where climate change adaptation is integrated with other processes such as DRR planning, mainstream budgets are not easily accessed.

To overcome this, governments in some countries have allocated specific local budgets to fund DRR and climate change action at local levels (e.g. the People's Survival Fund in the Philippines). However, such funds tend to be relatively minor and lack transparency.

Despite the barriers, in some cases, projects were able to link communities to local government funding streams, enabling access to resources for implementation. Examples include:

- The Oxfam Philippines project secured funds from local governments to implement a range of adaptation measures, including early warning systems (automated weather stations), resulting in improved response and evacuations.

Adoption, implementation and scale out

Program-level outcome: Community-based strategies for adaptation strategies are adopted, adapted and implemented in other vulnerable communities.

Headline question: *How have communities benefited (e.g. enhanced adaptive management)?*

International investment in adaptation in developing and emerging economies increased dramatically following the United Nations Framework Commission on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Copenhagen Conference of the parties (COP) in 2010, which resulted in agreements by developed nations to provide finance to vulnerable countries. In our region, there was a particular focus on small island Pacific countries judged to be among the most vulnerable and having the least capacity to invest internally.

Numerous programs were rolled out in the Pacific Region to establish the science, monitor impacts, develop regional climate models, develop national policy and adaptation investment plans, support local governments and communities to develop sub-national and community plans, and test out adaptation strategies on the ground. National governments have made some progress in integrating adaptation in development planning processes and providing access to finances, often through linkages with DRR architecture. To date, while there have been many plans developed and technologies tested, activity on the ground has been limited, and benefits to communities largely unknown. The CBCCAG program provided an opportunity for testing a suite of options in participating communities and for building an evidence base for further action.

Indicator 7: *Adaptation strategies are tested and modified to reduce local climate risks and vulnerabilities*

Different activities were tested in a variety of settings

The projects made resources available for testing various adaptation strategies and activities in participating communities through community-based grants and direct funding support. Primarily, the adaptation strategies were about building community resilience through improved management of natural resources and productive ecosystems, taking account of climate trends and projections. However, there were also savings and loans activities, providing insurance against crop failures and natural disasters, and governance activities, strengthening capacities of communities to access resources and finance for implementation. Activities were identified through the participatory vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning exercises conducted in the communities.

Most projects focused on livelihoods, introducing ideas and technologies to improve productivity, increase diversity and reduce the sensitivity of production systems to changing weather conditions. Some packaged a suite of related activities (e.g. Oxfam's climate resilient agriculture, comprising soil improvement, organic pest control, water conservation and diversified food crops, and CARE's climate-smart agriculture); others focused on management of specific resources (e.g. water – AfP and WaterAid, and fisheries – TNC).

New technologies were introduced (e.g. the Sloping Agricultural Land Technology, SALT, applied by CARE in Timor-Leste) and tools were developed for monitoring impacts (e.g. the low-cost sea level rise monitoring tool developed for TNC project). New livelihood options were tested (e.g. bee keeping, pig farming and fish farming – Oxfam, Vanuatu)

and technology brought in for food preservation and for improving post-harvest management and storage of grains and other produce (e.g. Oxfam, Vanuatu).

There was a strong emphasis on technology and methods to improve efficiency of water use in locations where drought and water scarcity are increasing. These included organic composting, micro-water management, drip irrigation, house tanks and keyhole gardening. There was also a focus on house gardens, targeting women farmers, and increasing and diversifying the availability of vegetables.

Techniques were introduced to mitigate impacts of climate-related events, including bioengineering to stabilise slopes susceptible to landslides, and mangrove plantings to protect shorelines from coastal erosion and storm surges. Nurseries were established to sustain forestry and agroforestry activities.

By connecting new with traditional knowledge, sources of in-built resilience were discovered and fostered (e.g. traditional taro crops in the Pacific Region – Live & Learn). Targeted research was conducted to investigate some of the livelihood options, including agroforestry, crop diversification and composting (Oxfam, Philippines), and traditional natural resource management mechanisms (e.g. *Tara Bandu* – Oxfam, Timor-Leste).

Although timeframes were challenging (only allowing for one to two seasons), communities were given opportunities to monitor results and outcomes. Some of the techniques were more successful than others. In vulnerable drying climates and challenging landscapes, simple technologies proved effective. These included composting (producing organic fertiliser) to improve productivity; terracing/agroforestry on sloping land to control erosion; and permanent gardens and house vegetable gardens to increase food diversity and improve nutrition for longer periods in the year:

> *'I was becoming discouraged spending so much money on farming inputs such as fertiliser and pesticides. [At] the field school … I was totally amazed. I couldn't believe you could make fertiliser for free.'* – resident of Bagumbayan Sultan Kudaret, Mindanao, Oxfam, Philippines (case study)

Technology that could be supported and maintained locally, such as rainwater tanks, were more effective than options for which local knowledge was limited and/or required importation of equipment (e.g. drip irrigation). Some techniques were found to be less suited to particular locations (e.g. water harvesting dams in areas lacking clay for sealing).

There is some evidence across the program that taken out of the local context, discussions about climate change tended to centre it as an environmental issue, and addressing it became part of a broader 'green agenda'. While the links between environment and climate change are strong, both in terms of the inherent causes (greenhouse gas pollution) and the impacts (which can be exacerbated by environmental degradation), they are complex. This conflation can lead to misunderstanding and strategies that may have limited local benefit in the larger context of climate change (e.g. isolated small-scale tree planting or clearing of drains).

The opportunity to test a range of practices in a variety of locations and settings has been invaluable in building the evidence base for community-based resilience building and adaptation. It is important that across the program, these experiences are consolidated, analysed and documented to inform future programming.

Indicator 8: *Adaptation strategies are adopted and scaled out by other members of the community and other communities*

Communities adopted techniques resulting in measureable benefits

The projects reported high levels of adoption of the adaptation strategies and activities by the participating communities. Independent evaluations and post project surveys confirmed that rates of adoption range from around 50% to more than 90% (e.g. Oxfam, Timor-Leste). Benefits to communities were measureable:

- Food and water security improved in many participating communities (e.g. households experiencing hunger months dropped from 97% to 55% – Oxfam, Timor-Leste, and hunger months were reduced and 75% of farmer group members were better off in terms of food security – CARE, PNG):

  'The communities have access to food at times they might not normally, for example through the keyhole technology in drought-prone areas – they are able sometimes to sell those vegetables to get money. It's like insurance against external shocks.' – implementation partner, Oxfam, Timor-Leste (interview)

- Home vegetable gardens provided additional nutrition for families and income from sale of surplus produce, delivering benefits for women who manage the gardens:

  'Through the home gardens we are able to produce enough vegetables for our families to eat but also to sell at the local market.' – Aldeia Kamalelara Suco Dato, community member, Plan International, Philippines (case study)

- Greater varieties and quantities of food were available for longer in the year, including drought-tolerant varieties and traditional food sources (e.g. Live & Learn reintroduced 12 endemic species of taro to communities in the Pacific Region).

- Seed storage reduced loses post harvest, improving food security overall.

- Increased water efficiency and fuel-efficient stoves reduced local pressure on resources in some communities (e.g. very high adoption rates of low-cost, fuel-efficient stoves – CARE, PNG).

- Access to safe water improved in some communities (65% of respondents reported improved access – CARE, Timor-Leste and increased access was reported in Vanuatu and Tonga – AfP), with reduction in waterborne disease attributed to better sanitation (14 of 20 participating communities were declared 'open defecation free' – CARE, Timor-Leste).

- With 20 new marine protected areas declared, fisheries were recovered and made more productive, including a recorded increase in economically important species by five-fold (TNC).

- Assets were retained that may normally have been sold to buy food in poor seasons (e.g. reduction in the sale of livestock in Timor-Leste from 93% to 55%, Oxfam).

- Agricultural systems and productivity improved in challenging, erosion-prone areas through technologies including terracing, bioengineering, agroforestry and permanent gardens and reintroduction of traditional resource management regulation. For example, there was a shift from slash and burn dryland farming to permanent gardens in Timor-Leste, regulated by *Tara Bandu* (Oxfam, Timor-Leste):

  'Sacred places are protected and the community no longer light forest fires and are prohibited to cut trees. They must consult the Kablehan before digging holes and changing the earth, thus preventing deforestation and erosion.' – community member, suco Bobometo, Oecussi District, Oxfam, Timor-Leste (case study)

- Savings and loans schemes managed by communities provided insurance against hunger in poor seasons and enabled poor families to educate their children.

- Stronger community governance and management structures led to greater cohesion and systematic management of resources (e.g. communities were better able to cope with drought through more cohesive water management – CARE, PNG).

- Advocacy brought positive results from government (e.g. supply of seeds for diversifying agriculture and gardens – Oxfam, Timor-Leste):

> '*Advocacy partners have brought the issue (climate change) to the government and agriculture department which has extended and encouraged technical support to farmers.*' – Oxfam partner, Oecussi District, Timor-Leste (case study)

While these results are positive, it is difficult to get an overall sense of the quantum of benefits accruing to communities at this time, or to judge whether the options implemented will secure longer-term resilience to the impacts of climate change in addition to the clear short-term development benefits. But the fact that many of the technologies are designed to reduce vulnerabilities to climate and weather-related risks, including water scarcity and drought, and aim to improve the resilience of the resource base and ecosystems that support livelihoods, is encouraging. The projects need more time to test and monitor activities to build and document the evidence base across their range of contexts and settings, and to fully establish 'resilience building' as an understood and practical concept for vulnerable communities.

It is not clear how far adoption has occurred and benefits have extended beyond the participating communities. The outreach and knowledge-sharing mechanisms developed with communities by the projects (e.g. demonstrations, advocacy, peer-to-peer exchanges, Knowledge Hubs, Climate Change Centres and Field Schools) are likely to have had impact in other communities. Some (e.g. integrating climate change and child-led/child-centred approaches in school curriculum) could be transformative over time. But projects need longer timeframes to fully establish these mechanisms in order to monitor and record their impacts over time.

Indicator 9: *Cross-scale networks are expanded to mobilise knowledge and resources*

Some projects included objectives for widening existing networks for CBA in target areas from local to national, regional and international levels. Standout successes include VCAN, coordinated by Oxfam in Vanuatu, representing more than 20 CSOs and bringing together local and international experts to share information and engaging government and civil society. VCAN influenced national policy and enabled advocacy from communities nationally and internationally, including community representation in Vanuatu's international climate negotiations regionally (through SPREP) and globally (through UNFCCC processes). VCAN has secured funding for a further three years from another source (Oxfam America).

Some projects found it useful to link with and strengthen existing national networks, supporting them to integrate climate change, including DRR networks. For example, through the AfP project, the Tonga National Council of Churches is working with the National Emergency Office to develop a national community-based DRR Framework.

Other projects were more focused on working locally, building an evidence base that can be used in future advocacy work with national governments. In some cases, the connections between national and local planning were not yet clear or established. National processes are sometimes disconnected from mainstream national institutional architecture for development, and from line agencies and local governments. An example of this is the UNFCCC National Adaptation Programs for Action (NAPA), developed by national governments and supported by agencies including the United Nations Development Programme. Processes such as these have proven difficult to engage with meaningfully in terms of representing community views and establishing wider networks.

Other examples of outreach beyond the target locations and countries include 'Think Pieces' developed by Oxfam in the Philippines, which informed national and international discourse on what adaptation looks like on the ground and the financing options (e.g. at Bonn UNFCCC COP, 2015). At a program level, more could be done to analyse experiences across the projects and contribute to international thinking on the meaning of CBA.

Indicator 10: *Programs are coordinated across scales and jurisdictions to ensure complementary action at different scales*

CBA and resilience building has proven effective in reducing the risks of climate change and people's vulnerabilities to the impacts locally. However, because of the nature and scale of climate change impacts, resilience building requires coordinated action at larger scales (e.g. whole watersheds, coastlines and ecosystems) and across jurisdictions.

For example, there are many cases where productivity and diversity in agriculture can be lifted locally, but without a reliable water supply and road and transport network, productivity cannot be maintained and surplus produce is difficult to get to market. In many instances, communities are able to carry out small-scale flood protection and prevention activities, such as de-clogging drains, disposing of solid waste and establishing local levee systems. However, these can be undermined if upstream drainage systems such as dams and spillways fail in a large flooding event, and in cases where deforestation is acute. Similarly, communities implementing conservation farming on sloping land or developing water supply systems require the cooperation of upstream communities and of government across the jurisdiction.

There is some evidence of cross-scale networks emerging in the CBCCAG program (e.g. national adaptation networks, working groups, and conferences). However challenging, closer collaboration and coordination of effort from communities, civil society and government at all levels is required to fully support and complement the work of communities in reducing risks and building adaptive capacities.

These networks and collaborations take time to establish and require active political commitment from government. The CBCCAG program is well positioned to play an important role in providing an evidence base, demonstrating the development and economic benefits of resilience building at community level, and the potential transformative impact if these efforts are complemented in development planning across scales.

Relevance to partners and Australian Government priorities

Headline question: *Did they meet the needs of partners? Were they aligned with Australian Government priorities?*

Communities participating in the CBCCAG program regard climate change in general, and adaptation in particular, as a priority. This priority ranges from extreme for communities living in areas experiencing acute impacts (e.g. the Marshall Islands and Isabel and Choiseul Provinces in the Solomon Islands) to very high in communities experiencing a drying trend, less reliable seasons, large storms or floods (e.g. Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, Philippines and PNG). In many communities, climate change is understood in terms of food and water security, and vulnerability to extreme weather, rather than as a global climate trend. But there is little doubt about the importance of these issues or of the fact that climate change is emerging as a higher priority as awareness builds.

In some areas of the Pacific Region, adaptation is occurring at the extreme end, with communities needing to migrate from their homes to higher ground. In other low-lying areas, there is a window of opportunity to avert this outcome, and in many less vulnerable settings there are substantial opportunities to build resilience through management of resources and productivity over time. Relevance and the need for investment are clear.

The program played an important role in raising the profile of climate change in dialogue with government, particularly the issues faced by communities, and in facilitating the voice of communities at local and national levels. At activity level,

CBCCAG investments are likely to meet the needs of communities because of the participatory nature of planning and a high level of responsiveness to identified vulnerabilities (e.g. food and water security). The activities are also geared to deliver development benefits in the short term to meet immediate needs. Projects have been flexible in responding to community priorities, including in situations where a large influx of donor investment over a short period has led to 'project fatigue'. (This has been experienced in some highly vulnerable areas of the Pacific Region such as Choiseul in the Solomon Islands.)

The priority of climate change for local governments in the CBCCAG locations varies. In many areas it is low or emerging, because of limited capacities to engage and finance adaptation planning and local action. National partner governments also differ in the priority and commitment they give to climate change at community level, despite affording the issues high political priority internationally. However, the CBCCAG program is aligned closely to national policies generally and supportive of the directions and intent of partner government policies and plans (e.g. aligned with NAPA priorities of food and water security priorities):

> *'While … we are one of the smallest carbon dioxide emitters in the world and we make only a time contribution to climate change, our nation is particularly vulnerable … [Climate change] will also have profound consequences for agricultural production, food security, the tourism industry, the incidence of natural disasters and the well-being of our people.'* – H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste

The CBCCAG program was a high priority for the Australian Government under the aid program when it began (2011-12), as part of Australia's commitment and investment in global international adaptation through UNFCCC processes (fast-start financing). It remains relevant today in the new aid program framework.

Australia's aid policy, *Australian aid: Promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*, recognises climate change as part of the priority of 'building resilience'. The policy affirms that Australia will work with countries and the private sector to promote effective DRR, build resilience to climate- and seismic-related shocks and manage the impacts of climate change on economies.

Effectiveness of approaches

Headline question: *In terms of delivery approaches, what worked well and why; what didn't work so well and why?*

The CBCCAG projects employed a range of approaches to deliver CBA and resilience building. There were many unique features but also a great deal of commonality, partly in response to guidance and direction provided by program managers at the design phase. Collectively, the projects provided a solid body of evidence for community-based climate change adaption best practice and opportunities for consolidation in terms of what did and didn't work well and why.

Existing programs and relationships were developed

The lead partners in CBCCAG projects took opportunities to build on long-established relationships with local partners and previous phases of related work in the target areas. In some cases, they advanced to new locations, taking lessons and experiences to apply in other settings. In others, they built on previous planning exercises and vulnerability assessments to deepen the experience of partner communities and their engagement in resilience building.

At a practical level, this allowed key staff to be retained, lessons consolidated and methods refined. On the ground, it meant that there was continuity of effort and a greater depth of knowledge built, with positive outcomes for local partners and communities.

Climate change was introduced through a community development lens

Lead partners' previous experience in all cases indicated that it is more effective to talk about climate change in the context of people's lives and livelihoods than as a separate concept. The project designs strongly reflected this, focusing on issues such as water and food security, and WASH. They also introduced technology and methods for more efficient, diverse and productive natural resource and ecosystems management that could reduce the sensitivity of livelihoods to weather and climate. The solutions/options were to be based on planning that took account of projected trends, risks and vulnerabilities. The projects also fostered traditional practices and in-built sources of resilience:

> *'Adaptation solutions are likely to be far more sustainable if they are grounded in a community's own strengths and values.'* – Oxfam, Vanuatu (case study)

This approach was effective in getting people engaged and it was responsive to local needs and priorities (*'Everyone is interested in food.'* – program partner). In come cases, it proved more effective than integration through a DRR lens (*'DRR activities such as mangrove planting to secure shorelines were less relevant to people than improving food security.'* – program partner). However, a DRR lens can provide a more direct link to funding streams for implementation, for example through DRR funds for local governments.

The community development lens also allowed the science to be introduced in ways and forms that made sense to people, such as through seasonal forecasts for cropping and flood monitoring. This enabled communities to apply the new knowledge more effectively in activity to reduce risks, for example through drought-tolerant crops and water-efficient production systems, and ecosystem and natural resource management to sustain production.

Evidence from across the program suggests that the value-add of bringing in climate change through a community development lens, relative to business as usual, comes from a more informed community discussion about short- and long-term risks. It strengthens capacity to identify adaptive measures that increase resilience to climate change impacts and deliver short-term development benefits. It also contributes to sustainable models of rural development.

The consortia approach added value

The consortium approach built on established partnerships, adding value by providing access to a greater range of skills and resources, and providing geographic reach that would not otherwise have been possible. Although there were problems in coordinating a large number of partners and achieving equal partnerships, the benefits of the collaborations and sharing of common approaches were widely appreciated. The geographic reach enabled approaches to be tested in a range of settings, providing a rich evidence base from which a set of development models for community-based adaptation have begun to emerge:

> *'The consortium was good for us to learn soil conservation and how to terrace, to discuss CCA and resilience, and also in cross-learning. It had its disadvantages as well – we need very good channels of communication to make sure everything is well coordinated across the different partners – that we're all on the same page and using the same systems. [We] need access to information (e.g. technical) other*

than on leader website as in many areas there is no internet.' – implementation partner, Oxfam, Timor–Leste (interview)

The consortia also enabled access to a range of technical expertise needed for introducing the climate change lens from within the lead agencies, partner governments and by engaging specialist experts. This expertise proved critical to informing choices about adaptive strategies and activities that are proportionate to the local risks, effective in building resilience to climate change impacts and deliver short-term development benefits. Lead partners added value by taking a role in advocacy through their connections with national networks and governments and international agencies.

Once established, it is important that the consortium approach is maintained to build on achievements across the partnerships, increasingly share knowledge and methods and gradually improve the governance model. Areas for strengthening include cross-partnership MEL – including mentoring, hosting and peer-to-peer exchanges – and coordination of activities.

Local partner capacities were built but needs are ongoing

Building local partner capacities was a major strategy in most CBCCAG projects. This strategy sought to help ensure ongoing engagement in resilience building, secure the sustainability of interventions and investment, strengthen local civil society and support local governance and ownership.

It is clear that knowledge and skills were built in local partner agencies, including in awareness of climate change, participatory/inclusive planning methods, resilience building strategies and project and financial management. However, it is likely that the capacity-building needs of many local partners will be ongoing for some time to come. In the meantime, they are likely to continue to benefit at some level from the networks and connections established with CBCCAG partners.

More work is needed to engage government

All lead partners recognised the need to engage with government, especially locally, to connect local partners and communities with ongoing technical expertise and support for planning and implementation of resilience-building activities. Various mechanisms were employed to engage government in project activities, including through formal working groups and committees. Success has been varied, with many instances of local government officials being supportive but not able to offer resources. This was largely due to the low capacities in many project locations and the lack of access to technical skills and resources for community development and climate change.

For some project teams, opportunities arose to engage with mainstream local government community development processes. This began the task of bringing community concerns about the risks of climate change to government planners. However, the climate change adaptation planning mechanisms at local government level generally are disconnected from mainstream budgets, making it difficult for the project partners to link with funding streams for implementation. Even accessing dedicated funds (such as DRR funds) proved difficult.

Overall, there is much work to be done to build engagement between local civil society groups working in climate change adaptation and resilience building and local governments in order to access resources and ongoing support for communities. In the meantime, there is an important brokering role for civil society groups to play in facilitating the voices of communities and advocating for their needs and priorities.

Efficiency of approaches

Headline question: *Are CBA programs an efficient use of funding? Could the outcomes have been achieved with fewer resources? How?*

Project reports and evaluations indicate that, in general, the approaches employed by the lead partners were efficient in delivering the outcomes, acknowledging that CBA is by its nature costly given the remote, vulnerable communities involved, transport and logistics challenges and low capacities and resources. Budgets were for the most part expended according to annual plans. Implementing partners appreciated the flexibility of program managers who allowed no-cost extensions when unforseen events such as natural disasters significantly delayed project schedules, as well as the responsiveness of project teams in these situations.

The consortium approach provided an efficient governance structure. Experienced, high-capacity lead partners provided project management and administrative support and liaison with DFAT program managers, enabling local partners to get on with capacity building, planning and local activities. Some lead partners also built capacities of local partners to prepare project proposals and manage projects and finances to enable them to access other sources of funds. Building capacities in project management locally will also help over time to resolve minor issues of fraud. Investment in local capacities overall is judged by the project teams to be paying off despite the upfront costs.

The partnerships enabled efficient sharing of resources, skills and approaches, and the networks helped to avoid duplication of effort in-country. One downside is that it took time to get the partnerships up and running in the early stages of the projects. This was not such an issue in projects that built on existing, long-established and like-minded partnerships.

Inclusive development

Headline question: *What strategies were employed to ensure that marginalised members of the community, including women and girls, and people with disabilities were included in project activities and can benefit from the outcomes?*

The project partners drew on past experience in the project locations to enable an inclusive approach and equality of access to the benefits of project activities. All projects employed participatory planning models, providing the foundation for wide community engagement. These approaches offered benefits over working through traditional structures, such as working through chiefs to encourage participation.

Some projects facilitated separate discussions for different groups (women, men and youth), allowing the range of perspectives of women and men to emerge. For example, to reduce slash and burn, women favoured formal regulation while men opted for education and awareness and local jurisdiction (CARE, Timor-Leste). Others provided specific meeting facilities away from traditional meeting places, where women could feel more comfortable. As a result, the projects mostly reported strong participation of women in project activities (*'There are at least as many women and girls in high-profile project roles as men and boys.'* – program partner, Plan/SCI, Philippines).

In some projects, activities were designed around women's roles to ensure their inclusion as beneficiaries. For example, kitchen gardens benefited women who are the primary managers of family nutrition and manage the finances from sale of surplus vegetables. Household water supplies and sanitation facilities reduced the demands on women for water collection, and provided health benefits for families.

Women's economic leadership was a focus from the beginning of some projects. Their engagement as leaders in savings and loans groups, for example, gave them access to resources and finance to mange during crises but also for profit in good times:

> '*It has helped members through thick and thin, particularly during hardship such as disasters.'* – initiator of savings project in Barangay Hangi, Las Navas, Northern Samar – Plan/SCI, Philippines (case study)

Women were also represented in leadership roles on groups and committees. Examples include Community Disaster Committees (Oxfam, Vanuatu), Community Facilitators Network (TNC), Core Groups (CARE, PNG) and water management and farmer groups (CARE, Timor-Leste). Their participation and leadership were reported to engender respect within communities for their knowledge and skills, which was empowering. Some projects reported that decision-making power had shifted in communities as a result. For example, nine out of 81 farmer groups comprise all female membership and women lead 25 of the groups (CARE, Timor-Leste):

> *'You look at climate change decision-making and you see men play the dominant role. But in this program, participation of women is strong – they are getting involved in leadership, technical farming issues and microfinance. Women are controlling their own capital.'* – program partner, Oxfam, Timor-Leste (interview)

Plan and SCI's child-led/child-centred approaches engaged children and youth to an exceptional level. Children learned about climate change risks, conducted their own vulnerability assessments, became active skilled messengers and advocates, and were encouraged by local government to continue their participation (and leadership) in government planning for climate change and DRR. These unique approaches demonstrated the power and place of children and youth in climate change, bringing valued perspectives as the generation currently most at risk on the planet. Their role in interpreting complex technical concepts such as forecasts and models and difficult terms such as 'storm surge' to adults was an asset in times of natural disasters.

In addressing inclusive development overall, most projects reported that they have more work to do in engaging people with disabilities. While some projects targeted support through activities that facilitated disabled access (e.g. raised kitchen gardens), this is an area in need of further work.

Across the program, the experiences and lessons from strategies designed to foster and promote inclusive development provide a valuable evidence base that should be consolidated and analysed to inform future programs.

Safeguards

Environment

Headline question: *Was the impact of project activities on people's natural and cultural assets assessed? In the case of potential negative impacts, did the project managers comply with local and Australian environment protection law?*

Given the focus on resilience building through natural resource management and ecosystems management, the projects were not anticipating serious negative environmental impacts. In most cases it was assumed that the impacts on natural assets and ecosystems would be positive overall. However, some environment assessments were undertaken and risks were identified (e.g. CARE, Timor-Leste, and AfP, Vanuatu and Tonga).

Many of the project activities dealt with the resource base, intensifying agricultural and productivity, with possible risks to long-term fertility. Some activities involved extraction of water from natural sources that could have consequences for aquatic ecosystems. Others involved small-scale construction, with minor but important risks to local environments (e.g. sea walls).

While negative impacts were unlikely, experiences across the program highlight the need for streamlined, targeted environment assessment and management tools, drawing on the substantial global knowledge base, for community-based development work. These need to be tailored to the types of activities and sectors (e.g. community-based agriculture, WASH and small-scale construction), and offer guidance for local partners so that they can work with communities to confidently assess, monitor and manage impacts.

Social

Headline question: *Could the activities result in resettlement or social upheaval? If so, did the project managers comply with local and aid program standards to protect people and their assets?*

Social impacts were considered to be positive across the program.

Management and governance

Headline question: *Were the management and governance arrangements appropriate for the activity designs; did they deliver the outcomes effectively?*

Program management was flexible and responsive

DFAT's responsiveness and flexibility, especially in the early stages of the program, were highly valued and appreciated by project partners:

> '*It was great to have supportive and flexible responsive management rather than restrictive micro-managing.'* – project partner (interview)

However, staff turnover as the program progressed led to a loss of corporate knowledge.

Post engagement varied. Where it was active, it was valued. The role of DFAT as a broker between NGOs, government and the private sector in the partner countries could have been more deeply explored/engaged.

Partners found the design workshop in Hanoi at the beginning of the program useful as it made DFAT's requirements clear. Allowing a rolling design (design as you go) was also found to be effective and adaptive to changing conditions in the target locations. The guidance provided in relation to safeguards was appreciated as it was tailored well to the needs of the NGOs and easily incorporated across the program. Greater engagement of DFAT sector specialists, bringing their perspectives on issues such as gender, agriculture and climate change, could have enriched this information.

The workshop in Nepal was widely valued but more cross-learning opportunities would have been appreciated.

Partners noted that Australian Government withdrawal from the program puts at risk many of the important gains and potential impacts likely to be seen over a longer period of engagement.

Project management was delivered to a reasonably high standard

Despite some delays in start-up and initial staffing and resourcing issues, project management was delivered to a reasonably high standard, with good quality reporting and efficient use of budgets. As accredited agencies, the lead partners were afforded a

high level of autonomy in day-to-day management. As experienced project managers, they were able to navigate the issues without serious delay or difficulty.

All of the project managers were faced with challenging timeframes, some requiring no-cost extensions to implement activities as designed. In some cases, designs were highly ambitious in terms of scope and impact and had to be scaled back. This particularly related to expectations of engagement with government and the possible outcomes and impact that could be achieved in less than three years.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning needs to be strengthened

MEL emerged as a weakness overall in the program. Some projects conducted baseline and ex-post surveys, and most have commissioned external evaluations, both providing valuable qualitative, and in some cases, quantitative information. However, there is little evidence of systematic, regular monitoring of progress against objectives or the effectiveness of delivery approaches (beyond the quarterly reports to DFAT). Project team leaders concede that this needed to be stronger and better coordinated at consortium level.

Some project teams provided training for local partners in MEL and shared lessons through cross-country and peer-to-peer exchanges. But most consider that more opportunities could have been made available for cross-learning both within and between projects.

Efforts to assess impact were hampered by the short timeframes and the fact that many of the anticipated impacts will only become evident over time..

Sustainability

Headline question: *What evidence is there that the outcomes are sustainable beyond the life of the projects? What is enabling and hindering this?*

Many achievements of the CBCCAG projects appear to be sustainable, or have the potential to be sustainable for a period beyond the life of the CBCCAG program. However, there are also several risks associated with low capacities and difficulties in accessing resources for CBA (and community development generally) in many of the target project locations. Positive factors include:

- The program built a strong evidence base for CBA across a range of settings. It needs to be consolidated and could provide the basis for models that have wider application and contribute to the ongoing international discussion on adaptation and resilience building.
- Further funding has been secured for some significant project outcomes. For example, funding for VCAN (coordinated by Oxfam in Vanuatu) has been granted for a further three years, TNC Manus Way Forward has follow-on funding, Live & Learn Knowledge Hubs have been picked up in the DFAT/UNDP Resilience Program for three years, and TNC has received a guard for a marine protected area.
- Local project partners have successfully applied for grants for adaptation work (e.g. TNC groups in the Solomon Islands secured small grant funding from European Union Green Grants).
- There is a level of integration of community adaptation planning in local government plans and some local governments have committed funding to maintain project activities. For example, local governments have committed $73,000 to implement adaptation measures and allocated $18,000 for early warning systems (Oxfam, Philippines) and co-funding has been secured for an annual youth camp (Plan/SCI, Philippines).
- Local governments have developed agreements and institutional arrangements to continue project activities. These include ordinances for child/youth participation in

planning (Plan/SCI, Philippines), agreements between provincial governments and local partners (AfP, Vanuatu and Tonga) and the Department of Education's integration of climate change in all key areas of school curriculum (Plan/SCI, Philippines).

- Demand is strong and communities have adopted and to some extent scaled out some resilience-building activities (e.g. conservation farming, vegetable gardens, savings and loans, and marine protected areas).
- Many of the technologies are 'built to last' (e.g. water tanks and stoves have a long life) and can be maintained by existing community groups.
- Some of the groups formed to discuss and plan for climate change adaptation overlap with other community groups (e.g. farmer and water groups) and can integrate the climate change knowledge into these activities.
- New structures such as Climate Field Schools are in demand but their sustainability is contingent on funding.

CBCCAG partners became engaged with the expectation of a future phase. While this was never guaranteed, there is general agreement that further work is needed to secure sustainability of project approaches and lasting impact for beneficiaries. Strong foundations of knowledge, skills and capacities have been established but less than three years in they have not been in place enough to see the outcomes and impacts of these achievements. The least useful action at a program level would be to stop now while there is so much opportunity to consolidate, continue and build on successes and established partnerships, goodwill and networks.

Lessons for future programs

During interviews and focus group discussions, the evaluation team took the opportunity to ask program partners to reflect on what was learned during their experiences with CBCCAG, and what they would do differently next time. Their responses, augmented by a review of project reports, evaluations and case studies, represent a strong endorsement of the main approaches as well as valuable lessons for future programming:

Extend timeframes

The projects progressively built on the work, experiences and networks of partners in the target locations. They didn't start from scratch. In the timeframe available for implementation (less than three years), they were able to engage communities and build knowledge and skills about climate change risks and vulnerabilities. They facilitated participatory planning and community-led identification of options to build resilience and deliver short-term development benefits. They tested priority options and lay important institutional foundations for continued community engagement in adaptation planning and action. They also built advocacy skills and connections between communities and government.

However, the timeframe was not sufficient to fully test, monitor and document the options, allow successful activities to be widely adopted or achieve change and impact at scale. In livelihoods work, the timeframe only allowed for two seasons and coherent results were only emerging as the projects came to a close.

Longer timeframes are needed in CBA to establish firm relationships with government and other partners, to influence local development planning, and to access funding streams for implementation:

> *'There are a lot of challenges happening, different parties and different views. We are only 1.5 years into the project – it's not long enough to bring about lasting change.'* – program partner, Oxfam, Timor-Leste

Deepen knowledge and experiences

Through collaborations with a range of partners, projects were able to achieve an extensive geographic reach and test approaches in several contexts. For example, the Oxfam Philippines project operated in 18 municipalities across eight provinces of Mindanao, where 12,000 households participated in risk assessments and training and 8,000 people were involved in livelihoods work. The Oxfam Timor-Leste project targeted 132 communities in four districts. This strategy enabled the projects to build a substantial evidence base within the target localities and for possible wider application, but also presented challenges of achieving depth in each location.

For future work, the priority should be to build on these foundations of knowledge, awareness and skills, and emerging partnerships and networks with government. This will deepen people's knowledge and experiences, continue to develop capacities of partners and communities, and enable results, outcomes and impacts to be monitored and documented over time.

Consolidate the evidence base

The projects have individually and collectively produced a large volume of material such as case studies, evaluation reports, project reports, think pieces, videos, training materials and manuals. These are currently housed in different locations. Some have begun to consolidate their approaches and experiences into 'models' for wider use.

All of this material is useful, but it must be consolidated, analysed and made available to really achieve the value-add offered by the program-level investment. This value lies in informing future programs and to contributing to the global discussion and methodological development in CBA. With many projects operating around the world, and with a particular focus of global activity in the Pacific Region, it is important that the knowledge is shared and duplication and overlap are avoided.

Continue the community development lens

Projects provided access to scientific knowledge and technical expertise relevant to climate change via a range of connections (through the lead partners, local government extension workers, partner country technical agencies and external experts). The community development lens adopted by the project teams enabled the knowledge and skills to be introduced in the context of development issues that are important to communities (e.g. food and water security, health and income).

This approach was appropriate and successful. The natural resource management, resource use efficiency and ecosystems services technologies/mechanisms introduced by the projects provided options that were complementary to achieving resilience in existing livelihood systems.

Communities took ownership and consolidated new knowledge with their extensive local knowhow to discuss their vulnerabilities and identify priority options for reducing the risks and building resilience in their lives and livelihoods. They tested options and adopted new technologies to improve productivity, use resources more efficiently and diversify and insure their livelihoods in a changing climate.

Deepen technical knowledge and skills

Technical expertise was often essential in this process to ensure that communities had good information on which to base their decisions, especially in relation to new technologies. Without adequate expertise, activities invested in by communities may not be proportionate to the risks, deliver the best benefits in the short term or impact longer-term resilience. This risk will reduce as communities learn more about climate change and gain knowledge from testing a range of options.

Reliance on local technical expertise is often not enough to meet the needs of communities for good information and advice. Local extension workers should be engaged so that they can benefit from knowledge and capacity building, but additional specific expertise is commonly needed. Consortia such as those in the CBCCAG program are well placed to access specialist expertise from within their organisations and through their networks.

Knowledge alone will not create change. Care is needed in introducing it. Knowledge tends to be sought after, can confer social status, and can impact on the dynamics of communities. In some cases, this can be positive, for example in engendering respect and bringing women to leadership roles, and in creating local champions. However, it is not until a critical level of knowledge and awareness is achieved that change will occur: the knowledge becomes imbedded, individuals invest and new approaches are adopted. This process takes time – often many years.

Find/build knowledge brokers

Getting access to climate change information for communities is difficult. Information is commonly housed with different agencies and information management systems are disjointed between national and local levels. Language and literacy barriers, and poor communication technology, limit its accessibility. Where climate change information is available, it is often in scientific forms and highly technical. Technical agencies lack capacities to tailor it to audiences, particularly at local levels.

Finding effective ways to translate complex technical information into forms that make sense in the local context is essential in the ongoing development of community awareness and adaptation skills. The projects played an important role in brokering knowledge across the technical divide, making it available in forms that could be applied in local planning.

The role that informed children and youth can play as climate change messengers in their communities was demonstrated, and is likely to become increasingly effective as climate change is gradually integrated in school curricula and across the formal education system. In the meantime, the role of knowledge broker needs to be filled. Local civil society groups are well placed for this role but need a greater depth of knowledge and skills to fully function as brokers to and from communities.

Foster in-built resilience

Communities have extensive, deep knowledge about their resources and how best to manage them to sustain their livelihoods. In the target locations, communities have witnessed recent weather-related changes and have taken steps to adjust. They are best placed to identify livelihood options and ways to adapt and can do this when provided with sufficient knowledge about the risks and technical advice about options. The approaches employed by the projects enabled communities to take on board new knowledge in the context of their local knowledge and traditional knowhow.

In many cases, the livelihoods of communities are already diverse and contain in-built resilience to unreliable rainfall and extremes in weather, having evolved through the collective wisdom of famers dealing with droughts and floods, poor seasons or late wet seasons for many centuries. Climate change brings greater intensity and less reliability to these events that farmers need to factor in to their planning. Communities need timely access to good information (short-term forecasts etc.) and an understanding of likely future trends so that they can adjust. This in-built resilience is fundamental to adaptation. Within it, there are substantial opportunities for improving efficiencies of resource use (e.g. water) and productivity and diversity of production systems to boost livelihoods and resilience.

Over time (sooner rather than later in some locations), the impacts of climate change will challenge livelihoods that are resilient today. Extreme floods and droughts already do, for at least a period of recovery. Adaptation in some contexts means or will mean migration to less vulnerable areas. Community-based approaches need to be adaptive to these different contexts, acknowledging that communities will need external investment and support to avoid the worst impacts and manage extreme risks.

Work within local governance structures

Communities tend to be organised around the issues that are of concern to them (e.g. farmer groups, water groups and church groups). Working within these structures is an effective way of engaging, although it is often necessary to also create new spaces for engaging groups such as women, children/youth and people with disabilities in forums where they feel more comfortable and able to contribute. These forums must be connected to mainstream community decision-making and development mechanisms to be effective.

Community organisations are commonly linked into local government development planning systems (e.g. through dedicated community development programs) and can access funds. While many local governments prioritise income-generating activities such as small-scale construction, roads and water supply through these links, they have an additional opportunity to integrate community priorities to build resilience to climate change. Moreover, they would benefit overall from taking account of weather and climate risks in the activities they fund.

Engage inclusively

Within community governance structures, there are opportunities to engage inclusively. This is important because different groups in the community have different vulnerabilities and skills, which all need to be represented and taken into account in community resilience building. Otherwise some major risks and opportunities will be missed.

Working with traditional mandates can be effective (e.g. engaging village chiefs and convincing them to encourage participation) but may not generate the demand or space for ongoing participation. Targeting activities to the specific roles of groups that find it difficult to engage through traditional decision-making platforms seems to be effective. For example, working with women to develop and diversify kitchen gardens, strengthening their marketing and financial skills to generate and manage income from surplus produce, directly benefits women. It also benefits the wider community through women's roles in family nutrition and health, and in providing funds for children's education, arguably one of the most effective adaptation options currently available to many communities.

Applying similar approaches should be tested for engaging people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. All have roles in the community that will be important in developing resilience, and require specific support to reduce their vulnerabilities and risks.

Be realistic about partnerships with government

Partnerships with government took longer than expected to establish and yield results. Getting engagement in project activities can be achieved through mechanisms such as working groups and committees, but maintaining connections with communities and ensuring that these partnerships offer benefits both ways is challenging. In many target locations, local government is the most appropriate level to partner with, having the mandates for community development. However, it commonly lacks skills and resources to support CBA. It is more concerned with short-term local development issues, often

dictated by political administrations. Longer-term issues tend to be given lower priority. Climate change is rarely integrated in local development planning and accessing budgets for implementation is difficult.

Wherever possible, it is important to work with existing community development planning systems, facilitating adaptation planning as part of these processes and not as separate exercises. In some locations, this approach has enabled access to mainstream community development funding programs for implementation of resilience-building activities. Working outside these systems can achieve success if local government champions emerge and support project activities, but this is unlikely to be sustainable.

Engage at complementary scales

Community development work is by its nature small scale and local. Engagement with government provides mechanisms for scaling out successful approaches to other communities and areas. The private sector also offers potential for supporting scaling out.

In engaging with government and the private sector, as well as looking for wider adoption, it is important to seek out opportunities to build climate change into planning and development systems at different scales. Otherwise, the work at community level can be undermined by failures to address larger systemic issues (such as flood control infrastructure) and development that works against community resilience.

Complementary development at community, local and landscape scales can reinforce resilience building in communities, for example by providing communities with infrastructure (e.g. roads, flood control and water supply) that they need to secure their livelihoods, and ongoing access to weather and climate information and skills. With the private sector, there are opportunities to collaborate on supply chain development to support community resilience (e.g. in supply of organic pesticides and fertiliser, seeds for drought-tolerant plants, and equipment for conservation farming) and opening up markets for diversified cropping systems and new enterprises.

While many target locations are a long distance from these outcomes, advocacy, demonstrations and facilitating representation from communities are all helpful towards achieving them.

Continue the consortium model

Partners engaged through consortia found the model to be efficient (with lead agencies providing administrative functions, leaving local partners to get on with implementation) and effective (enabling sharing of tools and skills, and capacity building for local partners). Constructive upfront discussions between partners at design stage would help to coordinate and make the best of their different roles and skill sets.

Build local capacities

The consortium model will be even more efficient and effective as more and more responsibility can be handed to local partners. Building their capacity will help to ensure that the work continues and is responsive and relevant to local needs. It pays off in the long run even if costly to start with.

Supporting local partners through good coordination, sharing of new methods and technologies and providing access to wider networks is an effective ongoing role for international NGOs to play.

Coordinate monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

Monitoring and reporting of results for each project was conducted to meet reporting requirements. End-of-project evaluations were also carried out, which assessed

progress against outcomes and objectives. Some projects built MEL capacities in local partners.

However, at both consortia and program levels, MEL needs to be coordinated to ensure consistency and coherence of reporting across the projects and to provide data that can be aggregated under program-level outcomes. A program MEL framework developed under a clearly articulated theory of change would be useful in guiding the development of project MEL systems. At project level, it is important that all implementation partners are across the system and have access to specialist MEL expertise if needed. Baselines are essential, in addition to regular systematic monitoring. A balance of stories, case studies and anecdotal evidence with data on productivity and adoption rates, for example, is needed to inform evidence-based reporting.

Someone in the consortium/partnership should have responsibility for coordinating monitoring, collating results and providing reports to managers. These should inform project and program-level reporting of progress against objectives and, where feasible, document development impacts and benefits to people. Dedicated resources are needed for this role.

Project partners appreciated opportunities provided for reflection and learning. These included peer-to-peer and cross-country exchanges within projects, and the Nepal workshop, bringing partners together. There is widespread agreement that, given the remarkable synergies and possibilities for value-adding between projects, there should be more of these opportunities in future programs, both within projects and across the program. They should be properly resourced, facilitated and structured as learning activities to share experiences, lessons and approaches.

Annex 1 Detailed evaluation plan

Evaluation plan for an independent evaluation of the Community Based Climate Change Action Grants Program

For the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

May 2015

Contents

Purpose

An independent evaluation of the Community Based Climate Change Action Grants (CBCCAG) program was commissioned by DFAT in May 2015 to assess whether the component projects have performed well and have resulted in the intended objectives of the Program and the outcomes of the individual projects.

The evaluation will also draw out key lessons to inform DFAT thinking regarding the scope and priorities of any future funding to the sector beyond the life of the current program.

Background

The CBCCAG (AU$16.9 million over three years from 2011-12 to 2015-16) co-invested with a range of non-government organizations (NGOs), including Oxfam, CARE Australia, Act for Peace, Live and Learn, The Nature Conservancy and Plan International, to implement projects to:

3. Increase the resilience of communities in developing countries to the unavoidable impacts of climate change; and
4. Reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions while also contributing to development priorities in target communities.

The program forms part of Australia's international 'fast-start' commitment of $599 million (2010-2013), building on the outcomes and achievements of previous support for community-based adaptation activities.

The program builds on Australia's previous support for community-level adaptation activities in developing countries and complements Australia's support for small-scale community-based work through the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Program.

Scope

The evaluation will encompass a suite of nine projects funded under CBCCAG:

- *Building Resilient and Adaptive Communities and Institutions in Mindanao* (Oxfam - Philippines)
- *Assisting Communities to Secure their Environment to Climate Change* (CARE - East Timor)
- *Addressing Food Security through Improved Agricultural Practice in Green islands* (CARE - Papua New Guinea)
- *Non Government Organisation Climate Change Adaptation Program* (Oxfam - Vanuatu)
- *Pacific Island Communities Climate Risk Reduction* (Act for Peace - Pacific Region)
- *Child-centred Climate Change Adaptation* (Plan International - Philippines)
- *Building resilience of communities and their ecosystems to the impacts of climate change* (The Nature Conservancy - Pacific Region)
- *Protection of Food Security through Adaptation to Climate Change* (Live and Learn - Pacific Region)
- *Improving land and water management to reduce impacts of climate change on communities* (Oxfam - East Timor)

The terms of reference for the evaluation sets out four key evaluation questions relating to effectiveness (the extent to which outcomes have been achieved), relevance to the project context and needs, impact and management:

5. **To what extent have the CBCCAGs combined to contribute to building the resilience of communities to the impacts of climate change and to reducing or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions while also contributing to development priorities in the target communities?** Did the projects achieve their individual end of project outcomes?
6. **Did the CBCCAGs take the right approach?** Did they meet the needs of our counterparts? Were they aligned with Australian Government priorities? Are community based adaptation programs an efficient use of funding?
7. **What were the key instances of the CBCCAGs' successes and sustainable change and what enabled this to happen?** Examples of their key achievements and what enabled them to happen. Examples of evidence of changes influenced by the programs being embedded into policy and practice.
8. **How well were the CBCCAGs managed on a project by project basis and at the program level? What were the key lessons learned?** Was expenditure to budget? Was there sufficient flexibility in how systems and process were applied? Was risk monitored and managed effectively? Were relationships managed well? What key lessons were learned about the delivery approaches?

These questions will form the basis of program level reporting. They will also guide development of a series of more specific project level questions, which will provide data that can be aggregated to program level.

Audience

The primary audience for the evaluation is staff of the DFAT Climate Change Branch, the program managers, who have commissioned the evaluation as part of their quality assurance process, and relevant DFAT Posts to inform future programming.

The NGOs managing the projects are an equally important audience, having an interest in the outcomes and lessons as they apply to the design and implementation of comparable future work.

Communities and other implementing partners also have a stake in the evaluation and it's outcomes, and will be consulted where possible.

Team

The evaluation will be conducted by a specialist team from Griffin nrm Pty Ltd, comprising:

- Dr Kate Duggan (climate change specialist)
- Bruce Bailey (monitoring and evaluation specialist)

The team will adopt a collaborative approach, working with program and project managers to develop and conduct a constructive evaluation process so that the outcomes are as useful as possible for these audiences.

Methods

Evaluation standards

The methods for the evaluation are designed to meet current DFAT standards[2], for:

- Enabling a collaborative approach;
- Meeting the needs of the primary audience according to the terms of reference;
- Encompassing a range of data collection methods and triangulation across different methods to corroborate findings;
- Addressing privacy and ethical issues;
- Providing professional analysis and assessments; and
- Offering independent advice and recommendations.

Methods of inquiry

The evaluation will employ various methods of inquiry to examine:

- **Progress** against project objectives and contribution to program outcomes
- The **relevance** of the investment locally and in the broader context
- The **effectiveness** of the development processes employed - skills, knowledge and capacity building; partnerships and collaborations
- The **efficiency** of the investment and management arrangements
- The **sustainability** of outcomes
- **Lessons** – what worked, what didn't and why

The evaluation will also examine performance and lessons in relation to:

- **inclusive development -** were marginalised and vulnerable members of the community included, including women and girls, and people with disabilities?; were appropriate guidelines and standards for inclusive development met?; and
- **Safeguards** - were people's natural and cultural assets and values protected?; were relevant local and Australian safeguard standards met?

The methods of inquiry will include:

- A review of program and project documents including program guidance to the NGOs, approved project designs and recent progress reports and evaluations (including the review of the related Vietnam
- An interview with the primary audience; the program managers
- Interviews with project managers and stakeholders for each project
- Site visits to two selected projects and in-depth interviews with implementation teams, partners and beneficiaries
- A focus group discussion of preliminary findings

This range of methods will provide a program level assessment of progress, enabling and constraining factors, challenges, issues and lessons, built up collaboratively from evidence collated across the projects.

[2] Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2014, *Detailed Description of Standards for Evaluation Plans*

Community adaptation/mitigation pathways

The evaluation will adopt a 'pathways to community adaptation/mitigation' approach, acknowledging that the ultimate goal of the program is a long-term undertaking, and that the projects are expected to contribute to its attainment in measureable but incremental ways. This approach views the development process in three phases:

1. **Skills, tools and capacity building** – facilitated by the implementation team and expected to take up the bulk of available time and resources, this phase engages and empowers communities with the attributes, skills and tools they need to begin to understand and manage the risks that climate change poses to their lives and livelihoods locally, and/or mitigate their emissions in ways that also benefit them directly in the short and long-term. This phase enables communities to identify solutions and strategies, and test them out. It positions communities to take the next steps towards engaging with networks and politically, to influence policy, planning and resourcing for local implementation of strategic action.
2. **Policy, planning and enabling** – facilitated by the implementation team through engagement of communities with government and civil society services and networks, to influence adaptation/mitigation policy and planning systems in community practice and at a more strategic level. There may be evidence of project activities and interventions influencing change in the way development planning is conducted at community and larger scales, for example in the information and strategies available to communities and in the networks and resources supporting community planning.
3. **Adoption, implementation and scale out –** of project outcomes may not yet be evident at scale but there may be evidence of this emerging, for example if networks are fostering and advocating their wider application, and mobilising resources for testing/implementation by other communities or agencies.

These phases map out a plausible pathway to impact, for communities engaged in building adaptive capacities, reducing the risks of climate change and mitigating emissions. It enables the evaluators to identify causal linkages between activities of the implementing team, the changes in behaviour of boundary partners or change agents, and the potential benefits for participating communities.

The approach enables the evaluators to map out the expected pathway to impact and make informed judgements about where the project has got to and the likely future impacts on beneficiaries. It can also establish the critical activities and changes that occurred along the pathway, what worked well and why and what fell below expectations. This analysis will highlight valuable lessons for future programming.

The linkages between the three phases are critical. The evaluation will look at the role of the projects in creating these, and for evidence of networks, partnerships, and institutional mechanisms (policy and mandates) that could be expected to mobilise resources for wider application and impact of program outcomes in future.

Limitations

The evaluation methodology is designed to provide the best possible information in the available timeframe and resources. However, there are limitations that could impact on the findings:

- **Time and resources:** the rigour of the data gathering and analysis processes will be constrained by the time available.

- **Judgements:** the evaluation will be limited to rapid qualitative methods of inquiry, and rely on the professional judgement of the evaluators to interpret stakeholder perspectives.
- **Access:** the program covers a vast geographic area and the evaluation team can only expect to gather indicative perspectives from a limited range of stakeholders/locations.
- **Measurement:** the evaluators will primarily rely on evidence collected from project managers and stakeholders to assess compound indicators such as 'capacity', 'knowledge and awareness', and 'empowerment'.
- **Attribution:** the projects are implemented in a complex context in which multiple factors contribute to and/or detract from the anticipated changes, making definitive attribution of changes to particular interventions challenging.

The 'enhancing community pathways to adaptation/mitigation' approach adopted in the evaluation is expected to lessen many of these limitations by examining evidence and causal linkages between project activities/investment and likely outcomes in the immediate and longer-term.

Reporting

The evaluation will produce the following reports, according the DFAT evaluation reporting standards[3]:

- An agreed evaluation plan
- An Aide Memoire for the field missions
- A draft evaluation report
- A final report reflecting feedback and discussions

Evaluation framework and questions

The evaluation framework below summarises the headline evaluation questions and indicators of success for each development phase in **enhancing community pathways to climate change adaptation and mitigation**. This framework will guide data collection for all of the inquiry methods.

Project level evaluation questions (below) will guide a structured discussion during interviews with project teams. These will be developed iteratively with the program managers and may be added to or adjusted to accommodate specific questions raised in the upfront review of program and project documents.

A Focus Group Discussion may be held to provide feedback on findings and discuss lessons for future programming.

[3] Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2014, *Detailed Description of Standards for Evaluation Reports*

Evaluation framework

	Development phase:		
	Skills, tools and capacity building	**Policy and program enabling**	**Adoption, implementation and scale out**
Evaluation questions:	Who are the **implementation team**?	Who are the **change agents**?	Who are the **beneficiaries**?
What evidence is there that the interventions produced the planned outputs and outcomes? What was unexpected?	What did the implementation team produce (e.g. goods and services)?	What are people doing differently as a result (e.g. planning and allocating resources)?	How have communities benefited (e.g. enhanced adaptive management)?
How did the project improve awareness/understanding of the risks and drivers of vulnerability to climate change? What factors are enabling or hindering this development?	*The team has leadership, trust, and a shared vision and plan for an alternative pathway; knowledge and skills are built and shared in participating communities*	*Local action plans and/or agreements are produced to reduce local climate risks and vulnerabilities and/or emissions*	*Adaptation/mitigation strategies are tested and modified to reduce local climate risks and vulnerabilities and/or emissions*
How did the project empower/strengthen community capacities to take the lead, anticipate and adapt to, and/or mitigate, the impacts of climate change? What factors are enabling or hindering this development? How were marginalised members of the community included?	*Communities are empowered to take ownership of the problem, to develop their own solutions and advocate for change*	*Government and/or civil society policies, planning systems and mandates are modified to integrate new knowledge and solutions*	*Adaptation/mitigation strategies are adopted and scaled out by other members of the community and other communities*
How did the project facilitate partnerships to mobilise knowledge and resources and engage politically?	*Communities are engaged with government and civil society to mobilise knowledge and resources*	*Cross-scale networks are expanded to mobilise knowledge and resources*	*Programs are coordinated across jurisdictions to ensure complimentary action at different scales*
		Resources are made available for implementation	
Outcomes:	**Community self-organisation and capacity to anticipate and adapt to change and/or mitigate emissions locally are enhanced**	**Community, government and civil society development planning systems are modified to support adaptation/mitigation planning and strategies**	**Community based strategies for adaptation/mitigation are adopted, adapted and implemented in other vulnerable communities**

Interview questions

Progress towards outcomes and objectives:

1. Can you summarise your project's achievements? What were the standout successes? Were these in line with expectations? What was unexpected and why?
2. In percentage terms, how would you rate the achievement of the project objectives (you can either do this for each objective or overall)?
    a. 100%
    b. 75-100%
    c. 50-75%
    d. 25-50%
    e. 0-25%
3. What are people doing differently as a result of these achievements? How are people benefiting?
4. What evidence do you have that your project has built community resilience and/or reduced emissions while benefiting the community? Is there evidence of leadership emerging, greater organisation and preparedness, mandates and responsibilities, capacity to anticipate and plan for impacts and/or mitigate emissions to gain benefits?
5. Is there evidence of wider networks and partnerships emerging between communities and government/civil society, influencing planning and mobilising resources on a more strategic scale?

Relevance:

6. Is climate change adaptation/mitigation a priority for your target communities? How do you know this?
7. Are they priorities for the partner government? Is this changing? In what direction?
8. How/why would you rate the local demand for this type of work: High Medium Low

Efficiency:

9. How much of the budget did you spend?
10. Could the outcomes have been achieved with fewer resources/how?
11. Can you describe the major challenges and issues in project management? How did you manage them? Was this effective?

Effectiveness:

12. In terms of your delivery approaches – what worked well and why; what didn't work so well and why?
13. What capacity building approaches did you employ? What evidence do you have that communities have been empowered, are more aware, and have new knowledge and skills to reduce climate risks and/or mitigate emissions?

14. What did the project partnerships do to connect communities with knowledge and resources they need for adaptation/mitigation? Are these partnerships working? What is enabling and hindering them?

Sustainability:

15. What evidence do you have that the project outcomes are sustainable beyond the life of the project? What is enabling and hindering this?

Inclusive development:

16. What strategies did you employ to ensure that marginalised members of the community, women and girls, and people with disabilities were included in project activities and can benefit from the outcomes? What else could be done to ensure inclusive development?

Safeguards:

17. Was the impact of project activities on people's natural and cultural assets assessed? In the case of potential negative impacts, did the project managers comply with local and Australian environment protection law?
18. Could the activities result in resettlement or social upheaval? If so, did the project managers comply with local and aid program standards to protect people and their assets?

Lessons:

19. What would you do differently next time knowing what you know today?

What next:

20. What else is needed to achieve the project objectives and contribute to the program outcomes?

Story time:

Can you briefly tell us about one of the rewarding/inspiring/insightful experiences you have had working on this project? What is significant about this experience? Do you agree to this story being cited in our evaluation report? Yes No

Annex 2 Partners and people interviewed

In Australia interviews

Agency	*Contact*
DFAT	Discussion with DFAT officers in Canberra
Act for Peace	Tracey Robinson Geoff Robinson Disaster Risk Resilience Manager
CARE Timor Leste	Takara Morgan
CARE PNG	Rebecca McLaren Andrea Dekrout
Oxfam Vanuatu	Shirley Laban
Oxfam Timor Leste	Sharon Alder Annette Salkeld
Plan International	Pia Treichel
Oxfam Australia	Peter Ikin
Live & Learn	Christian Nielsen

Participants and interviewees – Plan International Save the Children Philippines:

Barangay Garawon Water User's Association (BAGAWASA)
Officers and Members
Brgy. Garawon, Hernani, Eastern Samar

Officers/Designation	Names
President:	Noli Bantang
Vice-President:	Oscar Calvadores
Secretary:	Purita Catayong
Treasurer:	Florentina Cuna
Auditor:	Nida Calvadores
PIO:	Rudy Albesa
Business Manager:	Ramil Cabillo
Sgt. At Arms	Richard Tolen

Children's Coalition for Adaptation and Resilience (CARE)
Supreme Student Government (SSG) of PECMNHS
Teatro HUTABU and the Children Broadcasters

Officers/Designation	Names	Group or Affiliation
President:	Maria Clair Calvadores	CARE
Vice-President:	Mario Calites Jr.	CARE
Secretary:	Christaniel Langer	CARE
Treasurer:	Krisel Camarillo	CARE
Auditor:	Ralph Santos	CARE
PIO:	John Paul Consultado	CARE
Business Manager:	Dodgie Bagarino	CARE
Sgt. At Arms	John Patrick Orocay	CARE
CARE Adviser:	Mrs. Lurlyn Bonga, Teacher	

Department of Education (DepEd)	
Names	Position
Mr. Alejandrito L. Yman	Chief, Curriculum and Learning Dev't Division
Ms. Rosemarie Guino	Education Program Supervisor
Ms Annie Villaruz	Education Program Supervisor
Ms Gertrudes Mabutin	Education Program Supervisor
Ms Sarah S. Cabaluna	Education Program Supervisor
Mr Joy B. Bihag	Education Program Supervisor
Ms Victoria Briones	Education Program Supervisor

Supreme Student Government of PECMNHS	
President:	Pearl Jade Oprin
Vice-President:	Yzarrah Monique Apelado

Teatro HUTABO Members	
	Hazel Anne Obedientes
	Von Raphael Salas
	Bethena Diangzon
	Israel Ofanda

Mr. Ramon Daje	Education Program Supervisor

Plan Staff:	
Names	**Position**
Rachelle Nuestro	Consortium Manager
Joseph L. McDonough	Project Manager (Visayas Area)
William Azucena	Project Manager (Aurora Area)
Joan Abes	Consortium M&E Officer
Arnold D. Peca	Community Development Facilitator
Rey O. Caño	Community Development Facilitator

	Ronnel Gunda
	Mary Joy Magno
Theater Adviser:	Mrs. Annie A. Apelado, Teacher

Children Broadcasters of PECMNHS
Gellie Rose Candido
Wena Mae Adrales
Precious Joy Cinco
Edmar Escala
Jeric Tisado

Participants and interviewees – Oxfam Timor Leste

Hosted by Oxfam in Timor-Leste and supported by:
Sharon Alder, Program Director
Glenda Lasslett, Country Director
Armindo dos Reis, Oecusse Program Team Manager
Joao Corbafo, CCA program officer

Maunaben Aldeia, Na'u bairo **Cunha Suco, sub-district Pantemakassar**	Discussion with Group members from four local CCA groups (Tasek Sule, Nekaf Mese, Moris Foun, Fitun Foin Sae) and Y -ACTS Director Jose Eta	Supported by Y-ACTS Director Jose Eta (Oxfam Partner)
Nefobai Aldeia, Katu'i Bairo	Discussion with group members from Eno Naek Lifau	CBO supported by Caritas Australia
Caritas Australia office - Pantemakassar	Discussion with local NGO partners for Caritas and Oxfam Cornelio Ase, Program Coordinator Oecusse,Caritas Australia Domingos Ati (AHCAE), Jose Eta (Y–ACTS), Juvinal Faria(CECEO)	Assoçiaçâo Haburas Capasidade Atoni Enclave (AHCAE), Youth In Action Towards Sustainability (Y-ACTS) (Oxfam Partners) Centro Educacao Civica Enclave Oe-Cusse (CECEO), TOPOHONIS, FUNIBER (Caritas Partners)
Agriculture and Rural Development Department, Oecusse Regional Authority	Sr. Régio Servantes Romeia da Cruz Salu, Regional Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development	Regional Secretariat for Agriculture and Rural Development (Authority of the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno)