

# Partnership for Recovery and Resilience

## Synopsis from the Accountability and Learning Event

The Partnership for Recovery and Resilience organized an Accountability and Learning Event from November 13 to 15, 2018 that was held at the UNHCR conference hall in Juba, South Sudan. Over 150 participants from development partners, NGOs, local stakeholders, community leadership, UN entities, and regional and global centers of excellence attended each day.

This event provided a platform for stakeholders to pause and reflect on the progress of the Partnership in 2018, and identify a set of shared commitments for 2019 that partners and local communities can rally around to stop the growing trend of vulnerability and increase the coping capacity of individuals, households and communities. This brief provides a summary of key discussions and issues arising from the event.

### THE LEARNING EVENT PROCESS

During the two and a half day event, participants engaged in the following discussions:

- Examined the role and responsibility of community in advancing an agenda for reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience;
- Took stock of the source and depth of vulnerability in South Sudan and reviewed tools, data, and measures of vulnerability and resilience in Candidate Partnership Areas;
- Took stock of the progress being made across the six commitments of the Partnership through flagship programmes operating in South Sudan in addressing vulnerability and building resilience;
- Reviewed the framework and building blocks for the Partnership; and
- Collected and reviewed ideas, interventions, constraints and options to achieve results for each pillar of the Partnership Framework.

Event presentations and support documents are available at <https://www.africaleadftf.org/southsudanpfrf/>.

### WHAT DID WE ACCOMPLISH

We learned and observed:

- The interest, concern for, and commitment to building resilience in a manner that addresses combined peace building, humanitarian and development outcomes is shared by many stakeholders and communities in South Sudan. This has gained traction with a growing sense of urgency in the need to embrace a comprehensive approach to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience.
- While levels of vulnerability in the 2018 lean season were the highest on record, the pace of increasing vulnerability has slowed over the last five years. The trends of growing vulnerability, (to be confirmed in the end of year performance and crop forecast reports and IPC review), are potentially changing. For example, the rate of food production has not declined at the same pace observed since 2013 and the area planted has increased for the first time in five years. The integrated rapid response mechanisms are reaching and serving areas in crises more quickly, and more effectively to manage vulnerability.
- We do have the ability to measure and track resilience in South Sudan.
- The sources, drivers and symptoms of vulnerability are similar across different parts of the country where assessments were done, but vary in their combinations, complexity and intensities. Interventions, therefore, need to be context specific. The tools and analysis to improve targeting of efforts to address vulnerability are emerging and need to be advanced.
- The payoff to investing in resilience has shown that every dollar spent on strengthening resilience saves approximately four dollars in humanitarian assistance.
- We learned that despite significant (major) efforts being implemented across the country to meet basic needs:

- They remain insufficient to serve communities;
- Efforts to supports are not integrated or coordinated;
- Tools to measure impact that various efforts (joint and individual) are having on vulnerability and resilience need to be developed and/or strengthened.
- The time to invest in and build resilience is not after humanitarian issues and conflict are in remission, but at all stages of shock and recovery, especially in the midst of crisis, when the returns are higher.
- We learned that:
  - Putting community first, as the center of the resilience efforts, is essential and the most effective way to meet basic needs and increase coping capacity.
  - Communities have borne most of the burden of meeting humanitarian needs, which is essential in delivering equitable humanitarian assistance.
  - Understanding community institutions and dynamics is essential in effectively engaging at the community level, especially in the environment of complex emergencies.
- We learned of the progress being made in Yambio through the Partnership. The Yambio community has led the way through:
  - Creating an enabling environment for recovery to take place through resilience-building efforts.
  - Demonstrating a serious commitment to creating the space for implementing partners to deliver services.
  - Committing to advancing the resilience agenda and mobilizing its internal resources to make sure peace remains in Yambio, and to ensure resilience to and ability to cope with unforeseen events; the community may experience shock but it will not be broken.
- We took stock of the Partnership Framework and building blocks for geographically focused partnerships.
- We learned that the pace of partnership development in Candidate Partnership Areas (CPAs) is not sufficient in either meeting needs, or in generating the experience needed to arrive at mutual commitments and accountability and adapt partner efforts in a timely fashion.
- We witnessed local stakeholders demonstrate what local ownership looks like.
- We took stock of and learned that there are a substantial number of relevant and effective interventions now underway in South Sudan, generating results at the community level, that are important to the aspirations of the Partnership. Greater awareness and sharing of best practices is needed.
- We learned that where there is coherent and integrated support from partners, the impact of these joint efforts is more effective than individual efforts.
- We took stock of the challenges and options for nurturing partnership, including through information sharing, joint planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation.
- We learned that the private sector is acritical partner for building resilience.

We concluded that it is critical to engage in joint planning with collective outcomes to fully and meaningfully support the people of South Sudan.

## **PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY THE PARTNERSHIP**

Achievements discussed at the event included:

- The Four Pillars of the Partnership have been further socialized and validated.
- Yambio is sharing their experience of community organization, engagement, and commitment with other areas and leaders.
- “Champions” in Yambio have shown practically how local institutions can organize collective action in one CPA. While efforts will be different in each CPA, the Yambio experience remains inspiring, informative and instructive.
- Donors have shown a commitment to supporting Partnership as a common strategic approach.
- The UN agencies have demonstrated commitment to strengthening coordination, particularly across peace building, humanitarian and development activities, in order to address vulnerability and resilience.

- The INGOs have articulated a desire for greater participation in the Coordination mechanisms for Partnership and Resilience.
- Local NGOs have demonstrated their interest in supporting the Partnership at a community level.
- A language framing the challenges of Partnership and Resilience in South Sudan has emerged from a conversation involving all stakeholders.
- Technical Partners have agreed on the need for a single resilience measurement that incorporates governance, institutions and social capital in addition to more common food security measures.
- Resilience profile data sets have been compiled for the seven CPAs.
- Partners have begun to assess their own programs in terms of “Faces of Resilience,” which highlight the communities, capacities, themes and local partnerships at the heart of the resilience agenda.

## MOVING FORWARD

To deepen and operationalize the efforts to nurture partnership in 2019, the following priorities were discussed at the event.

- The event validated that the six CPAs of Partnership joint commitment remain relevant, although greater clarity and transparency is needed in what actions are being advanced to address those commitments.
- The pace of engagement in CPAs needs to be accelerated through joint engagement and planning with local communities.
- To facilitate and leverage the benefits of collective efforts, a joint action plan is needed that will help guide Partnership and facilitate alignment of ongoing efforts.
- The Partnership needs simple, effective, tools to address its commitment to accountability.
- Partners need to evaluate the unique dynamics, potentials and challenges of each community to determine “readiness” and ability to commit to building resilience.
- Communities (within the CPAs) need to establish ownership of their resilience agenda.
- Existing data needs to be made available to all Partners.
- Partners need to agree upon and establish a holistic resilience measurement framework.
- The Resilience Profiles need to be validated at a community level.
- The Partnership needs to sustain the engagement with CGIAR.
- The donors need to discuss how to ensure their decision making and disbursement processes support the requirements of Partnership.
- Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning must be sustained at multiple levels.
- Recognizing that the Partnership is a voluntary effort, the shared realization that partners have no choice but to act together to address the burden of reducing vulnerability and increasing coping capacity, continues to be a pillar of the partnership.
- Coordination needs to be strengthened across organizational boundaries and among multi-disciplinary actors at the community level to nurture and build the partnership for resilience will need deliberate steps to strengthen coordination and build the foundations of the Partnership.
- Focused efforts should be made to engage the private sector in the resilience-building agenda.
- The Partnership may consider regular consultation with the wider stakeholder group (plenary), every four to six months; and, a commitment to a regular (annual) stocktaking to discuss the Partnership and the status of its efforts.

## CONCLUSION

The event concluded with agreement that there was need for an agreed strategy for further implementation of the partnership with measurable goals. It was mentioned that this strategy should take into consideration ideas discussed at the Learning Event to ensure the Partnership advances its goals.