



An Roinn Gnóthaí  
Eachtracha agus Trádála  
Department of  
Foreign Affairs and Trade

# Evaluation of the embassy's approach to resilience

ETHIOPIA COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2014-2018

Report

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## ACRONYMS

<b>AFLAH</b>	Association of Friends of Lake Awassa
<b>AfU</b>	Africa Unit
<b>AGP</b>	Agricultural Growth Programme
<b>AMIYCN</b>	National Guideline on Adolescent, Maternal, Infant, and Young Child
<b>ATA</b>	Agricultural Transformation Agency
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>AWID</b>	Association for Women's Rights in Development
<b>CA</b>	Conservation Agriculture
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against
<b>CDRC</b>	Centre for Dialogue, Research and Cooperation
<b>CHAI</b>	Clinton Health Access Initiative
<b>CI</b>	Crop Intensification
<b>CIP</b>	International Potato Centre
<b>CSA</b>	Central Statistics Agency
<b>CSA</b>	Climate Smart Agriculture
<b>CSP</b>	Country Strategy Paper
<b>CSSP</b>	Civil Society Support Programme
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DAG</b>	Donor Assistance Group
<b>DCAD</b>	Development Cooperation Africa Division
<b>DFA</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ireland
<b>DoA</b>	Department of Agriculture
<b>DRMFSS</b>	Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector
<b>E-DHS</b>	Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey
<b>ECDD</b>	Ethiopian Centre for Disability and Development
<b>ECHO</b>	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
<b>ECSC-SUN</b>	Ethiopian Civil Society Coalition for Scaling up Nutrition
<b>EHF</b>	Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund
<b>EHRC</b>	Ethiopia Human Rights Commission
<b>EnDev</b>	Energising Development energy access project
<b>EPRDF</b>	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary and Democratic Front
<b>ESAP</b>	Ethiopia Social Accountability Programme
<b>FA</b>	Farm Africa
<b>FDRE</b>	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
<b>FTC</b>	Farmers Training Centre
<b>FVCD</b>	Food Value Chain Development
<b>GEWE</b>	Gender equality and women's empowerment
<b>GoE</b>	overnment of Ethiopia

<b>GoI</b>	Government of Ireland
<b>GTP</b>	Growth and Transformation Plan
<b>GWF</b>	Green Way Farm
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Development
<b>HRDG</b>	Humanitarian Response Donor Group
<b>HTPs</b>	Harmful Traditional Practices
<b>IAIP</b>	Integrated Agro-Industrial Park
<b>ICRAF</b>	World Agroforestry Centre
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IPDM</b>	Integrated Pest and Disease Management
<b>LHCPDF</b>	Lake Hawassa Catchment Protection Development Forum
<b>MI</b>	Micronutrient Initiative
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MoWCYA</b>	The Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs
<b>MSP</b>	Mission Strategic Plan
<b>NDRMC</b>	National Disaster and Risk Management Commission
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NNP</b>	National Nutrition Programme
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>OFDA</b>	(US) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
<b>PBS</b>	Protection of Basic Services
<b>PCP</b>	Programme for Country Partnership (UNIDO)
<b>PFM</b>	Public Financial Management
<b>PSNP</b>	Productive Safety Nets Programme
<b>SACCO</b>	Savings and Credit Cooperative
<b>SCI</b>	Sustainable Crop Intensification
<b>SDG-PF</b>	Sustainable Development Goals Preparedness Facility
<b>SHA</b>	Self Help Africa
<b>SI</b>	Salt and Iodisation Project
<b>SLM</b>	Sustainable Land Management (project)
<b>SNNPR</b>	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region
<b>SNNPR BoH</b>	SNNPR Bureau of Health
<b>SSI</b>	Small-scale Irrigation
<b>STC</b>	Save the Children
<b>TOC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>TRBoA</b>	Tigray Regional Bureau of Agriculture
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UNOCHA</b>	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of
<b>VAWC</b>	Violence Against Women and Children
<b>VSLA</b>	Village Savings and Loan Association

**WaSH**

Water Sanitation and Hygiene

**WBG**

World Bank Group

**WFP**

World Food Programme

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The independent views expressed in this report are those of the evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or views of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The 2014-2018 Ethiopia Country Strategy Paper (CSP) sets out Ireland's strategy for bilateral development assistance to Ethiopia. The evaluation examined Embassy of Ireland, Addis Ababa's approach to resilience in Ethiopia from 2014 to 2019. The Country Strategy Paper (CSP) was designed to contribute to a single resilience outcome: "Poor and rural households are more resilient to economic, social and environmental stresses and shocks" in a rapidly changing political, environmental and social context. Total programme expenditure was €134 million over the five-year period, implemented through a mixture of grants to government and non-government organisation partners.

### Focus and Purpose of the Review

The embassy requested the focus of the evaluation to be on resilience, given the overarching outcome. The evaluation is intended to measure the value and worth of the CSP programme and the extent to which the approach to resilience has impacted on its performance, rather than an evaluation of individual CSP components. The objectives of the evaluation were developed by the Evaluation and Audit Unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in conjunction with the embassy team, desk and SMG. They are to establish over the period of the current CSP:

- The extent to which the "approach to resilience" has been successfully adopted by the embassy, its partners and their partners (Process)
- The extent to which the approach adopted has strengthened resilience capacity at appropriate levels amongst targeted groups (Outcome)
- Key learnings that can inform future approaches to resilience by the embassy, in particular in the upcoming Mission Strategy (Learnings)

The evaluation team adopted an approach that combines a mix of qualitative methods in order to reach conclusions in relation to the evaluation questions and to draw out the lessons learned. It is important to note that this is a thematic evaluation, as directed by the embassy, and is not a full CSP/impact evaluation.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Use of the resilience framework

It was clear to the evaluation team that there were many important broader achievements and contributions delivered. However, these cannot be attributed to a deliberate application of the building resilience policy brief. It is important to underscore that the concept of resilience was embedded in the 2014-2018 CSP. However, the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience* was not formalised until 2016, half way through the implementation of the CSP. This may explain that a formal

resilience framework was not implemented<sup>1</sup> or promoted strongly across the programme design. Nor was there a conscious effort to systematically incorporate it into all output areas.

The resilience approach has relevance to livelihoods and social protection in the Ethiopian context. The embassy could continue to consider the use of the resilience approach if the areas currently supported by outcomes one and two of the current CSP are continued in the next strategy. However, the embassy will need to consider how to improve its strategy of reaching the poorest in the context of a resilience framework and how performance measurement might be systematically approached.

### **Implementing new approaches**

The *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience* states that “a systematic approach to building resilience is needed in order to place it at the heart of our policy engagement and programming”. While the five principles of resilience were embedded across the CSP, the evaluation did not find evidence of a formal inception of the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience*, or a formal introduction of the approach or framework into the CSP. The evaluation also did not find evidence that the framework set out in the policy brief was consciously tested on all CSP’s output areas. When future policies are rolled out, it is recommended that the Development Cooperation and Africa Division consider formal implementation procedures are in place for the testing and introduction of new approaches and frameworks in partnerships with the mission and its partners.

### **Risk management**

The embassy is in a better position to make strategic contributions to sectors than some other donors due to its ability to manage strategic risks. The embassy has reported that it is managing risk well through frequent communication with partners and risk management. It is recommended that the embassy maintain a healthy risk-appetite, continue to assess<sup>2</sup> and calculate risk in such projects and take the opportunity to make strategic contributions where appropriate. Given continuing uncertainty within the Ethiopian context, a conventional risk analysis approach might be usefully supplemented with techniques such as scenario planning to identify sets of circumstances that might unfold over the next Mission Strategy.

### **Integrating and aligning gender**

The CSP was found to be broadly aligned with international human rights standards as well as international and regional normative gender frameworks endorsed by the Ethiopian Government. The embassy has many notable strengths, including awareness of gender policy, advocacy, targeting and programming. The embassy was widely acknowledged as strong and consistent advocates for GEWE.

It is essential to underscore the constraining human rights environment in which the embassy, donors and partners were operating until the recent amendment to the Charities and Societies Proclamation (No.621/2009) in early 2019. This environment, coupled with regional variations in structural barriers to equality as well as the absence of a pragmatic and contextualised DFAT strategy/policy to address

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<sup>1</sup> For example, documentary evidence of testing, validation, training or team implementation/induction

<sup>2</sup> In particular: CHAI and SDG Health Fund

GEWE, posed significant challenges to progressing gender equality and mainstreaming overall. Targeting women was clearly present in the embassy's programming. Yet for the most part, moving beyond targeting to transformative change, equality and genuine empowerment is an area in need of strengthening.

The embassy should take the opportunity presented by the new Mission Strategy to embed gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) more centrally within the programme. Where identified capacity building of partners (e.g. gender) is a component of this engagement, it is recommended that this be included as a project outcome and measured accordingly. It is recommended that the embassy consider re-establishing the position of gender specialist or accessing ongoing technical support on a draw down basis in order to build capacity in this regard.

### **Reaching the poorest**

The evaluation found the CSP to be well focused overall, however, there were gaps in some projects around gender and a focus on the poorest. For example, a number of agriculture and livelihoods projects are not targeted at the poorest or furthest behind. It is recommended that the embassy team take the opportunity to reflect on how to provide technical focus while ensuring consistent emphasis on beneficiaries and on aspects of *A Better World* such as the policy of "reaching the furthest behind first".

In programmes that work with individuals and communities who are at a level above the poorest (e.g. Rural Livelihoods and Climate), it is recommended that the programme logic explicitly links outcomes for individuals and communities to better outcomes for the poorest and incorporates performance indicators that measure the same.

### **Defining and measuring performance**

The logic model used to define and measure results includes many outcome level indicators at a national level. While it is essential to be cognisant of this, it is difficult to attribute to change to the embassy interventions using this data. There is a significant amount of valuable work carried out by embassy staff which adds value to the programme (e.g. partner influencing) and ensures that the embassy's impact moves well beyond that achieved through the awarding of the financial grant alone. The embassy should consider alternative ways of assessing overall Mission Strategy performance.

It is recommended that the embassy consider establishing the post of a monitoring and evaluation specialist or availing of external expertise in order to develop a strategy for the effective monitoring, evaluation and learning of the next mission strategy.

### **Articulating a strategy for programme modalities**

The CSP has been implemented through a programme portfolio which is a product of legacy and evolution and encompasses a diverse range of investment from €30,000 to €52 million. It is recommended that the embassy continue this approach but take the opportunity to reflect on, and

articulate the rationale and strategy for the composition of selected projects part of the upcoming Mission Strategy.

### **Alignment with a Better World**

Looking forward to the new Mission Strategy, the strategic approach adopted by the CSP is broadly aligned with themes outlined in the recently launched Development Policy. *A Better World* prioritises gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and strengthening governance, all of which constitute core elements of the CSP.

It is recommended that a sharing of knowledge and lesson learning approach should be continued, both within the embassy and with its partners. This approach might be considered more generally across DCAD and its missions.

# 1 BACKGROUND

## Rationale and purpose of the evaluation

The 2014-2018 Ethiopia Country Strategy Paper (CSP) sets out Ireland's strategy for bilateral development assistance to Ethiopia. It was designed to contribute to a single outcome: "Poor and rural households are more resilient to economic, social and environmental stresses and shocks". The embassy has used a mix of aid modalities. This approach has involved working directly with government at both federal and regional level. The embassy has also worked with the non-governmental (NGO) sector to diversify the portfolio, generate learning, and spread risk. Regional programmes in Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) have comprised a prominent component of the CSP.

The current Mission Strategy was extended to the end of 2019 and a new Mission Strategy<sup>3</sup> will be planned in 2019. In advance of planning for the new Mission Strategy, a range of project evaluative exercises were commissioned and managed by implementing partners in collaboration with Irish Aid. A final independent evaluation of the CSP was also part of this plan.

The objectives of the evaluation were developed by the Evaluation and Audit Unit within DFAT in conjunction with the embassy team. They are consequently to establish, over the period of the current CSP:

1. The extent to which the "approach to resilience" has been successfully adopted by the embassy, its partners and their partners (Process)
2. The extent to which the approach adopted has strengthened resilience capacity at appropriate levels amongst targeted groups (Outcome)
3. Key learnings that can inform future approaches to resilience by the embassy, in particular in the upcoming Mission Strategy (Learnings)

### 1.1 Methodology and Scope

The evaluation is intended to measure the value and worth of the CSP programme and the extent to which the approach to resilience has impacted on its performance; it is not an evaluation of individual CSP components. The methodology and evaluation questions were directly informed by the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience* (see Annex 7) with specific reference to measuring resilience<sup>4</sup>. To do this, the evaluation assessed the programme through the lens of a resilience framework supplied by the embassy (Annex 2). The evaluation team used this framework as an interviewing tool to help informants understand the resilience approach. The evaluation also critiqued and analysed the resilience framework against existing academic literature in line with the outcome areas of the CSP. The evaluation team adopted an approach that combines a mix of qualitative methods in order to reach conclusions in relation to the evaluation questions and to draw out the lessons learned. It is important to note that this is a thematic evaluation, as directed by the embassy, and is not a full CSP/impact evaluation.

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<sup>3</sup> Since 2017 Country Strategy Papers have been replaced by Mission Strategies

<sup>4</sup> Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience, pp. 11

### **1.1.1 Document review**

A substantive range of documents were made available to the evaluation team to be included in a desk study. Policy and strategy documents from the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) included the Africa Strategy and development assistance policy, *One World One Future*. These documents, together with key policy documents and reports from the government of Ethiopia, provided the background to the evaluation.

Government of Ethiopia documents included Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan II (2015/16-2019/20); the National Social Protection Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia; Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Reports; and National Poverty Assessments. These documents provided contextual background to the evaluation as well as information against which the CSP's performance was aligned.

The evaluation also reviewed specific documents relating to the embassy's development cooperation programme, including the Country Strategic Paper (CSP), its mid-term review and its results report. These documents, together with Annual Reports, have provided data regarding the performance of the CSP. A desk based internal report completed in 2018, "*Effectiveness of a resilience approach*" (Kajumba, 2018), formed a foundation document for the evaluation given its specific focus on the embassy's approach to resilience<sup>5</sup>. Implementing partner reports and evaluations contained information relating to the performance of programmes and projects implemented with technical support and financial assistance from the embassy. This information, together with key informant interviews, was used to assess the extent to which the CSP successfully realised resilience capacity building outcomes. A list of key documents reviewed as part of the evaluation is included in Annex I.

### **1.1.2 Stakeholder workshop**

After introductory meetings with embassy staff, the evaluation team conducted a group consultation with representative stakeholders in the CSP in Addis Ababa. The workshop included representatives from donor partners, UN Agencies and NGO implementing partners. The objectives of the initial stakeholder consultation were to ensure that:

- Stakeholders were clear about the scope, purpose and objectives of the evaluation
- Stakeholders with whom subsequent key informant interviews were held were primed in terms of the questions they were asked to respond to and information that was potentially of interest to the evaluation team

Following a presentation, the team conducted an exercise with participants to gather information on Ethiopia's changing developmental context.

### **1.1.3 Interviews with key informants**

The evaluation team conducted over 70 semi-structured interviews with key informants, guided by a framework of themes to explore topics of significance. While the structure of interviews was informal, topics were identified in advance and accompanied by an interview guide. In constructing interview

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<sup>5</sup> This review was a learning product and focused on the implementation of the resilience approach for the 2014-2018 strategy. It was carried out by the Irish Aid's Regional Senior Climate Change and Development Advisor. The methodology included a desktop review and interviews with Embassy staff.

guides, consideration was given as to which evaluation questions were best answered by different individuals and interest groups within DFAT, the embassy, local partners, beneficiaries and the government of Ethiopia. Follow-up interviews were used to further investigate areas of particular interest with key informants who were seen to be knowledgeable and/or experienced in the area of resilience and the CSP.

#### **1.1.4 Focus group discussions**

The evaluation team engaged in over 20 group discussions to generate further evidence. Focus groups were carried out with:

- Donor Coordination Groups in Addis Ababa
- Consortium of NGO Implementing partners (Addis Ababa and SNNPR)
- Representatives of groups in receipt of services
- Government Officials (regional and woreda)
- Service providers

Teams within the embassy ensured that focus group discussions were carried out in appropriate settings. Interviewers encouraged views from all members, including those who may be considered to be marginalized. On a number of occasions, focus groups were held separately with women and men in order to elicit responses that may not have been forthcoming in a mixed setting. This was particularly useful when exploring women's empowerment and gender equality.

#### **1.1.5 Site visits**

The evaluation team visited a project site outside of Addis Ababa and a selection of projects in the Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples Region (SNNPR). During site visits, the evaluation team engaged with recipients of services and implementing partner field staff. The objectives of the site visits were to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the programme context;
- Corroborate and triangulate evidence from the document review and national level interviews;
- Observe mechanisms for development change;
- Listen to and incorporate voices of groups in receipt of services into the evaluation process.

The team used the visits to gather qualitative data across a range of sites in SNNPR. Locations were selected by partners to illustrate the range of resilience capacity building interventions that CSP partners implement in SNNPR. Details of sites visited by the evaluation team are listed in Annex 4 - List of Site Visits.

#### **1.1.6 Limitations**

As with all evaluations, the current evaluation of the Ethiopia CSP has certain limitations. The purpose of the exercise is to evaluate the embassy's Approach to Resilience. It is important to emphasise that it is not an impact evaluation of the CSP or individual projects. To this end, the evaluators have

assessed the extent to which projects have contributed to the overall effectiveness of the CSP using a selection of key informant interviews, focus groups and secondary documentation.

The evaluation team carried out site visits to observe project implementation and carry out key informant interviews with project management staff and beneficiaries. SNNPR was selected as a sample region and the projects were selected by the embassy in consultation with implementing partners. While these were considered adequate to provide valuable insights into the nature of programming on the ground, they do not necessarily represent the spectrum of programme implementation. The results from these sites cannot therefore be extrapolated across the entire CSP. It is also important to note that site the visits took place in Addis Ababa and SNNPR region only. There is regional variation between the socio-political context in these sites and that of the embassy's other major regional programme in Tigray.

The evaluation was not designed to measure impact<sup>6</sup>; however, the evaluation criteria of effectiveness implies an ability to measure the extent to which the programme contributed to changes in resilience capacity. Ten projects were previously evaluated and these reports were provided to the team for review. Five projects have been reviewed by the embassy on the basis of annual progress reports. No evaluations or progress reports were provided for five projects, making it challenging to measure the impact of these projects. A list of project evaluations is included in Annex 6.

## **2 THE ETHIOPIA COUNTRY CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANT SHIFTS DURING THE CSP PERIOD**

### **2.1 Political context**

Ethiopia boasts a unique cultural heritage and a rich history. The country is established as a symbol of African independence, as it was largely free from colonial occupation aside from a few short contested years. Ethiopia has been governed by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) throughout the period of the CSP (2014-2018). Composed of the leading political parties of four of the nine regions, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has traditionally dominated the EPRDF.

In late 2015, issues arising from changes in regional border demarcation and the eruption of historic tensions led to inter-ethnic clashes. At the same time, anti-government protests, in the Oromia, Somali and Amhara regions of Ethiopia were led by protesters demanding government reform and an end to the dominance of a Tigrayan minority. As the situation unfolded, violent clashes with security and police forces resulted in the deaths of over 400 protestors (Human Rights Watch, 2016). The outbreak of violence in the border areas of Oromia and Somali region has displaced over 800,000 people and remains a key driver of humanitarian assistance.

In October 2016, the government declared a state of emergency, suspending a range of civil and political rights and allowing arbitrary searches and detention without charge. In an attempt to stabilise the situation, political reforms, including a cabinet reshuffle, a re-balancing of the intra-party balance within the governing coalition, a number of high-profile arrests in a bid to tackle corruption, and a national dialogue with a number of, but not all, opposition groups, were instigated. The state of

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<sup>6</sup> OECD defines impact as "positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended".

emergency was lifted in August 2017; however, tensions remained high, with regional border demarcation issues, regional perceptions of marginalisation, and the lack of political and civil society space remaining unresolved.

In an unexpected move in mid-February 2018, the Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, resigned. A six-month state of emergency was subsequently declared in an attempt to quell tensions. Dr Abiy Ahmed, an ethnic Oromo, was appointed as the new Prime Minister of Ethiopia in early April 2018. His appointment was greeted warmly both domestically and internationally. Furthermore, his term in office comes with high expectations of reform, political liberalisation and a commitment to end disputes with Ethiopia's neighbours. These developments have been accompanied by pledges to build transparency within government and reconcile protests that have divided the country since 2015. In 2018, the Prime minister carried out a major reshuffle of the Cabinet, giving 50% of the ministerial positions to women.

The appointment of Ethiopia's first woman president, Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, took place in October 2018. Although the presidency is a non-executive position, her appointment brings an experienced diplomat to the helm and promises to bolster the government's commitment to gender equality in a country where women are nearly three times as likely as men to be unemployed. Together with youth, women remain the most disadvantaged group in the job market (UNDP, 2018).

Analysts (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2019) indicate that Dr Abiy's major challenge in the coming strategic period will be to deliver on promises of reform while simultaneously achieving a genuine sense of inter-party and inter-ethnic unity in a country which has become increasingly fractured. The ingrained power of the TPLF party, which has long dominated Ethiopia's political, security and economic apparatus, and their marginalisation in recent months, is likely to prove a significant challenge to the new Prime Minister's reform efforts. These efforts include attempts to maintain a peaceful and smooth transition towards deeper democracy and a more inclusive economy, deliver economic growth and tackle corruption (Africa Unit DFAT, 2018).

Political uncertainty in the latter part of the CSP period looks set to continue. Donors and NGO partners within Health, Nutrition, Civil Society and Humanitarian sectors who were interviewed as part of the evaluation identified political uncertainty as a factor which has impacted significantly on the implementation and effectiveness of programmes. Respondents felt that the situation remains unpredictable and that tensions generated by ethnic violence might rise further.

## **2.2 Governance and human rights**

The period of the CSP has been marked by a series of States of Emergency (SoE) invoked by the government in reaction to the perceived security threats in the country discussed above. Under the 2016 and 2019 SoEs, blanket restrictions were imposed on the right to peaceful assembly and security forces were provided with powers to clamp down on expressions of dissent. A government decision in the same year to release more than 7,000 prisoners, including renowned journalists and prominent opposition figures, was met with disappointment when, on 25th March, Eskinder Nega, a prominent journalist, was re-arrested along with 10 other people. This was considered by observers, including Amnesty International, as an abuse of power by authorities and evidence that the SoE was being used for political ends. In 2018, the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance places Ethiopia 44th out of 54, just above Chad in terms of human rights.

The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) indicates that Ethiopia's overall governance has declined over the period of the CSP, moving from a ranking of 31<sup>st</sup> to 35<sup>th</sup> between 2014 and 2018. Ethiopia's ranking on the index, which is made up of indicators that measure 'Safety and the Rule of Law', 'Participation and Human Rights', 'Sustainable Economic Opportunity' and 'Human Development', has been impacted significantly by Ethiopia's sharp decline in Sustainable Economic Opportunity<sup>7</sup>. While the country is considered one of only two countries (Ethiopia and Mali) to have improved in the area of transparency and accountability, the report notes that there is increasing deterioration in Safety and the Rule of Law, with worrying trends in Civil Rights and Liberties over the last ten years.

A significant development during the period of the CSP has been a new parliamentary proclamation on civil society. The Charities and Societies Proclamation Act (No.621/2009) was in force since February 2009 and placed severe administrative restrictions on the work of human rights focussed non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Ethiopia (Amnesty International, 2012). The new proclamation has effectively reopened space for civil society which was previously severely restricted. In an effort to encourage political participation from former activists and high profile groups, Ethiopia's prime minister has released thousands of journalists and key opposition leaders from prison. Previously exiled groups (some of them armed) have also been permitted to re-enter the country (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Lifting the decade-long restrictions has paved the way for an improvement in human rights, but has also led to uncertainty in relation to the combination of contextual and political factors. In 2018, Prime Minister Abiy moved to open civil society space by inviting exiled groups (some of whom were armed) back to get involved in nonviolent politics.

### **2.3 Economic context**

Ethiopia is strategically located within the Horn of Africa, close to major markets in the Middle East. Being landlocked since the independence of Eritrea, however, means that it has had to rely on its neighbours' ports to gain access to these markets for its goods and produce. During the period of the CSP, the signing of a peace agreement in 2018 with Eritrea promising to provide the country with access to the Eritrean ports of Assab and Massawa, boosting opportunities for international trade (The World Bank Group, 2019).

Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa following Nigeria. Despite being recognised as the fastest growing economy in the region, it is also one of the poorest (Gray, 2018). Nevertheless, the country aims to reach lower-middle-income status by 2025. The economy has sustained strong, broad-based growth throughout the period of the CSP, averaging 10.3% a year from 2006/07 to 2016/17, compared to a regional average of 5.4%, with construction and services accounting for most of the growth (UNDP, 2018). The contribution to growth in 2017/18 from agriculture and manufacturing has been lower than in previous years, while private consumption and public investment have contributed to demand-side growth.

Sustained economic growth throughout the period of the CSP has brought with it positive trends in the reduction of both rural and urban poverty. The percentage of Ethiopians living below the poverty line decreased from 30% in 2011 to 24% in 2016. The second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP

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<sup>7</sup> The SOE indicator measures public management, business, Infrastructure rural inclusion in development

II) which will run to 2019/20 aims to continue the expansion of physical infrastructure by means of public investments with a vision to transform the country into a regional centre for manufacturing. An anticipated annual growth of 11% in GDP is forecasted to be accompanied by a 20% increase in the industrial sector, creating much needed employment for a population increasingly dominated by young people (John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2016). A challenge will be to ensure that employment opportunities are inclusive to both women and men and are accessible to those beyond the urban centres

## 2.4 Poverty and Development

Ethiopia has sustained relatively strong development progress<sup>8</sup> in the last 25 years, but despite strong economic growth<sup>9</sup> during the period of the CSP remains amongst the World's 40 poorest countries. Over the same period (2014-18) Ethiopia's Human Development Index (HDI) ranking has remained at 173, placing it behind its comparable neighbours such as Rwanda and Uganda (UNDP, 2018). Health and nutrition gains include a significant decline in neo-natal and maternal deaths in targeted hospitals, increased coverage in maternal health services, and encouraging achievements in the institutional delivery of health services at federal level.

While educational attainment has been improving, the overall level of education still remains low and there are high gender and rural-urban disparities. The quality and coverage of education is on a worrying decline, and is not keeping up with population growth.

Throughout the period of the CSP, industrialisation has been seen by the government as a pathway to development. However, UN agencies and development partners have stated that in order to impact on poverty, there is a need for inclusive benefits brought about by creating decent jobs for all and expanding opportunities for the empowerment of women (UNDP, 2018). While there is rightly a strong focus on industrial development moving forward to the period of the next Mission Strategy, there is also a recognised need to safeguard agricultural production and productivity and to mitigate against the detrimental effects which industrialisation may have on the environment.

Population growth continues to shape the nature of development challenges in Ethiopia. Health systems which are already struggling are being put under mounting strain at a primary and tertiary level. The Ministry of Health (MoH) budget is modest and struggles to meet significant demands and competing priorities. As a result, there is an ongoing reliance upon the MoH Sustainable Development Goals Performance Pool Fund to fill gaps. Donor partners to the PSNP programme noted that without a focus on livelihoods and job creation, population growth has the potential to drive people into the Social Safety Net programmes at a rate greater than those who are graduating from it.

Absorption, adaptation and transformation in the face of climate change will represent an ever more important component of development planning in Ethiopia, as will a commitment to zero-carbon growth. While the latter may seem challenging, there are opportunities to build a green industry sector in Ethiopia by leapfrogging to modern technologies.

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<sup>8</sup> Between 1990 and 2017 life expectancy at birth in Ethiopia increased by 18.8 years, mean years of schooling increased by 1.2 years and expected years of schooling increased by 5.4 years. Ethiopia's GNI per capita increased by about 165.3 percent (UNDP, 2018)

<sup>9</sup> Ethiopia was designated in 2018 by the World Economic Forum as Africa's fastest growing economy <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/05/ethiopia-africa-fastest-growing-economy/>

## 2.5 Environment and climate change

Ranking 182 of 188 countries<sup>10</sup>, Ethiopia's Green House Gas emissions are among the world's lowest, yet the country is highly vulnerable to climate change. During the period of the CSP, Ethiopia's ranking in terms of climate vulnerability has dropped from 145 to 163 out of 181 countries on the ND-GAIN index<sup>11</sup>. The index shows that Ethiopia is currently the 22nd most vulnerable<sup>12</sup> country and the 31st least ready country, meaning that, despite significant investment, Ethiopia is both vulnerable to climate change and largely unready to address the effects of climate change (UNOCHA, 2018).

Already one of the most drought prone countries in Africa (Government of the Netherlands, 2019), the period of the CSP saw unusual and extreme weather events, including droughts and flash floods. Large variations in climate vulnerability across Ethiopia's regions mean that increased temperatures and prolonged droughts affect livestock rearing in the lowlands. Intense and irregular rainfall leads to erosion, which, together with higher temperatures, can result in lower agricultural production in the highlands. During the course of the CSP, extreme and unseasonal weather triggered increased levels and outbreaks of disease, malnutrition, pest infestation, lowered agricultural production, crop failure and livestock mortality.

The El Niño induced drought in 2015/16 was the most severe in 50 years. Due to the combined effects of drought, flooding, disease outbreaks and malnutrition, El Niño triggered consequent crises in health, livelihoods, nutrition, water and sanitation. In early 2017, the Indian Ocean Dipole induced drought in southern and south eastern Ethiopia, leading to 5.6 million people requiring food assistance. Pastoral communities who rely on water for their livestock were hardest hit. Droughts are not the only climate related shocks; flash floods caused by overflow of the Awash, Wabe Shebelle and Bara river systems and back-flow from Lake Tana displaced at least 100,000 people (UNOCHA, 2018).

Changes to the impact of climate change are challenging to chart over a single strategic period. However, the majority of respondents to the evaluation interviews reported that climate change has manifested itself through the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events such as drought over the period of the CSP. Drought which was reported as occurring on average once every ten years now occurs on average once every three years (Community focus group, 2019).

The combination of climate related shocks with conflict adds an additional layer of complexity. During the period of the CSP, Ethiopia has experienced several migrations as vulnerable populations flee from war torn and drought affected neighbouring countries such as South Sudan. Ethnic conflict has also created significant numbers of internally displaced persons during the period of the CSP. Ethiopia has approximately two million displaced people (Human Rights Watch 2019). An estimated 1-1.6 million people were internally displaced in April 2018 due to inter-communal conflict between the Guji and Gedio communities in Oromia and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR). Displacement caused by climate factors was also a challenge, with a further 0.5 million displaced later in the year. Many of those displaced by climate induced factors were receiving support from

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<sup>10</sup> 181 reflects most vulnerable

<sup>11</sup> The ND-GAIN Country Index summarizes a country's vulnerability to climate change and other global challenges in combination with its readiness to improve resilience. It aims to help governments, businesses and communities better prioritize investments for a more efficient response to the immediate global challenges ahead

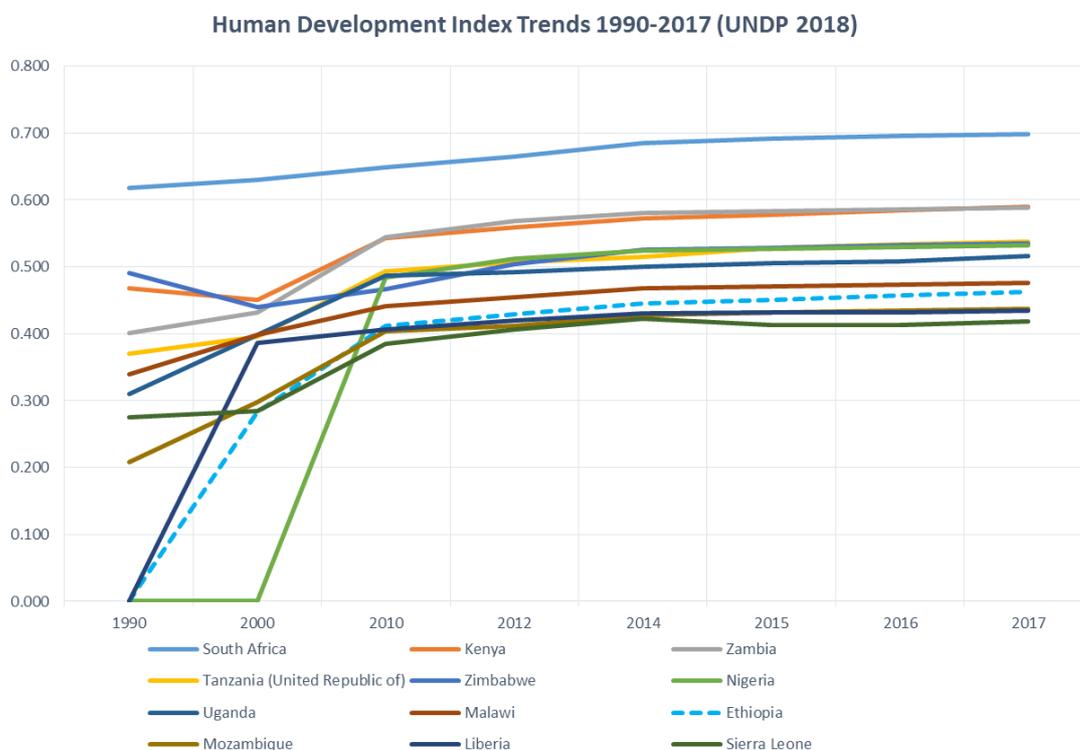
<sup>12</sup> Vulnerability measures the country's exposure, sensitivity, and ability to cope with the negative effects of climate change by considering vulnerability in six life-supporting sectors: food, water, ecosystem service, health, human habitat and infrastructure. Readiness measures a country's ability to leverage investments and convert them to adaptation actions by considering economic, governance and social readiness.

government through government-led integrated service sites set up in drought affected areas (IOM 2019).

Development agencies concur that a cross-sectoral, integrated approach to climate change in Ethiopia is essential to coordinate functions, mandates, research and ideas. Silos in policy making and development support will need to be avoided in order to minimise risks of future underproduction in agriculture and maximise opportunities to build climate resilience (United Nations Development Programme 2018).

## 2.6 Gender

In the past two decades, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has achieved well-earned successes in reducing the national poverty rate by half, resulting in Ethiopia being one of the fastest enhancers of human development since 2000 (UN Women 2018). Basic social services such as education and healthcare have been national priorities, with a remarkable improvement in maternal mortality rates<sup>13</sup> from 676/100,000 in 2011 to 412/100,000 in 2016. Overall, Ethiopia’s Human Development Index (HDI) has increased from 0.4442 in 2014 to 0.463 in 2017 (UNDP 2018). Commitments to political participation progressed with the allocation of 50% of cabinet positions to women in 2018, a notable achievement given the constraining human rights environment emerging from the Charities and Societies Proclamation Act. The appointment of Ethiopia’s first woman president, Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, in October 2018 promises to bolster the government’s international visibility in relation to gender equality. Despite overall human development and some gains in political footholds, women and girls in Ethiopia remain strongly disadvantaged in areas such as health, livelihoods and human rights.



<sup>13</sup> Ireland’s maternal mortality rate is 8/100,000 (UNDP 2018).

## **Legal and policy architecture**

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has committed to implementing gender equality initiatives for women and girls. Subscription to normative gender architecture such as the *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* and the *Beijing Platform for Action* are positive steps. The Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA) is responsible for coordinating women's interests and is a key actor in the prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The *National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM*, established in 2013, aims to gain traction. Several national policies exist, but require updating (UN Women 2018), such as *The National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2006-2010)*; the *National Policy on Ethiopian Women (1993)*; the *National Strategy and Action Plan on Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs) against Women and Children in Ethiopia (2013)*; and the *Strategic Plan for an Integrated and Multi-Sectoral Response to Violence against Women and Children (VAWC) and Child Justice in Ethiopia (2011)*.

Attempts to address targeting are included within government programming. For example, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) (co-funded by the embassy), the Agricultural Growth Plan (AGP) and the Sustainable Land Management Project (SLM) contain provisions to allow women fulfil their duties as mothers without losing the benefits from the programme. It should be underscored that while targeting is a necessary element, there is a vast gap between targeting and transformative empowerment. The more recent *Gender Equality Strategy for the Agriculture Sector (MoA 2017)* acknowledges women's exclusion in terms of access to agricultural services and inputs, and contains specific strategic objectives to address the critical gender issues.

## **Education, health and employment**

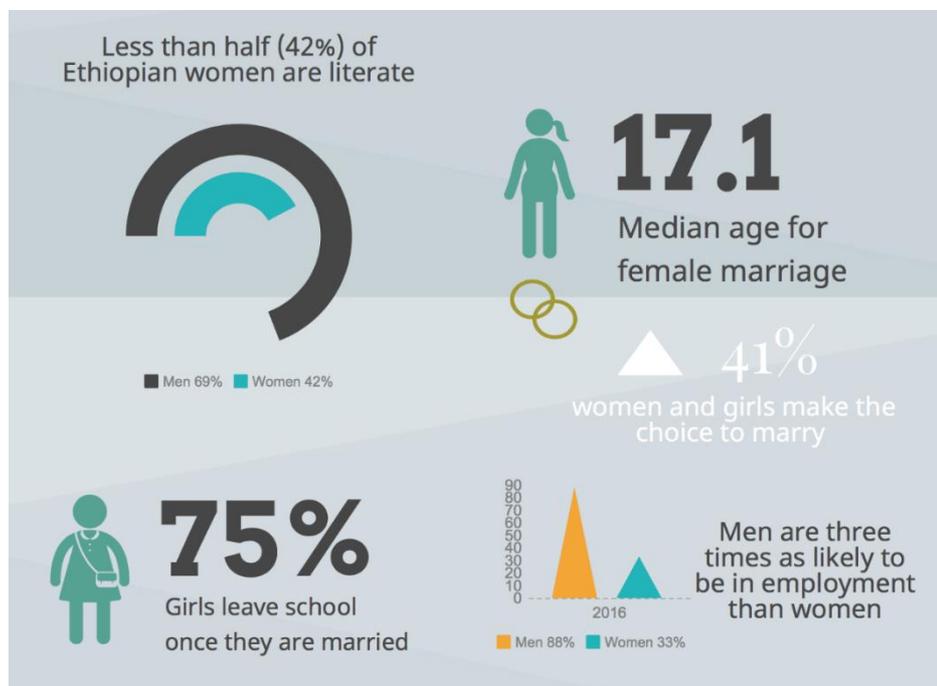
Despite progress in some aspects of human development, very serious challenges remain in reducing inequalities and harmful practices for women and girls (UN Women 2018). The Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey 2016 (CSA 2018) reported that the percentage of women with no education was 48% in 2016, a slight improvement since 2005. Every additional year of post-primary education for girls has multiplier effects, such as improving women's employment outcomes, lowering the prevalence of early marriage and improving their health and well-being and that of their families.

While good progress has been made in early levels of girls' education, 58% of women aged 15-49 are illiterate compared to 31% of men. The median age of first marriage is 17.1 years of age, with a small decline in the percentage of those married before the age of 18, down from 63% to 58% since 2005. In relation to the decision to marry, 41% of women aged 15-19 and 47% of women aged 20-24 reported that they made their own decision. Of the 25% of women attending school before they married, 75% ceased school after marriage (CSA 2018). Ethiopian women represent only 7.6% of graduates in science, mathematics, engineering, manufacturing and construction at tertiary level (UNDP 2018).

Economic empowerment is limited, with only 29% of women having an account at a financial institution or with a mobile money-service provider (UNDP 2018). Gender disparities in employment continue to be an issue. Overall, Ethiopian women are nearly three times as likely as men to be unemployed and remain the most disadvantaged in the job market. One in three (33%) women and

88% of men were employed in the seven days preceding the National Demographics and Health Survey 2016. Half of women and 8% of men had not been employed in the past 12 months (CSA 2018).

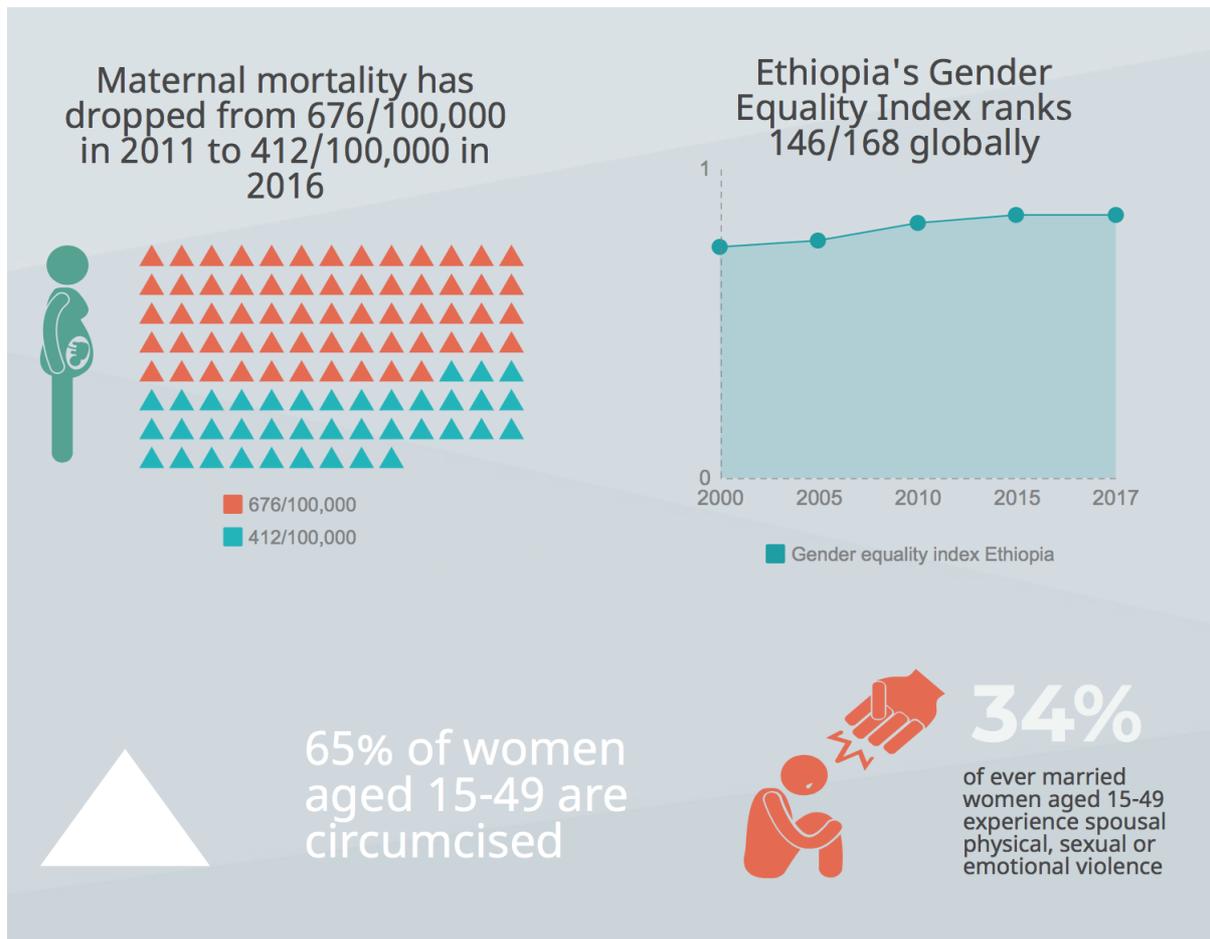
Figure 1 Selected gender data (CSA 2018)



### Violence against women and girls

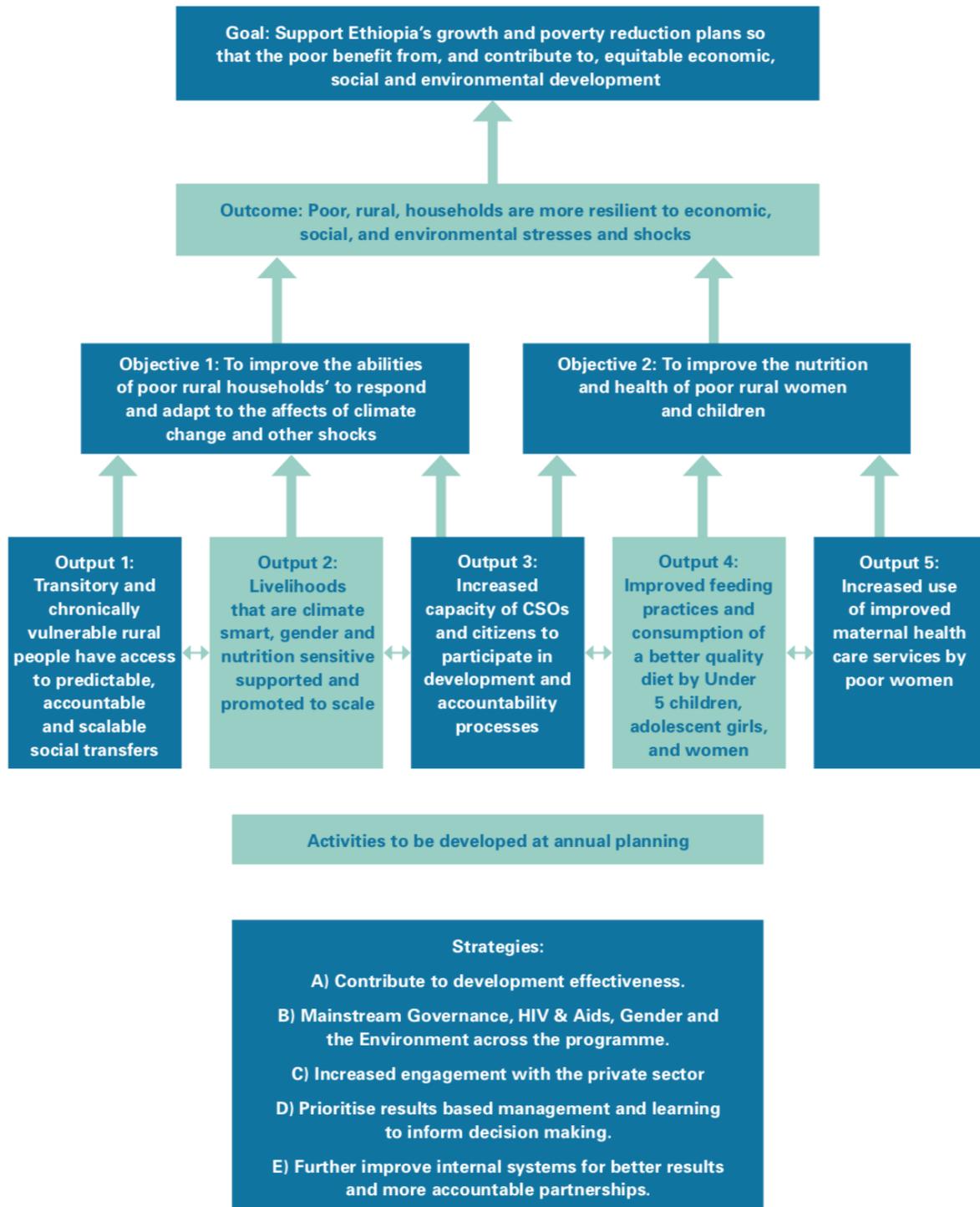
Harmful practices and VAWG are endemic in Ethiopia, with strong regional variations present. The lifetime prevalence of violence against women by their husbands or intimate partners ranges from 20% to 78%. An estimated 65% of women reported female genital mutilation (FGM). Regional variations exist in FGM, with a high prevalence in Somali (99%) compared to Tigray (23%) (CSA 2018). UN Women are a strong actor in this field, and have been advocating for changes in family laws, engaging in community awareness raising and strengthening safe houses for women and girls across Ethiopia.

Figure 2 Selected gender data (CSA 2018)



### 3 OVERVIEW OF THE CSP

Figure 3 CSP Logic Model



### 3.1 Integration of resilience in the CSP

#### Background to the concept of resilience

The traditional concept of resilience has been extensively researched within the field of socio-ecological psychology (Adger, 2000; Holling, 1973; Masten, 2001; Rutter, 1987). However, resilience is still a relatively new concept to donors' approach to development (DFID 2011; Woroniecki et al 2019) and differs significantly from the aforementioned models. Following the Nairobi Summit on the Horn of Africa Crisis in 2011, where African leaders called for a new approach to addressing recurrent crises in the region, donors began to discuss and implement a range of principles, approaches and focal areas of resilience. Initially, the concept was primarily focused on disaster responsiveness (DFID 2011) and agriculture-livelihoods approaches in the face of climate change<sup>14</sup> (Béné et al 2016).

#### Opportunities and challenges to the concept of resilience

The concept of resilience has the potential to make a contribution to the broad understanding of a multi-dimensional approach to development practice in favour of social and environmental justice. A useful characteristic of resilience is its ability help frame problems within a systemic approach and to think 'holistically' (Béné, 2014, pp. 604). Particularly in the context of rural livelihoods and responsiveness to shocks and stresses, the framework highlights the connections with the natural environment and the resilience of the community. It also has the potential to bridge the development–humanitarian divide, linking relief and development efforts by emphasizing how poverty or lack of resources can exacerbate vulnerabilities to natural and social disasters (Walsh-Dilley et al 2016).

Despite its relevance to countries experiencing shocks and stresses such as climate change, it is worth noting that some critiques of resilience approaches and frameworks have emerged in recent literature (Carr 2019; Woroniecki et al 2019). The overarching critiques in the literature can be organised in four broad themes: inconsistencies in the definitions and implementation of resilience; inadequacies in reaching the poorest; human agency and power issues; and the theory-practice gap. These challenges are summarised briefly. The Institute of Development Studies noted that “despite progress on the conceptual side, academics, practitioners and donors are still struggling with pragmatic issues - in particular, how to measure, monitor and evaluate resilience interventions” (Béné et al 2015, pp.3). International donors<sup>15</sup> have used a variety of approaches and frameworks to resilience, with several focussing their use in relation to agriculture, livelihoods and climate change.

Béné et al (2014) do not see the clear relation between poverty alleviation and resilience and does not consider a resilience approach to be a pro-poor concept. Carr (2019) referenced the claim that human agency and empowerment are not central to the models, noting that resilience models are “a framing that neither represents the current state of resilience thinking in the literature, nor addresses the substantial body of critique concerned with the lack of attention to agency, power, and difference in resilient systems” (pp. 1). Furthermore, Walsh-Dilley et al. (2016) suggest that resilience thinking can fail to fully recognize how the adaptive capacity of individuals and groups is constrained by a variety of social and political structures, as well as by power dynamics. Despite the notable benefits of a tool that has the intent to capture a multi-dimensional approach, the concept is still relatively

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<sup>14</sup> Such as mangroves and fisheries management in deltas.

<sup>15</sup> For example: Australian Agency for International Development; Canadian International Development Agency; Department for International Development, United Kingdom; Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation; Global Resilience Partnership; USAID; World Bank

new. Adaptation and testing of these approaches are underway in a variety of contexts and countries. However, despite its increasing use, definitions and approaches to the application of resilience for use in development practice vary widely, with inconsistent success. It was also observed during the evaluation that donors interpreted and adopted different approaches to resilience, implying different understandings of the concept and frameworks. In addition, the factors that contribute to resilient households, communities, or regions differ widely (Walsh-Dilley et al 2016).

### *Irish Aid's approach to resilience*

The concept and principles of resilience have informed the embassy's development cooperation prior to 2016 and are associated with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. A common understanding of resilience was developed by Development Cooperation Africa Division's policy brief in 2016 (DCAD Policy Unit). The policy brief defined resilience as "working with individuals, households, communities and states to build their absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacity to deal with such shocks and stresses. This allows us to identify collective outcomes across business units and sectors." (DCAD 2016, pp. 8)

The approach is underpinned by five core principles that sustain the resilience approach:

1. Start with the context
2. Be responsive
3. Invest in Partnership
4. Foster coherence and collaboration
5. Act on feedback

The concept of resilience was specifically referred to as the overarching outcome in the 2014 CSP within its logic model, stating: "poor rural households are more resilient to economic, social and environmental stresses and shocks" (GoE 2014, Annex I). In a desk review, Kajumba (2018) found that the approach was considered useful in countries where shocks and stresses such as conflict, natural disasters and climate variability consistently erode the development gains of poor and vulnerable groups. Irish Aid identified the broad applicability of the framework in its policy brief, stating that the approach to resilience "provides a common framework that is relevant across all of Irish Aid's work". However, while the term resilience is referenced in the CSP, the evaluation did not find strong documentary evidence that the approach was formally implemented<sup>16</sup> into programming in Ethiopia

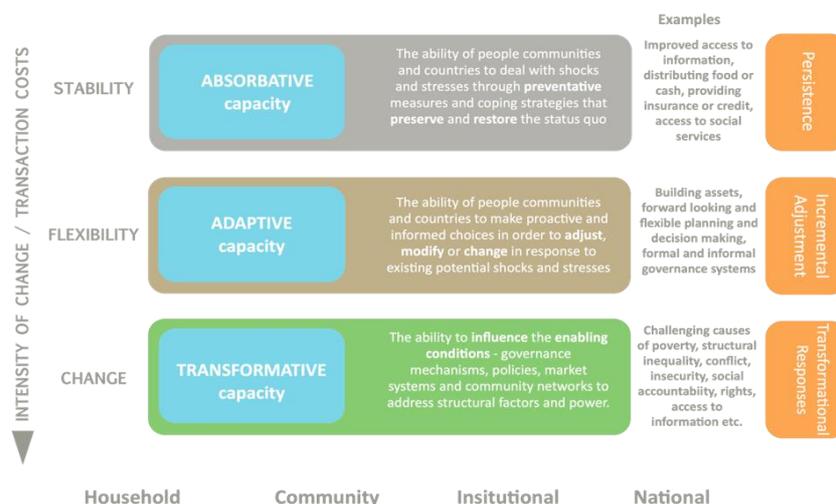
This evaluation of Irish Aid's Approach to Resilience in Ethiopia is considered to serve as an assessment of the approach to date in one of Irish Aid's largest development programmes. Of particular interest is the potential of a resilience approach to bridge the humanitarian-development divide.

In this report, the use of the resilience approach and framework refers to the conceptualisation of development where shocks and stresses (such as natural disasters and climate variability) can consistently erode the development gains of poor and vulnerable people. Building capacity to resist the impact of shocks and stresses is seen as central to achieving sustainable development gains (DCAD Policy Unit, 2016). The framework provided by the embassy is based on the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience*. The resilience framework refers to a conceptual model which the evaluation team used to assess the programme's contribution to the building of resilience capacities in Ethiopia.

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<sup>16</sup> For example, testing, validation, training or team implementation/induction

Figure 4 resilience framework



### 3.2 Programme Structure

As a means of implementing and managing the country strategy, the 2014-18 CSP has defined five output areas. These cover:

1. Social protection and Humanitarian response
2. Rural Livelihoods and Climate
3. Civil Society
4. Nutrition
5. Maternal Health

An additional two outputs were added in 2018 and 2019 to cover work to build regional interaction through the African Union, (Output 6) and work to support recently announced Government Reform (Output 7). The latter outputs were not part of the original CSP so have not formed part of the current evaluation. Table one details the grants provided to partners in each output area.

Figure 5 CSP Programme Output Areas



### 3.3 Financing

The embassy's development cooperation has been implemented with grants to government, United Nations agencies, NGO and CSO partners totalling €134 million over the five-year period. Table one shows the allocation of grants by programme output and partner<sup>17</sup>.

Grants within the CSP period range from €30,000 (Human Rights Council) to €52 million (PSNP). As part of its grant making process, the embassy both acts as an exclusive grantor to certain projects while contributing to donor consortia pooled funds in others.

Table 1 Programme Expenditure

Outcome area	Partner	Project	Programme Period		Total Grant (Euros)
<b>Output 1</b>	UNOCHA	Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund	Jan-14	Dec-18	17,535,835
	UNHCR	Protecting refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people	Jan-16	Dec-18	2,890,000
	World Food Programme	Targeted supplementary feeding programmes	Jan-16	Dec-16	3,500,000
	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources	PSNP	Jan-14	Dec-18	52,000,000
	International Development Association		Jan-14	Dec-18	1,210,000
	Subtotal				77,135,835
<b>Output 2</b>	Agricultural Transformation Agency	Community Based seed Production	Dec-13	Jan-19	2,300,000
	Consortium of NGOS	Improving livelihoods and climate resilience through adaptive research	May-14	Jan-19	6,250,000
	Tigray Farm Africa		Jan-2016	Dec-2016	400,000
	GIZ	Support for climate smart rural livelihoods and fuel-efficient cook stoves	Jan-14	Dec-18	2,220,000
	International Research for research in Agro-Forestry		Jan-14	Dec-18	910,000
	Southern agricultural research Institute	Improving livelihoods and climate resilience through adaptive research	Aug-15	Mar-19	625,000

<sup>17</sup> Figures based on Embassy Financial Statements

	Tigray Agricultural Research Institute	Improving livelihoods and climate resilience through adoptive research in Tigray	Aug-15	Jul-18	975,000
	Tigray Bureau of Agricultural and Rural Development	Community Based seed Production	Aug-15	Jul-18	2,150,000
	Adigrat Diocese Catholic Secretariat	Integrated Livelihood Improvement project (ILP)	Oct-15	Jul-18	700,000
	Subtotal				16,530,000
<b>Output 3</b>	Ethiopian Centre for Disability & Development Association	Disability Mainstreaming Partnership Programme	Jan-15	Dec-18	670,000
	Ethiopian Human Rights Commission	Advancing Access to Justice through Legal Aid	Jan-14	Dec-16	610,000
	International Development Association-World Bank	Strengthening the use of social accountability tools, and approaches.	Jan-14	Dec-17	3,100,000
	UN Women	Strengthening the use of social accountability tools, and approaches.	Jan-14	Dec-18	1,280,000
	DFID Ethiopia				70,000
	British Council	Civil Society Support Programme	Jan-14	Dec-17	2,964,165
	NGO/Private sector				137,564
	Subtotal				6,681,729
<b>Output 4</b>	Federal Ministry for Health	Support to the National Nutrition Programme - 1000 Days+	Nov-15	Dec-18	485,000
	International Potato Centre	Strengthening Institutional Systems for Scaling out and Scaling-up Orange Fleshed Sweet-Potato	Nov-13	Mar-19	2,600,000
	the Micronutrient Initiative				1,000,000
	Save the Children Fund	Scaling up Nutrition	Jul-14	Dec-18	585,000
	UNICEF	Improved Nutrition through Integrated Nutrition, Education and Social Cash Transfer.	Oct-14	Dec-18	3,659,384
	National Nutrition Programme	Nutrition Guidelines	Jan-15	Dec-15	485,000
	Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia	Nutrition Data Collection, Addis Ababa University	Jan-15	Dec-17	300,00
	Alive and Thrive	Improving Nutrition in the first 1000 days:	Jul-17	Feb-19	1,000,000

Output 5	Subtotal				9,814,384
	Federal Ministry of Health	Sustainable Development Goals Performance Fund	Jan-14	Dec-18	21,200,000
	Tigray regional Health Bureau	Strengthening the Health System of Tigray Regional State			400,000
	SNNPR Health Bureau	Strengthening the SNNPR Health System	May-17	Mar-19	300,000
	CHAI on Health Insurance	Piloting innovative solutions in Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI)	Jun-17	Jun-19	2,250,000
	Subtotal				24,150,000
	Total				134,311,948

### 3.4 Findings of the mid-term review and resilience mapping exercise

The mid-term review of the CSP (Embassy of Ireland, 2017), which included the *Results Report*, gave evidence of performance against the indicators and targets set out in the CSP's results framework and found the 2014-2018 CSP for Ethiopia to be on track. In particular, it confirmed that the programme was well aligned with the government's priorities as set out in the Growth and Transformation Plan II (GoE, 2015). The review, noted amongst other successes: the inclusion of nutrition as an important result for the PSNP programme while Ireland was the chair of the donor group; contribution to a timely response to the nationwide emergency triggered by the 2015 El Nino drought; increased access to seed within the agriculture sector through supporting the scale-up of community based seed multiplication schemes; "life support" to an embattled civil society sector; and support to the health sector which has contributed to a decline in neo natal and maternal deaths in targeted hospitals.

An internal assessment of the embassy's approach to resilience (Kajumba, 2018) found the concept to be relevant in the Ethiopian context given rising fragility and the nature of risks and shocks. The assessment, which was carried out in preparation for the final evaluation, defined resilience in the Ethiopian context and tested Irish Aid's resilience approaches across the CSP. Through a desk based review of documents, Kajumba (2018) conducted an exercise mapping the resilience framework onto the CSP. The review discussed how the CSP could potentially build resilience capacity across a range of levels - absorptive, adaptive and transformative - for individuals, households, communities and institutions and at national level. The review mapped the objectives of the CSP onto the 12 dimensional resilience framework which focussed on intention as opposed to results. Due to the desk based nature and other methodological considerations, it did not test the framework in the field. This evaluation both tests and builds upon this work to further examine the CSP through the resilience lens.

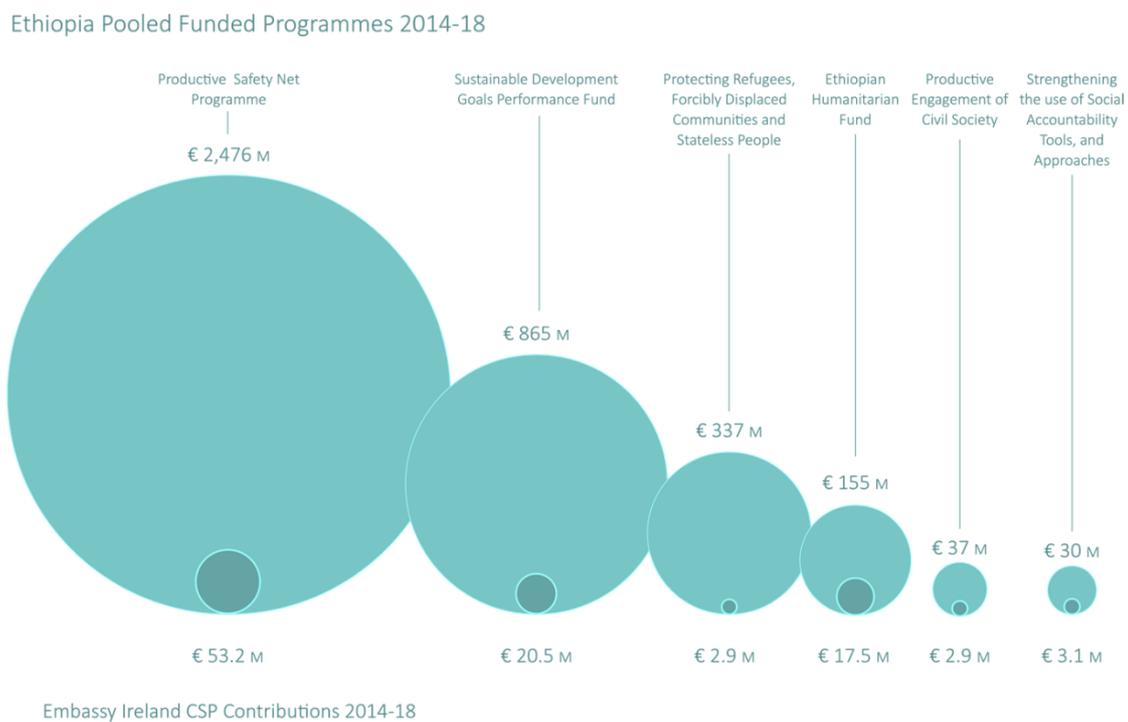
### 3.5 The embassy's contribution to consortium funded programmes

During the period of the CSP, The embassy has contributed to a number of programmes funded by a consortium of Donors and government. These programmes have been supported through the use of *pooled funds*. The largest of these has been the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), to which the embassy has contributed € 52 M (2% of total project funding) the embassy's support to the

Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund, at €17 M (11% of total project funding), represents the largest proportion of a consortium funded programme that the embassy supported during the CSP<sup>18</sup>.

Figure 4 below represents the embassy’s (dark green) contributions to pool funded programmes between 2014 and 2018.

Figure 4: The embassy’s contribution to consortium funded projects 2014 - 2018



<sup>18</sup> The embassy was the fifth largest donor to this fund during the period of the CSP after USA, UK, Germany and Sweden

## 4. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FINDINGS

### 4.1 Relevance and coherence of the CSP and resilience approach to the development needs in Ethiopia

#### Summary of Key Findings

- Programmes are closely aligned with government of Ethiopia's development priorities and *One World One Future*
- The CSP remained relevant throughout the strategy period to the changing environmental, political and humanitarian contexts in Ethiopia
- The nutrition programme is strongly relevant and closely aligned with Ethiopia's National Nutrition Programme II (NNP II)
- CSP largely remained targeted to, and relevant to the needs of the poorest
- The extent to which the coherence afforded by a framework can be said to have contributed to resilience capacity building outcomes could not be determined
- Strong coherence between the embassy's programmes and those supported by other donors
- Coherence and complementarity across output areas was generally good; however, some challenges remain (e.g. WASH and education in relation to GEWE)
- Engagement through various committees and workshops at national level brings strong coherence with other national programmes

#### Key Finding 1: Programmes are closely aligned with government of Ethiopia's development priorities and *One World One Future*

The embassy programmes under the CSP are closely aligned with government of Ethiopia's development priorities. The government's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II), incorporates valuable learning from GTP I and was constructed after wide-ranging consultation at both regional and federal levels. It contains a strong commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), regional and international economic collaboration. It also commits to tackling extreme poverty through a series of flagship projects. In addition to GTP II, the Health Sector Transformation Plan (MoH, 2015), National Nutrition Programme II (GoE, 2016), Agricultural Transformation Plan (GoE, 2015) and the Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE) (GoE, 2011) all set out national priorities with which the embassy aligns. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) is designated as a flagship project within GTP II, and the ENDEV Photo voltaic and cook stoves project incorporate technologies identified as strategically important within the CRGE.

The embassy programmes under the CSP have been closely aligned with Ireland's then Policy for International Development, *One World One Future*. The programme in Ethiopia (one of eight key partner countries in Africa) contributes to key policy decisions to build stronger economic partnerships and strengthen the Irish Government's presence on the ground in East Africa through donor platforms and coordination groups. Inclusion within the CSP of programmes that support climate smart agriculture and build resilience to drought related food insecurity reflect policy commitments to put climate change at the centre.

The decision within *One World One Future* to reinvigorate the approach to human rights and devote resources to gender equality and disability is reflected in the CSP's incorporation of work with the

Human Rights Commission, UN Women and Ethiopian Centre for Disability and Development. The policy's recognition of aid as a catalyst for development rather than its main driver is reflected in the embassy's strategy of investing in innovative field level projects which generate learning for scale up and scale out and influence policy. The policy influence and strong technical reputation the embassy has means that it pursues maximum value for money from modest resources.

**Key Finding 2: The CSP remained relevant throughout the strategy period to the changing environmental, political and humanitarian contexts in Ethiopia**

Both the Rural Livelihoods and PSNP have continued to respond to ongoing climate change. In particular, the programme responded to the increased frequency of drought that respondents at all levels reported having changed from every ten to every three years. In the context of the El Niño induced 2015/16 drought, the PSNP programme demonstrated capacity to scale up cash and food transfers to meet increased food insecurity of vulnerable households, while climate smart and conservation-focussed agricultural technologies promoted by the Improving Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience project ensured that small holder farmers were able to maintain yields through the use of drought resistant varieties and small-scale irrigation. Within the Civil Society programme, the embassy's responsive and flexible bridging funds to the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) was instrumental in sustaining Ethiopia's civil society sector during a period where acute governmental pressure threatened the sector's very existence.

**Key Finding 3: The nutrition programme is strongly relevant and closely aligned with Ethiopia's National Nutrition Programme II (NNP II)**

Nutrition has remained a government priority area throughout the period of the CSP. The embassy's programme to promote improved feeding practices and quality diet is strongly relevant and closely aligned with Ethiopia's National Nutrition Programme II (NNP II). In addition, the National Guideline on Adolescent, Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (AMIYCN) to promote optimal feeding and care practices reflects World Health Organisation recommendations. The Ethiopian Demographic Household Survey (Central Statistics Agency, 2016) found approximately 37% of children under five are stunted in Ethiopia, a decrease from a national average of 44% in 2012. Less than 7% of children under the age of 24 months consume the minimum acceptable diet. The Scaling Up Nutrition (CSP 2014 performance assessment) initiative implemented by the Government of Ethiopia has resulted in close collaboration and cooperation from national to woreda level which involved "kick starting and using existing systems, which is the only way to sustainability" (GoE regional interviewee, 2019). "The health office were working independently before; now there is good collaboration with the health office." (Government worker, 2019) This collaboration was verified in site visits through documentation (signed minutes of quarterly meetings). However, while coordination and leveraging of existing structures is there, interviewees noted implementation initiatives need to be resourced effectively to reach the poorest.

#### Key Finding 4: CSP largely remained relevant to the needs of the poorest



Throughout the strategic period, the CSP programme was largely relevant to the needs of the poorest. Food insecurity continues to be a major source of vulnerability amongst Ethiopia's poorest households. The targeting of such households within the PSNP programme was strong and involves well defined systems at national, regional and local levels. "We are satisfied with the targeting. It may not be scientific – it is community based but it keeps improving." There is specific and relevant targeting of nutrition sensitive programming to pregnant and lactating women as well as mothers with infants and children up to 24 months within projects. This is evident within projects implemented by partners such as Alive and Thrive, CIP and UNICEF who specifically target pregnant and lactating women and female headed from resource poor households as a core priority. However, aspects of programming within the Rural Livelihood and Climate programme are targeted at a level above the poorest and most vulnerable. For example, farmers with land participate in small scale irrigation and the production of improved seed varieties. The justification for this is that working with a "pyramid of poor farmers" can be effective in both supporting much needed income generation (e.g. poultry production for poor landless women) while creating employment opportunities through successful uptake of climate smart technologies by slightly better off farmers (orange fleshed sweet potato, small scale irrigation, fish ponds and bee keeping).

#### Key Finding 5: The extent to which coherence afforded by a framework can be said to have systematically contributed to resilience capacity building outcomes could not be determined

The evaluation found that while a resilience approach, in a broader sense than that implied by the framework was relevant to the CSP and that its principles can be seen in implementation. Nevertheless, it became apparent that the framework was not promoted strongly within the programming design and that there was not a conscious effort to incorporate it, *per se*. While a draft resilience policy has existed since 2013, the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience* was not formalised until 2016, half way through the implementation of the CSP. Given that a formal resilience framework was not consciously applied to programmes within the CSP, the evaluation team were unable to determine the extent to which the coherence afforded by a framework could be said to have contributed to resilience capacity building outcomes. Nevertheless, there are some retrospective examples of resilience capacity building across a range of levels and dimensions (see section 4.2). The team considered these to be effective, but not necessarily attributable to the application of the framework.

#### Key Finding 6: Strong coherence between the embassy's programmes and those supported by other donors

Coherence between the embassy's programmes and those supported by other donors across a range of sectors was also found to be strong. This has been achieved through the embassy's active engagement in donor sector related platforms and other coordination mechanisms. During the period of the CSP, the humanitarian sector work has been coordinated through the OCHA, who have administered the Ethiopian Humanitarian fund (EHF). Active communication and engagement with

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) were reported to have ensured that emergency responses delivered by all agencies were complementary and that one agency had been able to take over where another withdrew. The Humanitarian Response Donor Group (HRDG), which the embassy has also chaired during the period of the CSP, has helped to ensure that humanitarian response work supported by the donor members has been coherent and complementary. It was generally agreed that humanitarian response was going to feature in the forthcoming strategic planning period. The embassy's experience of sitting on both PSNP and HRDG placed it in a strong position to continue its leadership in ensuring coherence and complementarity across both sectors.

**Key Finding 7: Strong coherence and complementarity across output areas, however some challenges remain**

Coherence and complementarity across CSP programme output areas was found to be strong, with some good examples such as the Alive and Thrive initiative. This was amongst a number of examples where there was documented and reported evidence of the embassy actively linking programmatic themes (e.g. agriculture and nutrition) to achieve dual outcomes. There was also important inter-sectoral coordination particularly in relation to health, education and livelihoods. The work undertaken to pilot ESAP initiatives in 19 pilot woredas of the PSNP and the overall support to the health sector was also seen to be complementary and indicative of the efforts of the embassy to build inter-sectoral linkages and coordination both within the programme and amongst its partners.

There remain some challenges to complementarity and coherence within the programme, particularly with regards to the integration of WaSH and health. While programmatic themes were found to be constructively linked (in particular programme output areas four and five), some gaps exist in a coherent approach. While the proportion of electrified health clinics increased by 5% and 9% in SNNPR and Tigray regions respectively, the linking of electricity supply to health clinics that do not have Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) facilities was noted in site visits. Access to clean and hygienic maternal delivery space with running water is essential for health outcomes for women and their infants. The absence of adequate WaSH facilities will mitigate the positive impacts that the embassy's electrification projects might bring to health care in the centres that have been supported under the CSP.

**Key Finding 8: Engagement through various committees and workshops at national level brings coherence with other national programmes**

The embassy's engagement with other donors in committees, taskforces and workshops affords the opportunity for joined up responses and coherence. This engagement is reflected in several projects, such as in the area of climate change and 'Scaling up Nutrition'. The coalition provided essential support and technical expertise for the development of the National Nutrition Programme II. Within Irish Aid, the Community Based Adaptation Workshop brings partners and advisors together with mission staff on an annual basis at HQ level. This was particularly appreciated by partnering NGO staff, who also had opportunities to participate and share experiences at particular events within the Africa region.

## 4.2 Effectiveness in adopting a resilience approach and building resilience capacity

The evaluation team have used specific definitions of the terms resilience, resilience approach, resilience capacity and resilience framework in relation to the evaluation. These are set out in Section 0.

### 4.2.1 Adopting and applying the Resilience Approach

#### Summary of Key Findings

- There has been a mixed level of uptake of the resilience approach across output areas
- The framework may not always provide the most appropriate lens for considering all components of the CSP
- Preserving the status quo of the poorest may be insufficient when it already threatens their wellbeing.
- Certain factors may facilitate or challenge the application of the resilience approach

#### Key Finding 9: There has been a mixed level of uptake of the resilience approach across output areas

Outputs one and two teams (Social protection, Humanitarian response, rural livelihoods and climate) were familiar with the approach and its language. In output areas three, four and five (Civil Society, Nutrition, Maternal Health), teams were familiar with the approach; however, it was not promoted strongly within the programming design and there was not a conscious effort to incorporate it per se. Staff and partners who did not use the framework identified the following constraints:

- The existence of competing frameworks being promoted nationally by donor partners<sup>19</sup>
- Varying definitions of resilience amongst partners and donors
- Varying interpretations of resilience across team members

Interviews and analysis suggest that the application of the resilience framework may not be equally useful across all output areas. Some examples of programming that built absorptive, adaptive and transformative resilience capacity include: 1) the planning, transfer and disbursement of food and cash resources to targeted vulnerable households as part of the PSNP programme to build absorptive resilience to drought induced food insecurity; 2) the promoting of climate smart practice in smallholder agriculture to build adaptive capacity amongst poor farmers; 3) the promotion of fuel efficient stoves to reduce deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions and build transformative capacity at a national level. Partners within the Civil Society, Nutrition and Maternal Health output areas were not familiar with the framework.

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<sup>19</sup> See footnote 11

**Key Finding 10: Preserving the status quo of the poorest may be insufficient when it already threatens their wellbeing**

The resilience framework at absorptive level highlights the importance of restoring and preserving the status quo when building absorptive capacity (see Annex 2); however, preserving the status quo of the poorest may be insufficient when it already threatens their wellbeing. The Irish Aid Policy Brief on Resilience states: “It is important to distinguish between poverty and vulnerability. Those most exposed to, and impacted by, shocks and stresses may not be the poorest, but the viability of those who aren’t the poorest may be important to the poorest – e.g. landowners employing day labour” (pp.6). All interviewed recipients of nutrition interventions stated that women prioritise their family’s diet over themselves, a finding consistent with recent UN Women research in Sub Saharan Africa (UN Women, 2018). When focus group participants were questioned about their resilience capacity at an adaptive level (i.e. “What will happen if the rain does not come in the next fortnight?”), they reported they “would not survive if the rains didn’t come”. This finding is reflective of Béné et al. (2014) core argument, in which the authors do not consider resilience to be a pro poor concept.

**Key Finding 11: Certain factors facilitated or challenged the application of the resilience approach**

The DCAD policy brief implies that uptake of the resilience approach should be consistent across development cooperation programmes. However, the evaluation found factors facilitated or challenged the application of the approach. For example, the use of the resilience approach is facilitated when:

- Programme/project focus tackles a number of dimensions of vulnerability (e.g. livelihoods, agriculture and climate change)
- Resilience capacity change can be observed at individual and household level (PSNP, Livelihoods and Agriculture)
- Programmes or projects are shaped by the embassy’s direct grant support,
- Partners are familiar with concepts of resilience stemming from the nature of their work (agriculture and climate change)
- Projects are designed from scratch using the resilience approach as a foundation

Use of the resilience approach is challenging when:

- Programme/project focus is on a single dimension of vulnerability e.g. nutrition, maternal health where all components are not coherently linked to the same communities receiving assistance
- Resilience capacity is being built at a broader, system level where it may be harder to observe (governance and civil society, health)
- Programmes or projects are shaped by wider consortiums and where resilience may not be coherent with other approaches (e.g. EHF)
- Partners are unfamiliar with concept (civil society and governance)
- The resilience approach is “retro-fitted” to the project

### 4.3 Building resilience capacity

#### Summary of Key Findings

- There are good examples of how the CSP was able to build capacities at absorptive, adaptive and transformative levels
- The PSNP programme is widely acknowledged as having helped avert a national famine during the El Niño induced drought of 2015/16
- Embassy supported farmers of climate smart agriculture interventions fared better than non-beneficiaries during a period of drought in 2015-16
- While resilience building outcomes are more challenging to measure in the Civil Society and Accountability programme, there have been important achievements
- National level data (CSO 2016) has revealed significant improvements in maternal mortality rates (MMR) since 2011

**Key Finding 12:** There are good examples of how the CSP was able to build capacities at absorptive, adaptive and transformative levels; however, it is not equally implemented across all programmes

A desk based review mapping the potential for building resilience capacity was carried out in 2018 (Kajumba, 2018) and highlights some examples of how the CSP could potentially build at absorptive, adaptive and transformative levels. The report concluded that this greatly contributed to addressing poverty, vulnerability and inequality in Ethiopia. It noted, however, that resilience capacity is built over the long term and that results in many cases are therefore at intermediate level.

This resilience capacity is also not equally observed across all programmes. Programmes within output areas one and two (Social Protection; Rural Livelihoods & Climate) all demonstrate outcome level results measured through evaluations which can be coupled with a building of resilience capacity amongst participants. This is consistent with other donor models who use the resilience approach for climate, agriculture and livelihoods. Programmes that form part of outputs three, four and five (Civil Society, Nutrition, Maternal Health) have all achieved significant results; however, the approach was not consciously applied. It may be argued that the approach was not always appropriate.

**Key Finding 13:** The PSNP programme is widely acknowledged as having helped avert a national famine during the El Niño induced drought of 2015/16

Food shortages in 2015/16 were significantly greater than previous episodes, with 18 million people in need of a food response. A potential famine was averted largely as a result of the Government's capacity to reallocate resources and respond swiftly to those most affected through distribution mechanisms that had already been established by the PSNP (Dorosh & Rashid, 2015). The programme has continued to contribute to household resilience capacity through a decrease in the annual food gap. In the period 2016 – 2018, the average household food gap amongst PSNP beneficiaries decreased from 2.4 to 1.3 months in Highland areas, dietary diversity increased from 4.2 to 4.3 and tropical livestock holdings from 7291 to 9259 (IFPRI, IDS, Dadimos, CSA, 2019). The provision of cash and/or food in return for labour to beneficiaries has supported public works which engage in soil and

water conservation, establish nurseries, strengthen forestry and constructing and maintain rural roads. A mapping exercise carried out by the evaluation team suggests that the PSNP intends to contribute to resilience capacity building at multiple levels (from institution up to national) and across a range of resilience dimensions (absorptive, adaptive and transformational). The intention of the approach is represented in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Mapping of the PSNP project showing resilience building activities across a range of levels and resilience dimensions



**Key Finding 14:** The embassy supported farmers of climate smart agriculture interventions fared better than non-beneficiaries during a period of drought in 2015-16

Within the Rural Livelihoods and Climate Programme, qualitative evidence from programme officers and an end of project evaluation suggests that beneficiaries of the consortium’s Climate Smart Agriculture projects fared better during the drought than non-beneficiaries (Muir, 2018, p. 18). During the El Nino drought in 2015/2016, support enabled the farmers to cover 8,305 Ha of land and produce a reasonable amount of crop yeilds (Consortium Annual Report, 2017, p 23); this is an example of absorptive capacity building as beneficiaries had a coping strategy to deal with the shock. Qualitative evidence and the consortium’s end of project evaluation both suggest that supported farmers in the consortium’s projects fared better during the drought than non-beneficiaries; this is verified by the Lake Hawassa Longitudinal Study conducted by IIED. The main messages from the study are:

- Underperformance of income within treatment households in 2015 was reversed in 2016
- Crop, livestock and total income was higher than the comparative control cases in the study and treatment households have marginally higher mean crop production compared to counterfactual households in 2016, with the sustainable intensification and conservation agriculture interventions performing best
- Consumption of on-farm produce are broadly positive for treatment households, with a decrease in performance last year when compared to control households now reversed. Disaggregating by intervention type, households receiving sustainable intensification and

conservation agriculture interventions both recorded greater mean consumption of on-farm produce than the counterfactual in 2016 (Barrett, 2017, p. 3).



Small Scale Irrigation Project supported Farmers, Galo Argessa Kebele, Hawassa Zuria District

#### 4.3.1 Managing Risk within the CSP

##### Summary of Key Findings

- The embassy is aware of risk associated with implementation of the CSP and has taken steps to mitigate associated threats to the programme
- The range of programme modalities employed by the Embassy within the CSP have benefits in spreading risk
- Regular engagement between embassy staff and partners contributes to risk management at programme level.
- Strong project and partner management systems also contribute to robust fiduciary and performance risk management
- The embassy are seen as champions of early innovation, which requires an element of risk taking

**Key Finding 15:** The embassy is aware of risk associated with implementation of the CSP and has taken steps to mitigate associated threats to the programme

The process of constructing the CSP has included the identification of critical success factors (based on key assumptions regarding the operating environment in Ethiopia). These have, in turn, allowed the embassy to identify key risks and to construct a risk matrix that outlines remedial actions should

identified risks present themselves. The environment in Ethiopia during the period of the CSP has been marked by a high level of uncertainty, with major events such as drought (triggered by the 2015/16 El Niño event), political upheaval and ethnic conflict all serving to shape the context and the nature of programming. This was an identified risk in the embassy's risk matrix, and controls were in place. The embassy used an adaptive management approach to react constructively to all of these; additional funding was secured from HQ to address increased humanitarian need. Uncertainty within the social, political and environmental contexts looks set to continue during the period of the next Mission Strategy and the handling of associated risk is likely to remain an important aspect of programme management.

**Key Finding 16:** The range of programme modalities employed by the embassy within the CSP have benefits in spreading risk

The larger programmes that receive support from (e.g. PSNP, OCHA EHF, SDG Performance Fund, ESAP and CSSP) are supported through pooled funds where a consortium of donors contribute to a single project, inherently spreading risk. In addition, certain projects, such as PSNP, have a specific programme component that focuses on strengthening internal management systems of the programme. In this project regular six-monthly reviews are carried out at federal, regional and local levels to identify areas of challenge and to identify remedial actions. Joint Monitoring visits and an independent audit process, to which the Internal Auditor at the embassy contributes, further supports risk mitigation in this modality.

**Key Finding 17:** Regular engagement between embassy staff and partners contributes to risk management at programme level

The evaluation team found regular and active management of risk, with staff demonstrating detailed knowledge of partners and the ability to explain detailed aspects of project performance, deviations from work plans, mitigation and instances of partnership termination when appropriate. Partners themselves referred to regular visits by embassy technical staff, field work and prompt reactions to reports and requests. The embassy and its peers engage in the regular sharing of information and documents within established Donor platforms. This constitutes a collective risk management strategy where many donors partner with a common set of local NGOs.

**Key Finding 18:** Strong project and partner management systems also contribute to robust fiduciary and performance risk management

Astute partnership selection, together with agreed design and appraisal of proposals, is a foundation upon which the embassy draws up memoranda of understanding (MOUs) on a five-year basis. Partners subsequently submit annual plans and report on progress with these plans regularly. Ongoing engagement between embassy staff and partners using these instruments allows performance to be monitored and deviations from agreed plans and/or expenditure to be identified promptly and examined or queried.

**Key Finding 19:** The embassy are seen as champions of early innovation, which requires an element of risk taking

The NGO consortium, who implement the Improving Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience project, noted that the embassy has given them the opportunity to adopt certain programme components that might be regarded as risky by some donors. Climate Smart Agriculture was considered a new and uncharted area. The consortium approach with the embassy created a critical mass of knowledge, which is not common with other donors. The benefits, however, are that the learning has allowed them to create and disseminate a critical mass of knowledge about particular agricultural techniques. The consortium report that this approach is uncommon amongst donors. The Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) project aims to be transformative at a national scale should all conditionalities be met (the poorest purchasing health insurance, MIS integrating with multiple systems, health clinics having electricity and computers, the government implementing the use of the software etc). This is a high risk project, with many critical factors outside the influence of the embassy or CHAI, making it difficult to ascertain the likelihood or probability of achieving the intended outcomes. Both CHAI and the embassy reported to the evaluation team the risks are managed. There is a large reliance on exogenous factors outside of the control of the embassy's influence, with any one of these factors providing major challenges. For example, MIS, uptake of health insurance, and quality of health centres and posts are a challenge for people paying for their use. The embassy have reported to be managing well through frequent communication and risk management strategies.

#### 4.4 Integration and alignment of gender and women's empowerment

##### Summary of Key Findings

- The CSP was broadly aligned with international human rights standards as well as international and regional normative gender frameworks endorsed by the Ethiopian government. However, structural barriers persist
- Gender was an area of genuine advocacy, targeting and programming which was prioritised across programme output areas. The embassy were widely acknowledged as thought leaders and strong advocates for GEWE in national platforms
- While targeting women is clearly present, moving beyond this to transformative change, equality and genuine empowerment remains a challenge. In some programmes, women were inadvertently excluded
- Implementing partners reported their appreciation of importance of gender equality. However, the implementation of thorough gender-sensitive analysis and programming needs to be improved within partner organisations to make genuine advancements in empowerment

**Key Finding 20:** The CSP was broadly aligned with international human rights standards as well as international and regional normative gender frameworks endorsed by the Ethiopian government. However, structural barriers persist

The CSP was broadly aligned with international human rights standards and international and regional normative frameworks endorsed by the Ethiopian government. These include the Sustainable

Development Goals, the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

The UN Women programme was identified as one of the strongest programmes for GEWE, as it was specifically designed in accordance with international human rights principles (UN goals, national policies, priorities and needs) and provided a holistic approach to empowerment. Within a very modest budget, the programme responded to a number of complex challenges, including attempts to redress and harmonize federal and regional laws, providing safe houses and assistance to victims (including education and economic empowerment) and providing training and awareness raising to judges, prosecutors, police and community members. Safe houses served approximately 1102 women and girl survivors and their 537 children who were affected by violence. In addition to supporting women and girls and advocating strongly for the change of harmful family laws in the Somali region, substantial progress was made with the inclusion of a Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) module within the Ethiopian National Demographic and Health Survey 2016. The importance of this should be underscored, as it provides the first national estimate of regional variations and will assist with national priorities in gender sensitive programming.

Despite the notable successes, gender equality and women's empowerment remains a challenge in Ethiopia. As one respondent noted, "While there are many good policy frameworks, laws are not well developed, and the Government has a reluctance to legislate for issues beyond the home front door." Interviews with embassy staff, partners and recipients of services indicated that strong gender inequalities are entrenched in social norms. Harmful gender norms were challenged through social mobilisation (835 women's development groups were trained on addressing VAWG, Harmful Traditional Practices and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights). The UN Women evaluation noted many areas of improvement (for their country-wide programme); however, the embassy-funded components were praised as essential and holistic service provision.

**Key Finding 21:** Gender was an area of genuine advocacy, targeting and programming that was prioritised across programme output areas. The embassy were widely acknowledged as thought leaders and strong advocates for GEWE in national platforms.

The embassy team reported a strong commitment to GEWE. They also reported that they are recognised as advocates in both national platforms and at community level. Gender was an area of programming that was prioritised across all programme output areas. Donors and implementing partners alike noted that the embassy has been a strong advocate in promoting gender within programming and that it consistently followed up and monitored interventions.

Partners and donors reported that a strong commitment to gender was evident, in particular among locally engaged staff within the embassy, who also share their vast institutional knowledge among the partner and donor community. Interviewees perceived that the embassy was one of the most serious donors on the matter of gender. One donor noted "Ireland walks the walk more than almost all others given its capacity and on-the-ground experience". The donor added that more work needs to be done beyond targeting to achieve transformative change and empowerment. By doing so, the donor noted the embassy would be placed alongside more readily recognized GEWE champions and provide the embassy with an authoritative voice in policy dialogue forums.

In 2018, the embassy commissioned a gender audit. While a useful exercise, it was reported to be received with mixed response as several of the recommendations were not feasible or pragmatic to implement. Embassy teams were somewhat self-critical and noted that some aspects of gender programming had largely been a bureaucratic exercise and that GEWE should be made a stronger priority.

**Key Finding 22:** Targeting women is clearly present, yet moving beyond this to transformative change, equality and genuine empowerment remains a challenge. In some programmes, women were not always included.

Efforts to target both women and men are evident across the programme. In particular, pregnant women and lactating mothers have been the primary targets within the nutrition and health programmes. The NGO consortium's programme focuses on gender and nutrition sensitive sources of livelihood. As part of this output, women who were relatively literate and were early adopters of improved technologies and practices were selected to become poultry suppliers. The design of PSNP gives priority to female headed households and the programme has introduced measures to remove barriers to participation by women within the Public Works components.

In some programmes, women were not always equally included (IIED, 2019). This was noted specifically within the Improving Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience Programme. The seed multiplication intervention was designed to challenge the monopoly that the government and commercial sector enjoys over seed production and distribution by demonstrating that smallholder farmers can produce environmentally appropriate and affordable seed. However, the minimum plot-size required to generate a "viable seed production cluster" (0.5 hectares) meant that women were structurally excluded. Similarly, in projects that promoted small-scale irrigation and agroforestry nurseries, men were, for the same reason, the main beneficiaries. Other partners asserted their appreciation of the importance of gender equality. However, partners reported that training was usually only accessed by men. It was difficult to ascertain the representativeness of this statement, as gender disaggregated data in reporting was inconsistent across partners.

**Key Finding 23:** Implementing partners reported their appreciation of the importance of gender equality. However, the implementation of thorough gender-sensitive analysis and programming needs to be improved within partner organisations to make genuine advancements in empowerment

The majority of partners reported that the embassy consistently persisted in adopting gender as a priority in programming. However, several agriculture and livelihoods partners reported that they were not aware gender was a priority.

### **Women and decision making and economic empowerment**

Despite efforts in programming, partners reported that women needed their husband's permission to receive health checks, visit the clinic and spend money on their health. National level data (CSA, 2018) found that 71% of married women participate in some decision making within the home related to their own health care, household purchases and visits to family, with 10% having no power to decide. It is important to note that large regional variations exist and field work was primarily conducted in the SNNPR region.

While many partner reports indicated improvements in decision making within the household, when questioned, it related to decision making around root crops, which were already traditionally within the woman's realm. A partner reported success in decision making and women's economic empowerment, with women having autonomy over income from chickens. However, when the women themselves were asked they reported the husband had the decision-making powers.

The women's focus groups were invaluable for unpacking discussions around women's traditional roles and sphere of influence. In another community who had benefitted from a joint intervention with PSNP, the men reported that there was joint decision making on PSNP income. In the women's focus group, one woman noted "before PSNP, the man would take all the money and use it without consulting, this isn't a problem now with awareness training". However, the women also confirmed that at best, decision making was semi-consultative.

### **Gender balance of partner employees and field visits**

During interviews, the evaluation team found a clear and consistent gender imbalance within partner staff as well as programming. The exceptions were UN Women (and partners) and ECDD, who apply assertive measures in their employment practices, the latter having a 50:50 gender quota for staff. When conducting fieldwork, women were rarely represented in partner interviews. During field visits, women and girls were consistently underrepresented or absent during project site visits. In addition, interviews were most often dominated by men, while women spoke during designated women's focus groups. Most meetings were organised and facilitated by men, and meetings themselves with government officials at local, regional and federal level did not have balanced gender representation. An implementing partner representative recognised the same challenge and stated that, while appreciating the importance of gender balance in the workplace, the situation was far from perfect: "In our unit we are always encouraged to recruit more women; there is always room for improvement". Nevertheless, women's voices can and should be included in all discussions.

### **Articulated requests for strengthening GEWE approach**

Targeting of women and men within the CSP has been broadly strong; however, addressing the structural barriers to women's empowerment and gender equality remains an area of significant work. This was emphasised by donors, embassy and partner staff who stated that when it came to equality and empowerment, a plethora of structural barriers remain. Embassy staff and partners reported the need to strengthen capacity in GEWE and gender sensitive analysis and programming. Several activities within partner reports did not disaggregate data according to gender, making it difficult to ascertain reach. Individual and household data was captured in some programmes; however, this was limited by qualitative reporting such as "the woman is breastfeeding more". Both embassy staff and partners recognised that additional capacity was needed if significant progress was to be made. In addition, while it is acknowledged that the embassy cannot and should not "do everything", a large gap exists in GEWE programming in the area of education as it is central to the empowerment of women and girls. Given the high female illiteracy rates of 58% nationally (CSA, 2018), strong gender analysis and consideration needs to be given in relation to a coherent approach to GEWE programming in the future in light of Ireland's development priorities.

## 4.5 The extent to which the embassy used learning to influence policy and practice

### Summary of Key Findings

- Donors and Partners identify The embassy as strong collaborators in furthering policy agendas through advocacy within platform
- The embassy's engagement with donor and programme coordination platforms have lent weight and amplified the voice for policy influencing

### Key finding 24: Donors and partners identify the embassy as strong collaborators in furthering policy agendas through advocacy

Donors and partners identify the embassy as strong collaborators in furthering policy agendas through advocacy within platforms. Interviews and documentation reflected the strong level of collaboration, engagement and influence of the embassy in donor groups and national platforms. Technical expertise, commitment and stamina were cited as core contributions of the embassy to national dialogue. The embassy's expertise, experience and feedback were reported as highly valued, while staff were described by peers as "principled, articulate and solutions focused". In addition, donors pointed out that the embassy was often able to facilitate dialogue between partners in challenging environments for collective benefit. Examples of donor platforms and coordinating groups that the embassy has actively engaged with over the period of the CSP have included the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP), paving the way for amended legislation for the civil society sector. The embassy has engaged with government alongside other donors to coordinate and harmonize support to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national development plan and the SDGs through the Development assistance group (DAG). The embassy has helped to ensure focus coherence in humanitarian response as part of the Humanitarian Donor Response Group (HDRG). The embassy has also played active roles in coordination groups of major programmes including the ESAP and PSNP. The embassy has acted as chair of a number of these groups during the period of the CSP.

### Key Finding 25: The embassy's engagement with donor and programme coordination platforms have lent weight and amplified the voice for policy influencing

Engagement with coordination platforms offers an opportunity to contribute to policy dialogue and, importantly, provides the embassy with a "seat at the table" alongside donors who often bring much larger development budgets to bear. Pursuing policy issues with government was acknowledged to be more effective when pursued through a process where donors enter into dialogue with "one voice". Ireland's contribution through such platforms has consequently added significant value to the grant making process. As well as affording significant respect amongst its peers, it has resulted in the embassy securing a stature that significantly exceeds its size.

The evaluation team learned that the embassy has led at least two high level policy dialogues with government around the plight of persons displaced as result of ethnic conflict. The embassy, as chair of the HRDG, coordinated urgent dialogue amongst donors, led two high level site visits to affected

areas and engaged government over the plight of IDPs forced to return to conflict areas. Peers reported that other small donors appreciated the embassy's stance in demonstrating that "one does not have to have a big budget to take on a leadership role."

## 5. ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

In addition to the information uncovered through the use of the designated evaluation questions, the evaluation team uncovered other findings which are potentially of use to the embassy. These are summarised in the section below.

### 5.1 Stamina, effectiveness and foresight of the embassy team

#### Summary of Key Findings

- Stamina, effectiveness and foresight of the embassy team was notable
- Significant achievements have occurred in outputs 3-5 despite the building resilience policy brief not being consciously applied
- Although nutrition and diet diversification are priorities, food insecurity was reported as a major challenge by interviewees
- The evaluation found that the embassy adapted to the changing context in which the programme operated in across the course of the CSP

#### Key Finding 26: Stamina, effectiveness and foresight of the embassy team was notable

It is essential to underscore the constraining human rights environment in which the embassy, donors and partners were operating until the recent amendment to the Charities and Societies Proclamation (No.621/2009) in early 2019. In light of this backdrop, there have been many notable achievements by the embassy in this area. The crucial support to the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) by the embassy (especially when other donors were absent) helped ensure civil society survival despite a highly challenging operational environment and, indeed, it was reported that the investment provided a “life line” for CSSP<sup>20</sup>. Through the ESAP programme, 198,206 service users engaged in interface meetings, resulting in 366 service improvements within their communities. This has resulted in leveraging of basic services such as libraries, books, segregated toilet facilities in schools and access to water points, and a marked increase in the improvement of relationships between communities and government which were previously strained.

Through the foresight, technical competence and maintenance of core Irish values demonstrated by the embassy team, essential support was provided that helped ensure CSOs are in a position to respond as the environment improves. Ireland’s contribution should not be underestimated in this regard.

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<sup>20</sup> During the interim funding period, 577 CSOs/NGOs received grants, who would not have otherwise received support

**Key Finding 27: Significant achievements have occurred in outputs 3-5 despite the building resilience policy brief approach not being consciously applied**

In addition to the notable efforts of the UN Women's<sup>21</sup> programmes supported by the embassy discussed earlier, significant achievements have occurred in outputs 3-5 despite resilience not being consciously applied. Examples included the provision of safe houses during severe crises affecting internally displaced people and a project in Hawassa whereby over 200 women and children prisoners have received separate accommodation and support services (education and vocational skills) within the prison<sup>22</sup>. A government official reported that as a result of these services, prisoners are less volatile and the project has been rolled out to other prisons in the regions.

ECDD<sup>23</sup> were a notable partner, as they applied a human rights approach through service delivery through existing governance structures. This work helped to develop awareness and promote inclusive education, health, research<sup>24</sup>, community development and livelihoods<sup>25</sup> work for people with disabilities. ECDD reported that they were one of several CSO groups that lobbied for the amendment to the Charities and Societies Proclamation (No.621/2009).

**Key Finding 28: National level data (CSO 2016) has revealed significant improvements in maternal mortality rates (MMR) since 2011 and nutrition outcomes**

The embassy team, in collaboration with donors, partners and government, have achieved significant footholds in the areas of health and nutrition. MMR has decreased from 676 in 2011 to 412 per 100,000 live births in 2016. While evaluators could not ascertain that there is a direct correlation between this result and the embassy's efforts as part of the joint consortium, reducing MMR was a goal of the Ethiopian national strategy, the SDG joint pooled fund and CSP 2014. The embassy initiated and led a process which culminated in the re-programming of USD\$19.7 million from the Sustainable Development Goals Performance Fund (SDG-PF) to the Ministry of Health which contributed to new cases of acute watery diarrhoea dropping to less than 1,000 per week over eight weeks.

Partner and embassy reports, as well as interviews and site visits, indicated strong evidence that the poorest communities are being targeted effectively in output areas 3-5<sup>26</sup>. A range of approaches were applied, including grass roots projects, institutionalisation, and leveraging existing structures and systems at local and national levels.

The CIP programme reported distribution of over 16.6 million orange fleshed sweet potato<sup>27</sup> (OFSP) cuttings to 34,511 households<sup>28</sup>, indicating the wide reach of the project. Pregnant and lactating women and female headed households were target cohorts, however an interviewee reported the

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<sup>21</sup> See section 4.3

<sup>22</sup> Previously, women and children were housed with male inmates

<sup>23</sup> Direct partner funded by the Embassy. Amongst many of its activities, approximately 1,256 service providers received disability inclusiveness training (including schools, offices, health centres, government facilities), with 27 facility modifications to provide accessibility for people with disabilities as well as 5276 community members included in disability awareness community conversations.

<sup>24</sup> ECDD have also lobbied for the inclusion of a disability module in the EQOL survey, which concluded people with disabilities are structurally excluded from health services, opportunities for education, work and community participation.

<sup>25</sup> Economic opportunities of people with disabilities were achieved as a result of the project. In one site visit, as a result of ECDD advocacy, an employer hired 15 people with disabilities and supervisors have been trained in sign language.

<sup>26</sup> See targeting challenges discussed in finding 4 related to agriculture and livelihoods

<sup>27</sup> A potential coherence issue was noted by the evaluation team, with CIP also promoting Irish potatoes through another donor in overlapping regions.

<sup>28</sup> Source: CIP end line evaluation

difficulty in supporting women farmers as there were structural barriers to women accessing land. CIP have demonstrated strong evidence of the institutionalisation of OFSP both in relation to government policy (strategy, training, etc.) as well its integration into traditional diets.<sup>29</sup>

**Key finding 29:** Although nutrition diet diversification are priorities, food insecurity was reported as a major challenge by interviewees

The embassy's work is a critical component of a national effort to address nutrition challenges. The importance of nutrition was found in a baseline survey of 432 households commissioned by the embassy. It found high rates of exclusive breastfeeding and, conversely, low diet diversity among children in the selected woredas. The prevalence of anaemia among children (67%), adolescent girls (32.8%) and lactating (27.2%) and pregnant women (33.4%) was high across sampled woredas. Stunting, wasting and underweight prevalence accounts for 16.4%, 8.5% and 12.4% respectively (Ethiopian Public Health Institute Food Science and Nutrition Directorate 2017).

Notably, all recipients of interventions interviewed reported that food insecurity is a major challenge which impacts upon their ability to diversify their diets. The prevalence of food insecurity is unknown, despite high rates of undernutrition reported across multiple sources (CSO 2011; CSO 2016; Moss et al. 2018). While food production is reported to be increasing generally, food insecurity compounded by climate change could be an issue in some areas (UNFAO 2017; Johnston and Wall, 2019). This may impact the effectiveness of diversification interventions where the focus is on teaching poor households how to diversify their diets (and infants' diets) through complementary feeding practices. A kebele health post interviewee noted that over 20% of households in the community they serve experienced food insecurity.

**Key finding 30:** Health systems are severely challenged

The embassy has focussed its supports on areas of health system strengthening under output five. Government reports and interviews with local and national government officials confirmed that health systems are severely challenged at a primary and tertiary level. One government official noted in the evaluation: "This is a huge country with needs from primary health care to cancer care that we can't hold on our own... we are constantly firefighting". Challenges include under-resourcing, staffing, pharmaceuticals, training, infrastructure, MIS, M&E. For example, one health extension worker reported that she serves 5,000 individuals. A senior government official also confirmed many facilities lack running water, sanitation and electricity, with 52% of 17,000 posts equipped with electricity and water. While the support for health system strengthening is an urgent requirement for the Ethiopian Government, it is worth noting that Output Five: Increase use of improved maternal health care

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<sup>29</sup> In site visits, interviews reported evidence of institutionalisation from practice at Farmer Training Centre up to inclusion of OFSP in federal registry of listings, curriculum and training materials. CIP reported an increase in exclusive breastfeeding up to six months in addition to complementary feeding of nutrient rich foods. The Food Consumption Score (FCS) and Dietary Diversity Index (DDI) analysis results show that the project has positive change in consumption behaviour of the households. During 2014-2015, 18,909 households were growing and consuming OFSP in 20 districts in Tigray and the Southern Regions. In the same period, 18,450 school children were consuming OFSP as part of their school meal in 42 schools in the two regions. An increased proportion of households consuming Vitamin A and iron rich foods was reported in the CSP 2014 performance assessment. It is not possible to accurately determine the effectiveness of nutrition interventions funded by the embassy at the individual or household level in relation to micronutrient deficiency. However, national datasets from the Demographic Household Survey (2011, 2016) reflects small gains at a national level. Consumption of food rich in vitamin A increased from 26% in 2011 to 38% in 2016 in children age 6-23 months. Iron consumption also increased slight from 13% in 2011 to 22% in 2016. The coverage of iodised salt has significantly increased over the last 5 years from 15% (2011) to 89% (2016).

services by poor women implies a targeted approach to maternal health. However, the vast majority of funds appear to be allocated to federally administered general health systems support and procurement, rather than maternal health care services for poor women directly.

## 5.2 Adaptation and flexibility

### Summary of Key Findings

- The evaluation found that the embassy adapted to the changing context in which the programme operated in across the course of the CSP

**Key Finding 31:** The evaluation found that the embassy adapted to the changing context in which the programme operated in across the course of the CSP

The embassy's approach to adaptive management in the face of changing contexts was reported to have served it well in making sure that the programme continued to deliver development results and remained appropriate to beneficiary needs. Inter-ethnic conflict, the opening of a space for civil society and a climate induced drought all shaped the way in which the CSP operated. Inter-ethnic tensions, regional instability, conflict and their spill over has resulted in increasing numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This has shaped the nature of the embassy and their partners' humanitarian response, moving from a slow onset emergency to one that emerges rapidly. This was reported to be well supported by the embassy's flexible and timely approach to emergency response funding, in addition to its strong leadership in advocating for greater recognition amongst senior government officials and Donors of the plight of IDP's.

The CSP period included a climate induced drought which was one of the most severe in recent Ethiopian history. The event not only threatened to derail CSP livelihoods projects, but also placed additional pressure on Humanitarian Responses. An adaptive approach allowed the embassy to respond to the change in context and use existing CSP programmes to provide much needed support to those who were especially vulnerable.

## 5.3 Defining and measuring performance

### Summary of Key Findings

- Important outcome level results are not always specifically articulated within the CSP. Policy influencing may be articulated in the next strategy.
- The way in which the CSP Performance Measurement Framework has been constructed presents challenges to rigorously measuring its performance
- Partner evaluations vary in terms of methodologies and rigour
- Peers report a number of ways in which the embassy has added value to its development cooperation programme by moving beyond the grant-making process

**Key Finding 32:** Important outcome level results are not always specifically articulated within the CSP. Policy influencing may be articulated in the next strategy.

The embassy has directed significant effort (and achieved noteworthy success) in influencing policy, practice and institutional behavioural change amongst government and partners; however, these important outcome level results have not been specifically articulated within the CSP, nor are there mechanisms in place for measuring performance in this area. Policy influence is an important step in achieving sustainable outcomes for citizens (Segone, 2010), while institutional behavioural change is often an important component in leveraging policy change (ODI, 2009). The CSP identifies policy dialogue and influence as a strategy for achieving results within each programme output area, however it does not currently consider this as a result in itself, nor are there means within the CSP to measure achievements in this area. The current approach to assessing performance of the CSP using a results framework incorporating high-level, national performance indicators risks losing many of these important accomplishments.

**Key Finding 33:** The way in which the CSP Performance Measurement Framework has been constructed presents challenges to rigorously measuring its performance

This stems from the need to fulfil two tasks: 1) adding up impact *across* the programme outputs to determine if the CSP's high-level outcome has been achieved<sup>30</sup>; and 2) answering the question “*Are our interventions working?*” The diverse nature and scale of projects within the CSP means that consolidating their outcome level results and linking these to national-level indicators defined within the CSP logic model is a challenging task which, even if it were achieved, presents issues of attribution<sup>31</sup>. The higher-level results of the CSP have been assigned national level indicators – while these have been measured (e.g. as part of the MTR) it is technically challenging to determine the extent to which the embassy's programming has contributed to these. Consequently, there is a disjoint between measuring results at project and CSP level.

**Key Finding 34:** Partner evaluations vary in terms of methodologies and rigour

In projects where the embassy has significant control and is the exclusive grant maker (e.g. Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience), it has been possible to commission and carry out longitudinal studies, complete with counterfactuals. As a result, the embassy can confidently claim that changes in beneficiary well-being are the direct result of the project intervention. In others (e.g. support to Ministry of Health) the embassy has been obliged to rely on government progress reports which primarily measure output results using performance indicators at national level. This makes it difficult to imply attribution or contribution to the embassy support. In other instances, qualitative data has been used to measure results where quantitative data is more appropriate<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> The CSP high level outcome is stated as “Poor, rural households are more resilient to economic social and environmental stresses and shocks”

<sup>31</sup> Attribution is a term used to describe the extent to which a programme can be confidently claimed to be the cause of observed developmental change

<sup>32</sup> Examples include targeted interventions for improved feeding practices and consumption of a better-quality diet by under 5 children, adolescent girls, and women. Qualitative reporting in one evaluation reflects improvements in breastfeeding practices and diversification, but it is not known if this has extended to nutritional outcomes

**Key Finding 35:** Peers report a number of ways in which that the embassy has added value to its development cooperation programme by moving beyond the grant-making process.

This constructive engagement has afforded the embassy a stature within the development community that significantly exceeds its size. Few, if any of these successes, however, have been measured as part of strategic performance management. “Added value” that peers reported include:

- Leadership in ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable are met during emergencies is recognised and valued by peers
- A sound appreciation of changing developmental context and the need to work towards a humanitarian development nexus
- An approach to development cooperation that is strategic yet flexible and adaptive<sup>33</sup>
- Skill in selecting, managing and supporting partners
- Using the convening power of learning by facilitating shared learning processes amongst donors and development organisations<sup>34</sup>
- Stamina and commitment in support of programmes within the CSP<sup>35</sup>
- Principles and values around particular development issues and a passionate pursuit of an agenda to advocate for the same
- Engendering relationships with government and partners that are highly valued
- Using a particular experience and competence to engage and communicate appropriately at multiple levels

## 5.4 Technical capacity and Programme Organisation

### Summary of Key Findings

- The embassy is perceived by partners and peers to be technically strong across multiple sectors
- Embassy staff and partners themselves perceive certain capacity gaps in particular areas such as gender and monitoring & evaluation

<sup>33</sup> As one development partner respondent put it “Influencing the design of a program is as good as financing it”. The embassy has been instrumental in the design of a number of programmes having provided funding and commitment at strategic milestones in programme establishment. Donor partners within the civil society and accountability programme stated that “Ireland has driven the CSO agenda from the beginning”. Embassy funding was crucial in managing the gap between strategic phases of the programme and allowed it to survive. “Good humanitarian donorship that is not present with the majority of other donors” led the embassy to impose lighter reporting requirements and allowed UNHCR to use funding where it was most needed. The agency also felt that it could approach the embassy and request funding at short notice for rapid onset emergencies such as that associated with the influx of refugees from Eritrea.

<sup>34</sup> A significant number of partners reported that the embassy facilitated shared learning processes amongst donors and development organisations. This was perceived as valuable in facilitating organisational development, learning and collaboration. An annual workshop where the embassy brought partners within the Nutrition programme was cited as a valuable resource while others remarked on the benefits of having the opportunity to participate in regional events with partners from other The embassy Missions on the continent.

<sup>35</sup> One donor representative commented that “although its financial contribution is small, Ireland’s commitment and participation is as good as the big contributors if not more”. A number of partners commented on the embassy’s reliability in terms of funding, a PSNP representative stated “Irish Aid contribution is predictable. We can rely upon the flow of money from the Irish. We don’t have that predictability from others” and another from the Nutrition programme, - “Ireland is here for the long run, they invest in Ethiopia for its development, not just short-term gains”. Partners within the Civil Society and Accountability programme noted that The embassy bridging funds were critical to keeping the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) alive until the opportune time when GoE started to seek ideas from them for revised (and relaxed) legislation on CSOs

- The current CSP programme has been organised under five output areas that align with areas of sectoral technical expertise within the embassy

**Key Finding 36:** The embassy is perceived by partners and peers to be technically strong across multiple sectors

The embassy's technical expertise has contributed to an enhanced level of engagement with implementing partners that is widely appreciated. Respondents reported that Ireland stands out amongst donor partners in terms of their interest and follow up of project implementation, with frequent visits to project sites, often accompanied by government officials to meet and discuss project impact with beneficiaries. The embassy CSP has benefitted from the presence of technically strong and committed expatriate staff to lead and manage the CSP output areas; however, a technically strong and committed local team of advisors within the embassy has been instrumental in maintaining crucial institutional knowledge.

**Key Finding 37:** Embassy staff and partners themselves perceive certain capacity gaps in particular areas such as gender and monitoring & evaluation

Capacity gaps in gender are reported as having contributed significantly to the challenge in moving CSP gender outcomes beyond the output level. A former position of Gender specialist no longer exists within the embassy team, having been relinquished during a period of obligatory budget control. There was mixed opinion as to whether a full-time position or specialist support on a draw-down basis would work best in future. Similarly, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) does not have a designated advisor, although it was reported that M&E advice was outsourced to a consultancy firm at one stage, with mixed results. While individual managers currently take responsibility for managing M&E within individual CSP output areas, there is currently a range of performance indicators for monitoring performance (some measured at programme level, others measured nationally) and a range of evaluation methodologies for assessing programme impact (some of which are more rigorous than others). This means that consolidating results across the CSP and assessing their contribution to high level programme outcomes is challenging.

**Key Finding 38:** The current CSP programme has been organised under five output areas that align with areas of sectoral technical expertise within the embassy

Certain conventional sectors have been omitted in order to focus the programme (e.g. education) while two additional ones have been added: Output 6 - Work to build regional interaction through the African Union; and Output 7 - Work to support recently announced Government Reform. This has been an efficient way of administering and managing the programme, and has also shaped the way in which the embassy conceptualises the wider CSP. Organising the programme by technical sector can lead to some gaps around gender and a focus on the most vulnerable. These issues arise when a sectoral technical focus (e.g. agricultural seed multiplication) takes precedent over a focus on the beneficiary (poor rural women)<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> Evaluators found that the rural livelihood benefits of community seed multiplication were somewhat mitigated by the programmes inherent structural barriers to women

## 5.5 Relationships and partnerships

### Summary of Key Findings

- The quality and nature of the embassy's relationships with partners is hugely important in terms of adding value to financial grants
- A significant, but as yet unmeasured, component of the CSP has been the embassy's influence on the practice and behaviour of donors and partners.
- The consortium approach that the embassy has used to support and manage NGO partners within the Rural Livelihoods and Climate programme has been highly effective

**Key Finding 39:** The quality and nature of the embassy's relationship with partners is hugely important in terms of adding value to financial grants

While constituting one of DFA's largest country development cooperation investments, the volume of finance that the embassy can draw upon in support of its programme in Ethiopia is modest in comparison to some of the larger donors. Despite this, the embassy is regarded as a major player amongst government and donor partners. The embassy's commitment to working with and supporting partners (government, UN and NGO) was widely cited as one of the reasons for this view.

**Key Finding 40:** A significant, but as yet unmeasured component of the CSP has been the embassy's influence on the practice and behaviour of donors and partners

There is evidence that through practicing constructive engagement, the embassy has influenced the way in which partners (and sometimes donors) approach aspects of development work by way of them becoming more sensitive to certain issues and/or more effective in the way that they implement their programmes. As an example, the International Potato Centre (CIP), with encouragement from the embassy, have moved beyond the development and cultivation of sweet potato to explore how its promotion might be institutionalised within the government's nutrition strategy. "The Irish Embassy have given us not only money but ideas". The evaluation team found additional examples of where the embassy has influenced policy and institutional behaviour and/or improved practice. Assessing this type of result may need an alternative approach to performance measurement, such as Outcome Mapping.

**Key Finding 41:** The consortium approach that the embassy has used to support and manage NGO partners within the Rural Livelihoods and Climate programme has been highly effective

Embassy staff reported that the decision to implement the Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience programme through a consortium of NGOs was based on a need to reduce administrative costs. Partners, however, reported that the benefits of the approach have included strong horizontal learning, peer support between individual NGOs and an enhanced voice in terms of advocacy and influence: "We have achieved things as a consortium that we would not be able to accomplish individually".

## 5.6 The profile of the development cooperation portfolio

### Summary of Key Findings

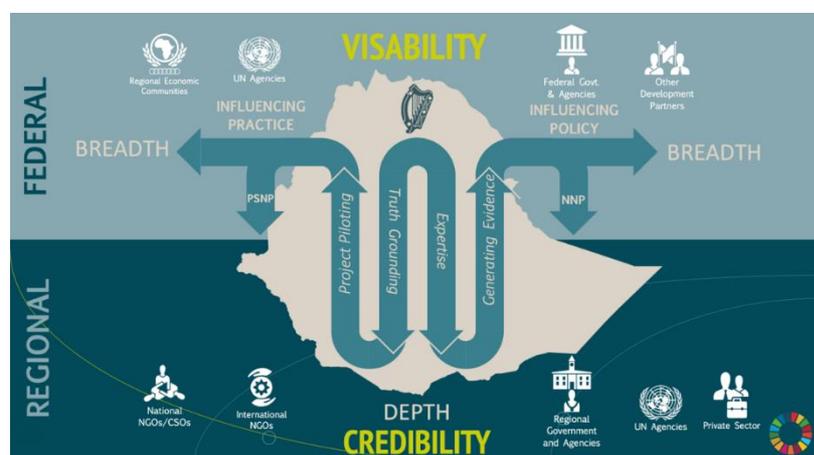
- The rationale for the portfolio structure is not currently articulated
- A rationale for the portfolio structure can be built around how it currently functions
- There are benefits to working at both macro and micro level

### Key Finding 42: The articulation of the portfolio structure could be strengthened

The embassy's programmes are implemented at both federal and regional levels, with a wide range of financial investment ranging from 30,000 to 52 million euro and partners (42); however, the rationale for the portfolio structure is not currently articulated within the CSP. Structure is reported to be a product of both legacy and evolution and has a diverse and rich range of investment and partners. While this appears to have delivered results, there is currently no formal rationale or ex ante analysis within the CSP as to why this is so. Nor is there a rationale as to why the embassy considers particular regions (Tigray and SNNPR) to be strategic areas in which to focus development cooperation. This implicit (as opposed to tacit) knowledge makes lesson learning around the effectiveness of portfolio structure difficult, constrains its future optimisation and risks loss of institutional knowledge.

Programming that takes place at regional level provides an opportunity for the embassy to generate contextual evidence from the ground and to develop expertise in particular sectoral areas. This can be seen to give the programme depth. Piloting of projects generates evidence that in turn is used to influence national level policy and practice. For example, ATA's cooperative based seed project would not have happened without the Edget union, which was an embassy funded pilot project. The success of the pilot gave confidence to the Government to bring this to scale to 14 unions. Learnings are also incorporated back into Federal level programmes such as PSNP and NNP. Sharing learnings and research both at national and international level brings breadth to the programme. The portfolio structure, when optimised, brings both visibility (through its breadth) and credibility (through its depth), in addition to enhancing impact. Implementing the programme through a diverse range of partners serves to spread risk.

Figure 6 Representation of the CSP portfolio with implementation and learning processes indicated



**Key Finding 43:** There are benefits to working at both macro and micro level.

At macro level, the embassy supports a number of federal level programmes where a “seat at the table” affords them the opportunity to influence programme impact at a level that greatly exceeds the effect of their financial grant alone. At micro-level, projects have the potential to generate context specific learning that can be subsequently used to inform scale-out and scale-ups and to influence policy. Distinct types of partner are appropriate for working at different levels within the portfolio structure, with those at regional level often requiring investment in partner capacity building.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation uncovered a wealth of information regarding the embassy and its contribution to building resilience capacity in Ethiopia. Overall, the evaluation team concluded that the programme had made important contributions across a range of sectors and demonstrated results both at individual and system levels. The following section contains conclusions and recommendations that emerge from the evaluation. These have been formulated taking into consideration that the embassy is about to enter its new mission strategy planning process and that a new policy for International Development, *A Better World*, has been published.

### 6.1 Use of the resilience framework

**It was clear to the evaluation team that there were many important broader achievements and contributions delivered. However, these cannot be attributed to a deliberate application of the building resilience policy brief.** It is important to underscore that the concept of resilience was embedded in the 2014-2018 CSP. However, the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience* was not formalised until 2016, half way through the implementation of the CSP. Nor was there a conscious effort to systematically incorporate it into all output areas. While the term resilience is referenced in the CSP, the evaluation did not find documentary evidence that the approach was formally implemented<sup>37</sup> into programming in Ethiopia. It was clear to the evaluation team that there were many important broader achievements and contributions delivered; in essence, these cannot be attributed to a deliberate application of the building resilience policy brief.

**The resilience approach has relevance to livelihoods and social protection in the Ethiopian context. The embassy could continue to consider the use of the resilience approach if the areas currently supported by outcomes one and two are continued in the next strategy. However, the embassy will need to consider how to improve its strategy of reaching the poorest (for example, a number of agriculture and livelihoods projects are not targeted at the poorest or furthest behind) in the context of a resilience framework and how performance measurement might be systematically approached.**

In the preparation of a new mission strategy, consideration for the potential of the approaches should be explored. Should the embassy decide to apply the building resilience policy brief for future use, developing consensus amongst the embassy team and partners as to the value and worth of the

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<sup>37</sup> For example, testing, validation, training or team implementation/induction

approach in relation to programme areas will be essential to ensure that it can be adopted and applied in areas where it is appropriate.

## 6.2 Implementation of new approaches

Irish Aid's *Policy Brief on Building Resilience*, implemented in 2016 states that "a systematic approach to building resilience is needed in order to place it at the heart of our policy engagement and programming". While the five principles of resilience were embedded across the CSP, the evaluation did not find evidence of a formal inception of the *Irish Aid Policy Brief on Building Resilience*, or a formal introduction of the approach or framework into the CSP. The evaluation also did not find evidence that the framework set out in the policy brief was consciously tested on all CSP's output areas. **It is recommended that DCAD ensure that formal implementation procedures are in place for the introduction of new approaches and frameworks in partnerships with mission and its partners.**

## 6.3 Defining and measuring performance

The logic model has been used during the recently completed CSP to define and measure results; however, **many of the outcome level performance indicators are measured at national level where change is difficult to attribute to the embassy interventions.** The embassy should consider alternative ways of assessing overall Mission Strategy performance. This might mean designing an evaluation plan where the evaluations of individual programme components can be synthesised in order to come to a conclusion as to the value and worth of the entire programme. Robust ex ante analysis and baselines would also enhance their ability to measure results.

**There is a significant amount of valuable work carried out by embassy staff which adds value to the programme (e.g. partner influencing) and ensures that its impact moves well beyond that achieved through the awarding of the financial grant alone. This sets it apart from many other donors in Ethiopia and has afforded it a stature within the development community that significantly exceeds its size.** It is recommended that the embassy reflect on and articulate this added value and incorporate associated results into the next mission strategy along with mechanisms that measure performance in such areas.

A significant part of the embassy's added value involves influencing government and partner practice. This institutional behavioural change is not easily measured through logic models alone. The embassy might consider alternative frameworks such as outcome mapping for defining and measuring results in this area.

In order to implement the above and embed effective monitoring, evaluation and learning, **it is recommended that the embassy consider establishing the post of a monitoring and evaluation specialist or availing of external expertise.** This would be beneficial in developing a strategy and systematic implementation for the effective monitoring and evaluation of the next mission strategy, and in contributing to learning that is pragmatic and meaningful.

## 6.4 Integrating and aligning gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE)

**The CSP was found to be broadly aligned with international human rights standards as well as international and regional normative gender frameworks endorsed by the Ethiopian Government.** The embassy has many notable strengths in areas such as awareness of gender policy, advocacy, targeting and programming. The embassy were widely acknowledged as strong and consistent advocates for GEWE. Implementing partners also reported their appreciation of the importance of gender equality. The UN Women programme was identified as one of the strongest programmes for GEWE, as it responded to a number of complex challenges. **The inclusion of a Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) module within the Ethiopian National Demographic and Health Survey 2016 was a significant normative foothold, as it provides the first national estimate of regional variations and will assist with national priorities in gender sensitive programming.**

It is essential to underscore the **constraining human rights environment in which the embassy, donors and partners were operating until the recent amendment** to the Charities and Societies Proclamation (No.621/2009) in early 2019. This environment, coupled with regional variations in structural barriers to equality and the absence of a pragmatic and contextualised DFAT strategy/policy to address GEWE, posed significant challenges to progressing gender equality and mainstreaming overall.

**Against this backdrop, women were clearly targeted in the embassy's programming. Yet for the most part, the process of moving beyond targeting to transformative change, equality and genuine empowerment is in need of strengthening.**

The embassy should consider contextualised gender analysis in advance of programming and may, for instance, take into account robust theories of change, localised indicators, regional variations and the structural barriers experienced by Ethiopian women and girls in addition to essential pillars of GEWE (including access to education, health, economic empowerment, SGBV and access to power), so that a pragmatic and comprehensive approach to GEWE is implemented.

**M&E mechanisms were identified as a broad area which could be systematically improved** (discussed in 6.5). Such mechanisms should systematize the collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, as well as markers of progress towards outcomes.

Interviews with partners and site visits reflected a **consistent gender imbalance within the organisational composition of partners' staffing structures.** The embassy could consider including the requirement of gender disaggregated data within its programme reporting, within partners' organisational profiles of staffing, and as part of Organisational Capacity Assessments and annual reports.

**The embassy should take the opportunity presented by the new Mission Strategy and Ireland's Policy for International Development to embed GEWE more centrally and meaningfully within the next Mission Strategy.** Embassy staff and partners identified that implementing gender sensitive programming may require both further capacity building of staff and partners to ensure that the new strategy fulfils its potential. Where identified capacity building of partners (e.g. gender) is a component of this engagement it is recommended that this be included as a project outcome and measured accordingly.

Re-establishing the position of gender specialist or accessing ongoing technical support on a draw down basis to support this are options worthy of exploration. Finally, in light of the new policy, *A Better World*, and taking into account both context and the expertise and experiences of the embassy

in addressing GEWE, management may wish to consider how best to resource, finance and support this key priority.

## 6.5 Ensuring effective targeting

**The evaluation found the CSP to be well focussed overall; however, there were gaps in some projects around gender and a focus on the poorest.** For the new Mission Strategy, it is recommended that the embassy team take the opportunity to reflect on how to provide technical focus while ensuring consistent emphasis on beneficiaries and aspects of the new white paper such as the policy of “reaching the furthest behind first”.

**Some programmes supported direct beneficiaries who are at a level above the poorest (e.g. Rural Livelihoods and Climate). Nevertheless, it is recommended that the programme logic explicitly links outcomes for direct beneficiaries to better outcomes for the poorest** and incorporates performance indicators that measure the same.

When working at regional level through NGO partners, the embassy should consider the selection of target populations so that there are some groups that receive a complementary package of interventions. This will provide an opportunity to learn about the effectiveness of programmes which tackle multi-dimensional aspects of vulnerability.

## 6.6 Risk management

**The embassy’s decision to continue to support the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP), at a time when the operational environment was highly challenging, constituted a very significant programmatic risk. However, a combination of effective management systems, good communication, realistic objective setting and a sharp focus on capacity building helped to mitigate this risk. While possibly too early to affirm, indications at the time of the evaluation suggest that this was a considered and commendable decision.** In retrospect, the project can be seen to have contributed to the resilience of the civil society sector. It has the potential for a significant long-term impact. The Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) project aims to be transformative at a national scale should all conditionalities be met (the poorest purchasing health insurance, MIS integrating with multiple systems, health clinics having electricity and computers, the government implementing the use of the software etc.). The critical factors and dependencies outside the influence of the embassy or CHAI make it difficult to ascertain the likelihood or probability of achieving the intended outcomes. This is a high risk project that the partner and embassy reported to the evaluation team to be managing.

**It is recommended that the embassy maintain a healthy risk-appetite, continue to assess and calculate risk in such projects, and take the opportunity to make strategic contributions where appropriate.**

The embassy manages risk well using a combination of formal (risk analysis) and, in many cases, less formal (strong partner engagement) approaches. Given continuing uncertainty within the Ethiopian context, a conventional risk analysis approach might be usefully supplemented with techniques such as scenario planning to identify sets of circumstances that might unfold over the next Mission Strategy. These, in turn, might be used to identify risks as well as measures to mitigate them.

## 6.7 Optimising partnerships

The CSP has a diverse and rich array of partners which allow the programme to be implemented at scale and to generate learning from project piloting in specific contexts. **The programme should continue to engage with a diverse range of partners and to afford the same level of technical support.** Where identified capacity building of partners (e.g. gender) is a component of this engagement, this should be included as a project outcome and measured accordingly. It is also recommended that the PMF takes into account the different results achieved by different partnerships, for example the direct results achieved from direct project funding and the contribution from pooled funds.

The consortium approach within the Rural Livelihoods and Climate Programme was particularly effective at reducing administrative transaction costs and in ensuring that the “whole was greater than the sum of the parts”. We recommend that the embassy continue to explore this modality and to consider expanding it, where conditions are appropriate, to other programme areas.

## 6.8 Articulating a strategy for programme modalities

The CSP has been implemented through a programme portfolio which is a product of legacy and evolution and encompasses a diverse range of investment from €30,000 to €52 million. A representation of how the portfolio and its modalities operate is included in section 5.6. It is recommended **that the embassy continue this approach but take the opportunity to reflect on, and articulate the rationale for, its structure as part of the upcoming Mission Strategy.**

## 6.9 Planning and measuring policy influence

**Influencing policy is cited within the CSP as a means of achieving programme outcomes (as opposed to being defined as an outcome in itself). The embassy, where appropriate, might consider policy influence as an outcome so that strategies to achieve it can be more precisely defined and progress towards it can be measured.**

## 6.10 Alignment with a Better World

Looking forward to the new Mission Strategy, the strategic approach adopted by the CSP is broadly aligned with themes outlined in the recently launched Development Policy. *A Better World* (GoI, 2019) prioritises improving gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and strengthening governance, all of which constitute core elements of the CSP. Programme output areas encompass interventions that are clearly centred on protection, food and people. Designing and implementing the CSP using the principles of resilience has allowed the embassy to achieve important developmental outcomes while doing things differently, in particular through reinforcing good practice and accountability in the allocation of resources through a range of channels of delivery. **The evaluation found that valuable lessons were systematically captured by the embassy throughout the implementation of the CSP. It is recommended that this knowledge exchange and lesson**

learning approach, both within the embassy and with its partners, should be continued. This approach might be considered within DCAD and its missions.

## 7. CASE STUDIES

Project - Improving smallholder livelihoods and resilience - Village Lending and Savings Groups

Location - Lenchecho Kebele, Halaba District and Bulchama Kebele, Shashemene District

Building absorptive and adaptive resilience at individual, household and community levels



*“If a shock comes we can borrow money from the group to cope and then pay it back”*



*“The group has brought us together socially. Now we support each other and contribute 20 birr when someone has a problem”*

As well as promoting Climate Smart Agricultural practices and agricultural economic development, the Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience Project<sup>38</sup> also supports and promotes Women’s Village Savings and Lending groups. Participants engage in a well proven model of group lending that helps households invest modest amounts of capital in livelihood projects which contribute to household food security. Women are both the members and the organisers of this initiative.

While the standard operating procedure of lending groups is well set out, some groups have used the

opportunity to provide additional support to each other in times of stress. One group in Bulchama Kebele, Shashemene District, have even devised their own set of emergency loans to help group members who face unforeseen household shocks such as fire, illness or a death in the family.

The result is increased absorptive and adaptive resilience to unforeseen crises and food insecurity at household level, while the associations themselves strengthen the adaptive resilience of the community to deal with longer term shocks such as drought and the challenges they present.

<sup>38</sup> The Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience Project is implemented by a consortium of NGOs with support from the embassy.

**Project** – Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund - Internally Displaced Persons Guji Gedeo

**Location** - Yirgachefe IDP camp, Gedeb

**Building individual and institutional resilience at absorptive and transformative levels**

Emergency  
Humanitarian  
Response



Advocacy  
and  
Lobbying



In June of 2018, boundary conflicts and ethnic tensions led to 68,000 people being forced from their homes and seeking refuge in Dilla Town (Gedeo) and Bule Hora (West Guji). This was the third wave in a series of violent episodes in the region since April 2018 (UNOCHA, 2018). Those who were forced to move lost everything. Conditions in makeshift displacement camps were crowded and unsanitary.

The embassy supported emergency humanitarian relief through EHF partners to deliver much needed channelling of funds for children and nutrition, water and sanitation, and efforts to build reconciliation between the fractured communities<sup>39</sup>. However, the government’s reluctance to officially recognise the IDPs and restrictions on relief agencies in gaining access to affected peoples meant that for nearly three months, the humanitarian community could not distribute food or provide shelter. The embassy coordinated urgent dialogue amongst donors<sup>40</sup> on the matter. This was followed up with a letter to government and two high-level site visits to affected areas, including one for heads of foreign missions. Furthermore, the embassy engaged in advocacy and lobbying with government around the plight of IDPs, many of whom were being forced to return prematurely to their villages.

The embassy’s efforts and those of its partners paid off in that the plight of IDPs and the root causes of violence were eventually acknowledged and NGOs gradually gained better access to affected populations. Other smaller donors appreciated the embassy’s stance, stating that it demonstrated that *“one does not have to have a big budget to take on a leadership role.”*

<sup>39</sup> Reconciliation initiatives using local churches and congregations were instigated by EHF funded Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

<sup>40</sup> The Embassy was chair of the HRDG at the time

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## Annex 2 - The resilience framework

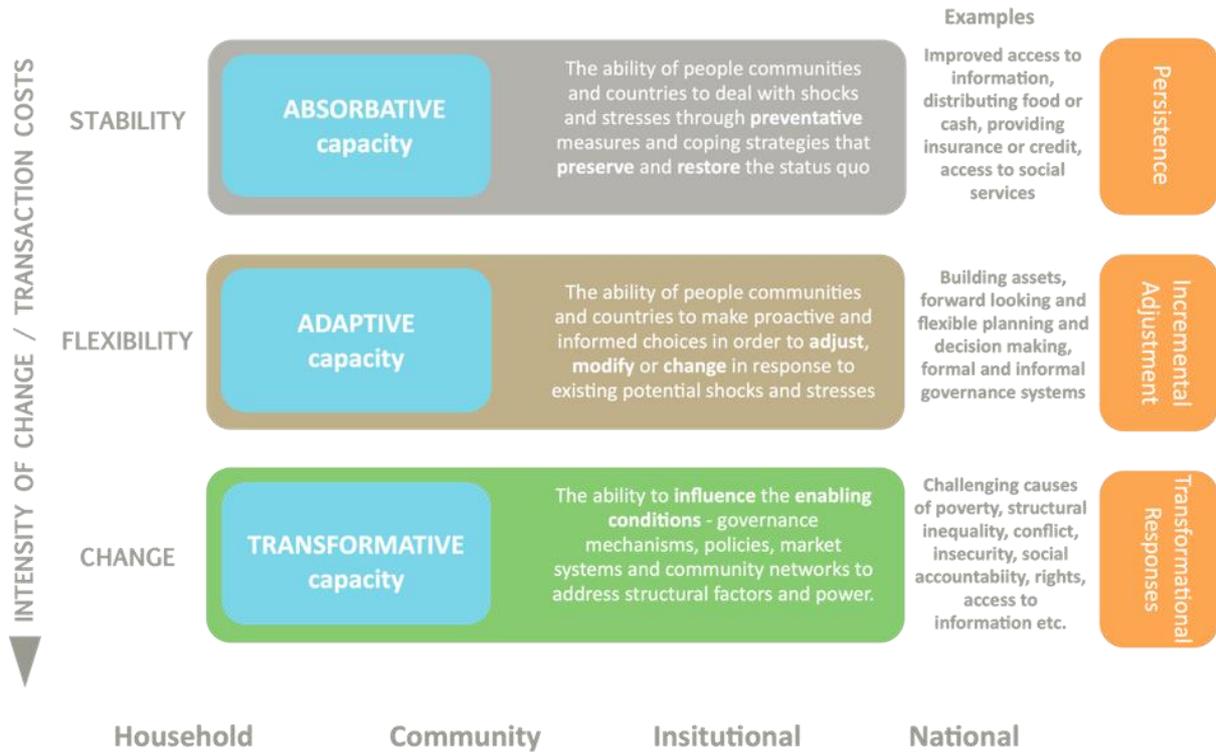


Figure 4 Key elements of the DCAD Resilience Framework



Figure 5 The five principles that underpin a resilience approach

### **Annex 3 - Evaluation questions**

The following set of evaluation questions have been tailored within the framework of the evaluation criteria and are directly related to both the objectives of the evaluation and the criteria against which the mission CSP will be assessed. The questions have been designed to add further detail to the objectives and contribute to further defining its scope. Evaluation questions have been grouped under the criteria identified in the previous section and will be used to generate interview guidance sheets.

#### **Relevance**

1. To what extent has the approach adopted by the embassy allowed the CSP to remain relevant to the development needs of vulnerable target groups, including the needs of poor women, in Ethiopia?
2. Moving forward within the next Mission Strategy, how suitable is the approach in supporting the embassy to respond to changing needs in Ethiopia, with a particular focus on climate change, and what have been the key lessons?

#### **Effectiveness**

3. To what extent has the embassy successfully adopted and implemented a resilience approach, including through its partners and their partners?
4. To what extent have efforts to build the resilience capacity of women and men, (absorptive, adaptive and transformative) at household, community and national levels been successful? If not, why not?
5. Was there an effective risk management approach in place during the CSP period?
  - a. How did the approach influence the way in which the CSP managed/responded to risk and adapted to changing contexts?

#### **Coherence and complementarity**

6. To what extent were CSP programme components coherent and complementary, and how did this contribute to resilience capacity building outcomes?

#### **Gender**

7. To what extent has the approach to resilience ensured that gender and women's empowerment were integrated and aligned within the programme?

#### **Policy and influencing**

8. How effective was the embassy in using the learning from the programme to influence policy *on resilience approaches* at regional and national levels?
9. How effectively and coherently did the various programme modalities (political engagement, policy dialogue financing, partner selection and management) contribute to Ireland's policy objectives in Ethiopia?

#### Annex 4 - List of Site Visits

#	Project	Partner
1	Small-scale irrigation and agroforestry	SOS Sahel
2	Agroforestry homestead	SOS Sahel
3	Green Way Farms PLC Permaculture Centre and Nursery	SOS Sahel
4	Permaculture Farm Site	SOS Sahel
5	EDGET Community Seed Multiplication, Plant doctor and Farmer	Self Help Africa
6	Poultry Project Beneficiary	SARI
7	Hillside restoration and Youth Group, Lake Hawasa Ecosystem	SOS Sahel
8	Small Scale Irrigation, Lake Hawassa	SOS Sahel
10	Fish Restocking Pond and Solid Waste Management (Trash Racks)	SOS Sahel
11	Household Fish Pond and Bee Hive Cluster	SOS Sahel
12	Private Nursery	SOS Sahel
13	Women's Voluntary Savings and Lending Group	SOS Sahel
14	Qera IDP Camp	OCHA UNHCR and EHF partners
15	Yirga Chefe IDP camp	OCHA UNHCR CARE
16	Lay Tuka FTC Hot Pepper Value Chain	Farm Africa
17	Kote Small Scale Irrigation Cooperative	Farm Africa
18	Kote Women's VSLA	Farm Africa
19	Bolossosori Woreda PSNP Programme	GoE
20	Fuel Efficient Cook Stove	GIZ Endev
21	Community Based Seed Multiplication	VITA
22	Improved Mango Seedling Farmer	VITA
23	Lem Lem Mango Nursery Group	VITA
24	Alive & Thrive HQ	Alive & Thrive
25	Wareda health center	Alive & Thrive; VITA; Government
26	Regional health post visit	Alive & Thrive; VITA; Government

#	Project	Partner
27	Kebele women's group	Alive & Thrive; VITA; Government
28	CHAI HQ	CHAI
29	CIP HQ	CIP
30	Rural farmer training centre	CIP
31	Regional government post	CIP
32	Hawassa Prison	CSSP/IICP
33	British Council	CSSP
34	Hela International	ECDD
35	ECDD HQ	ECDD
36	Hawassa government compound	ECDD
37	Organisation for Persons with Disabilities	ECDD
38	ECDD Hawassa Office	ECDD
39	ESAP committee Salaba Wareda	ESAP
40	ESAP committee Hawassa	ESAP
41	Ministry of Finance	ESAP, GoE
42	World Bank HQ	ESAP, World Bank
43	Remote health post	GIZ
44	Maternal Health Blocks	SDG Health Fund, GoE
45	Department of Health	GoE
46	World Bank HQ	SDG Health Fund, GoE
47	Remote health post	STC; GoE
48	Regional health office	STC; GoE
49	UN Women HQ	UN Women
50	Women's safe house	UN Women

## Annex 5 - Glossary of terms used within the report

<b>Attribution</b>	Attribution refers to that which is to be credited for the observed changes or results achieved. It represents the extent to which observed development effects can be attributed to a specific intervention or to the performance of one or more partners, taking account of other interventions, (anticipated or unanticipated) confounding factors, or external shocks.
<b>Resilience</b>	Re- conceptualisation of development where shocks and stresses (including conflict, natural disasters, gender inequality and climate variability) can consistently erode the development gains of poor and vulnerable people
<b>Resilience approach</b>	A resilience approach refers to the conceptualisation of development where shocks and stresses (including conflict, natural disaster, gender inequality and climate variability) can consistently erode the development gains of poor and vulnerable groups. Building resilience to shocks and stresses is seen as central to achieving sustainable development gains.
<b>Resilience Framework</b>	The resilience framework refers to a specific conceptual model developed by the DCAD Policy Unit, through which interventions can be thought of as building resilience capacity to empower people, communities, institutions and countries to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, or transform, shocks and stresses. The DCAD framework includes five guiding principles which are 1) Start with the context 2) Be responsive 3) Invest in partnership 4) Foster coherence and collaboration 5) Act on feedback. A visual graphic depicting the key elements of the resilience framework are illustrated in  Figure 4 (P. 24)
<b>Resilience Capacity</b>	The ability of individuals, households, communities, institutions and states to absorb, adapt and/or transform in the face of shocks and stresses.
<b>NGO Consortium</b>	A consortium of NGOs that jointly implement the Smallholder Livelihoods and Resilience project. The Consortium is made up of SOS Sahel, Farm Africa, Self Help Africa and Vita
<b>Kibele</b>	The smallest unit of local government in Ethiopia
<b>Targeting</b>	Targeting seeks to deliver benefits to a selected group of participants, in particular poor and vulnerable people. Targeting mechanisms attempt to link a project's specific purposes with its intended group of beneficiaries.
<b>Target group</b>	The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit the development intervention is undertaken.
<b>Woreda</b>	<i>Woredas</i> , or Districts, are the third-level administrative divisions of Ethiopia. They are further subdivided into a number of <i>kebele</i> (wards or neighbourhood associations), which are the smallest unit of local government in Ethiopia.

## Annex 6 – List of CSP Project Evaluations

Project	Evaluation	Date
<b>Productive Safety Net Programme</b>	Impact Evaluation PSNP 4	Jan 2019
<b>Improving smallholder livelihoods and resilience through climate smart agricultural economic development</b>	End of Project Evaluation	July 2018
<b>Community Based seed Production</b>	Final Evaluation Report on Cooperative Based Seed Production (CBSP) Project	Dec 2018
<b>Productive engagement of civil society</b>	Final evaluation report (CSSP I and the Extension Phase)	Nov 2016
<b>Strengthening the use of social accountability tools, and approaches.</b>	Ethiopia Social Accountability Programme 2 (ESAP2) Impact Evaluation	Oct 2017
<b>Strengthening the use of social accountability tools and approaches.</b>	Final UN Women PRVAWG Evaluation Report	
<b>Strengthening Institutional Systems for Scaling out and Scaling-up Orange Fleshed Sweet-Potato</b>	CIP Final Report - End Evaluation of OFSP and Potato, April 2017	Apr 2017
<b>Improved Nutrition through Integrated Nutrition, Education and Social Cash Transfer.</b>	IDS 2017 evaluation UNICEF social cash transfer pilot SNNPR	July 2017
<b>Strengthening the SNNPR Health System</b>	HSTP - Comprehensive report Mid-Term Review	Dec 2018
<b>Electrifying Rural health institutions with solar power</b>	Endline Evaluation of the Irish Aid Supported GIZ's Project of Electrifying Rural Health Centres with Solar Power	Jan 2016
<b>Improving access to water supply for health centres in SNNPR</b>	Terminal Evaluation Report	October 2015

## Annex- 7 Irish Aid Policy Brief: Building resilience

### Introduction

This policy brief is primarily intended to help develop a common understanding of resilience across Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It sets out the rationale and policy context for building resilience, introduces five principles that underpin a resilience approach and explores some of the opportunities and challenges inherent in adopting a resilience approach across Irish Aid. It draws on international literature and the work of other donors and partners but it is tailored to Irish Aid, offering our own working definitions and examples, based on our approach and experience to date. While primarily an internal document, it is written with a view to being shared with Irish Aid partners to inform programme design and policy positions.

While great strides have been made in reducing global poverty and increasing social and economic opportunities, progress has been uneven across and within countries. Millions of people have been left behind, including in countries experiencing rapid economic growth. Many lead a fragile existence, with progress in better years or months lost or eroded on a regular basis. Each year brings an increasing number and scale of humanitarian emergencies, resulting in immense suffering and posing a significant threat to social cohesion and longer term development.

Many of the reasons for this uneven progress are structural, including entrenched gender inequality, poor governance and accountability, unequal power relations, exploitative markets, vested political interests and historical conflict. Some are longer term stresses, including climate change, population growth, urbanisation, protracted conflict and depletion of natural resources. In addition, poor households and nations have to contend with a range of shocks such as inflation, health epidemics, natural disasters and violence.

Increasingly, these stresses and shocks are recognised as part of the context in which we work, to be addressed in an integrated manner, rather than being seen as an unexpected turn of events. The poor and vulnerable, particularly poor women and girls, the elderly and people with disability are disproportionately exposed to these shocks and stresses as well as structural inequalities. More focus is now placed on empowering individuals, communities, institutions and countries to anticipate, absorb, adapt to and mitigate or transform these shocks and stresses, a process known as building resilience.

A working definition of resilience for Irish Aid is thus proposed as:

**Building resilience empowers people, communities, institutions and countries to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, or transform, shocks and stresses**

Five principles underpin a resilience approach:

1. Start with the context
2. Be responsive
3. Invest in partnership
4. Foster coherence and collaboration
5. Act on feedback

DCD Policy Unit, V8 July 2016

Building resilience is a complex process requiring robust analysis, thought and planning. We can't expect people on their own to be resilient; we must also look at the systems and institutions that affect them. This takes time and, to be successful, it relies on the contribution of a number of factors working together. This paper attempts to define a way of working – a resilience approach - to facilitate this. Empowering people and placing them, and their humanity, at the centre of our efforts, is at the heart of this approach.

A resilience approach helps to shine a spotlight on the root causes of poverty, inequality and exclusion from the perspective of our beneficiaries and to put more emphasis on preventative measures. It goes beyond supporting people to manage a risky or unfair environment.

Systematically working in this way – adopting a resilience approach - will deepen our understanding of our target group in order to develop interventions and policy positions that are intentionally designed to empower them, and the institutions they rely on, to manage the shocks and stresses that directly affect them, while identifying opportunities to deliver deep, systematic and long-term change at scale. A resilience approach is particularly important for working in situations of fragility.

### **Policy context**

*Agenda 2030*<sup>1</sup>, with a promise to 'leave no-one behind', the *Paris Agreement* and the UN Secretary General's call for our common humanity compel us to find a way out of situations of chronic poverty, hunger and protracted crises that have driven human suffering and humanitarian needs steadily upwards.

1 See March 2016 revised indicator list for Agenda 2030 with targets to reduce poverty in all its dimensions and to build resilience of the poor and vulnerable to reduce their exposure to shocks and stresses E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev1 Targets 1.5 and 13.1

2 [www.dfa.ie](http://www.dfa.ie)

3 See Annex 2 for a full list of Ireland's commitments

Ireland's 2015 Foreign Policy, *The Global Island*<sup>2</sup> commits us to addressing the root causes of poverty, hunger and insecurity in developing and fragile countries so that we can help people and countries to realise their rights and potential. Reduced Hunger and Stronger Resilience is the first goal of Ireland's 2013 Development Cooperation Policy, *One World One Future (OWOF)*.

There is significant momentum globally to improve the impact of, and linkages between, development and humanitarian assistance and to adopt more integrated, people-centred approaches. Irish Aid *Humanitarian Assistance Policy* recognises the need to engage before, during and after crises. At the 2016 *World Humanitarian Summit*, Ireland broadly endorsed the UN's Core Commitments, based on the UN Secretary General's Agenda for Humanity. Ireland's specific commitments under the fourth of five core responsibility areas 'Changing People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need' include a deepened focus on fragility, longer term planning, joint analysis and collective outcomes, supporting responsive country systems and increased investment in preparedness, community based adaptation, natural disaster and climate change risk management<sup>3</sup>.

Following internal consultations and discussions, DCD Senior Management agreed in April 2016 that adopting a resilience approach across the Irish Aid programme is intrinsic to delivering on our commitments.

### **Absorptive, Adaptive and Transformative Capacity – a worked example addressing hunger**

The first goal of *One World, One Future (OWOF)* is to *reduce hunger and strengthen resilience*. In our world of plenty, up to 800 million people remain hungry. This failure of humanity was highlighted in the 2008 Government of Ireland Hunger Taskforce Report. A key message of the report was that hunger is fundamentally a failure of governance.

Hunger has different causes in different contexts. These may include poor rains, pests, animal disease, inefficient farming practices, absence of rights to land, exploitation of food markets and price manipulation, conflict, violence or insecurity, corrupt or absent public services, low availability/affordability of improved inputs, unequal access by women to resources or decisions, early marriage, low levels of education, low household income, etc.

Building resilience to address hunger involves a long-term deliberate process to understand and tackle its root causes. We need to start by identifying whose resilience we want to build and then explore in more depth the shocks and stresses most relevant to those institutions or people, from their perspective. Interventions are then tailored to that target group and context.

Building **absorptive capacity** empowers people, communities and states to anticipate and absorb known shocks and stresses. This may include improved information at a local and national level on rainfall, drought, yield forecasts, market prices, natural hazards and climate change. Distributing food or cash transfers, providing insurance or credit, ensuring reliable access to social services such as education, health, water, sanitation, nutrition and social protection can help poor and vulnerable households to survive a hungry season and help protect their assets – savings, livestock, harvest, health, school attendance, security. In insecure areas, protection from violence, safe access and local organisation will be important.

Building **adaptive capacity** empowers people, communities, institutions and states to make informed choices to manage future shocks and build flexibility. Introducing vaccinations and improved inputs, better farming practices, income generation activities, savings and loans, irrigation or landmine clearance may protect and build assets. Improved nutrition, health, education and training contribute to increased productivity and innovation. Stronger national and local planning processes based on robust information can incorporate adaptation actions.

The ability to anticipate, absorb and adapt to shocks is critically important. However, this will only help vulnerable people and countries to respond to an unfair context. It does not fundamentally challenge inequality, power dynamics and root causes of hunger. Building **transformative capacity** empowers communities, institutions or states to identify the root drivers of shocks and stresses and mitigate them, or address inequitable sharing of risk and power. This involves addressing the underlying forces of corruption, inequality, insecurity, isolation, conflict, high fertility, political capture and exclusion that are limiting the extent to which poor people have access to adequate land, labour, public services, training, inputs, credit and fair prices. Tackling root causes may require land reform, targeted subsidies or market interventions, social accountability initiatives, improved access to information, etc. Some root causes of hunger arise at global and regional level and require sustained political engagement.

All three capacities are critical as they reinforce one another. A well-designed intervention, reflecting the five principles of a resilience approach, would link critical and mutually supportive elements of all three. The mix of capacities is likely to change with the scale of fragility, with more focus on adaptive and transformative capacity as a situation stabilises, civil society evolves, institutions are built and national capacity develops.

## **How can Irish Aid adopt a resilience approach?**

Irish Aid's policy framework commits us to addressing the root causes of poverty and vulnerability. By systematically adopting a resilience approach, Irish Aid can be more ambitious in terms of the scale of change we seek and the lasting impact of our interventions. A resilience approach requires us to be more rigorous in our analysis, with stronger power and political analysis, and to place more attention on how we, and our partners, work.

As a medium sized bilateral donor, Irish Aid can contribute to building resilience at local, sub-national and national level through its policy engagement, support for national and local planning processes, funding instruments and by engaging with partners in the design of the interventions we support.

A resilience approach is relevant to a number of Business Units across Irish Aid. The five principles of a resilience approach should be taken into account in design and implementation of programmes and partnerships. The appraisal matrix for Humanitarian Programme Plan applications and Programme Grant applications included in Annex 2 incentivise a resilience approach. It is expected that Irish Aid country strategies, will include at least one outcome area focussed on building resilience. Policy positions should also advocate for a focus on addressing root causes of shocks and stresses and increased investment in preventative action.

This section sets out how Irish Aid can (i) adopt a resilience approach across our partnerships and programmes, (ii) advocate for a resilience approach through policy engagements and (iii) strengthen our systems and processes to support a resilience approach.

### **1. Adopting a resilience approach across our partnerships and programmes**

Adopting a resilience approach in our partnerships and programming involves working with our partners to embed five key principles into our plans and interventions:

1. Start with the context
2. Be responsive
3. Invest in partnership
4. Foster coherence and collaboration
5. Act on feedback

These principles are explored in more detail below, illustrated by examples of good practice from within Irish Aid. Tools and references providing further operational guidance are suggested in Annex together with a glossary of the terms used in this paper.

**Fig 1. Five principles of building resilience**



### **1. Start with context: Respond to an integrated, shared vulnerability analysis**

- Improve our approach to **targeting**. Start by understanding whose resilience is to be built, to what shocks and stresses. Many of our proposals and country strategy papers include comprehensive sections on national indicators, the economy, drivers of poverty and vulnerability and political economy which are key to our planning. More could be done to clearly focus on an identified target group and explore in more depth the particular shocks and stresses affecting that group, from their perspective.
- The 2016 Tanzania Directions paper includes analysis of poverty and drivers of inequality relevant to a target group in order to identify entry points to address immediate needs while challenging social norms and structural weaknesses.
- **Recognise shocks and stresses** as part of the context. Shocks and stresses need to be identified, ideally through a shared process<sup>4</sup> which includes all perspectives. Invest with other donors and partners in a common shared analysis to be used by all partners, whether focused on development, humanitarian assistance, conflict, climate change, human rights or stabilisation, to improve effectiveness, coordination and cohesion. Ideally, this would be done through a transparent process with government, private sector and civil society presents. The full range of possible shocks and stresses are assessed for likelihood, scale and relevance to our objectives and target group. Relevant issues – e.g. natural disasters, low capacity, HIV, climate change, poor governance and accountability, macro-economic instability, remoteness, insecurity, conflict etc. - should then be recognised as part of the context to be addressed if we want to achieve long term and sustainable change for our target group.
- Undertake a robust **vulnerability analysis** specific to a specific target group in the context of identified shocks and stresses, recognising the different vulnerabilities and capacities associated with gender, ethnicity, location, age, disability and other factors. It is important to distinguish between poverty and vulnerability. Those most exposed to, and impacted by, shocks and stresses

may not be the poorest, but their viability may be important to the poorest – e.g. landowners employing day labour. Irish Aid’s 2009 Vulnerability

- Invest in **longer term risk projections** and availability of data at local level.
  - Through the International Institute of Environment and Development, a climate risk analysis was carried out in Northern Province in Zambia and a longitudinal analysis is underway for Lake Hawassa. This data is used to develop medium and long-term climate change scenarios. Similar risk analysis is possible for community level conflict, financial systems, etc.

## 2. Be responsive: Design for a changing context and longer term flexibility

- Strengthen our programme **design and implementation**. A resilience approach requires stronger Irish Aid engagement in all stages of the programme cycle and more direct involvement in programme design and review. More emphasis needs to be placed on how results are delivered, what processes are used, the extent to which resilience principles are applied and who is involved. Interventions should be intentionally designed to respond to the needs and context of the identified target group using appropriate entry points and partners. Recognise the particular vulnerabilities and capacities of women and girls and ensure that their specific needs are addressed.
- Key **risks** relevant to beneficiaries should be identified, using the vulnerability analysis to assess their exposure to identified shocks and stresses. Medium and long term risk projections should be developed from available data and evidence in order to develop contingency plans for different scenarios. National and local planning processes should be appraised to see to what extent they take account of, and have resources in place to respond to, the risks identified. Many structural causes of poverty and vulnerability are intensely political and require a clear political economy analysis and incremental advocacy strategy with action at local and national levels.
- Create incentives to allow **longer term planning with flexibility** to change the type and scale of intervention in response to feedback, based on adaptive learning. In very fragile and volatile contexts, particularly protracted, chronic and recurrent crises, a mix of short term and longer term interventions is often appropriate.
  - Programme grants, CSF grants and partnerships through HQ and country strategy processes are increasingly multi-annual and allow for reorientation in the course of implementation, as long as a focus on high level results and outcomes is maintained. However, this flexibility does not always follow through to a local level and partners should be encouraged to address this.
  - Irish Aid’s multi-year grant to the International Rescue Committee for Gender in Emergencies allows windows for emergency, programming and advocacy with inbuilt flexibility. A medium-term funding framework for partner countries and protracted crises could facilitate planned transitions and mitigate the risk of rapid drops in funding to countries from humanitarian or development resources. Multi annual commitments to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and other humanitarian pooled funds are

currently being considered as part of the WHS commitment to allocate 20% of Ireland's humanitarian funding multi-annually.

- The Productive Safety Nets Programme in Ethiopia and the INGO Consortium in Malawi have proven able to expand and contract and tailor interventions to match needs on an annual basis. Irish Aid's upcoming social protection strategy recognises the potential for emergency transfers to become national systems as fragile states stabilise and the potential for strong social protection systems to mitigate the impact of crises. However, national systems only have limited capacity and take time to establish; external responses may still be required if that capacity becomes overwhelmed.
- Community management of nutrition (CMAM) helps identify moderate acute malnutrition at household level and refer people to primary health centres and supplementary feeding before levels become dangerous.

### **3. Invest in partnership: Act as local as possible and as global as necessary building on existing capacity**

- Incentivise genuine **partnership**, particularly at local level. Partnership has been a core value of Irish Aid for many years. In many cases, the relationship between our INGO, UN or government partners and local NGOs is more akin to sub-contracting. True partnership requires two-way trust, downward accountability, shared risks and a sufficient timeframe to allow for capacity to develop and a shared understanding of context to emerge, with a view to sustainability and responsible exit of external support. Many local, representative organisations have weak organisational capacity and are considered more risky and time-consuming to fund.
- Irish Aid should create incentives to progressively increase the resources, flexibility and decision making, that are **devolved to local level** using the principle of subsidiarity i.e. action should be as local as possible but as global as necessary. Efforts are already underway to implement WHS commitments on localisation and ensure that a greater percentage of our funding reaches local organisations who are present before, during and after our interventions.
- At the World Humanitarian Summit, Ireland committed to develop multi-annual agreements in respect of at least 20% of its humanitarian funding by 2018 and to provide at least 30% of our humanitarian funding as non-earmarked funding from 2016 to ensure greater predictability and that our partners are empowered to use it where it is needed most.
- Irish Aid's Programme Grant guidelines recognise that a strategic approach to partnership builds capacity and space for collective participation in development processes. The Programme Grant II guidelines include a target of 30% of incoming resources to be granted onwards to local organisations.

- The START fund includes grant windows for capacity building of local organisations and development of tools to support preparedness and early warning. Currently local NGOs receive some 50% of Start Fund allocations.
- Place more **emphasis on understanding, and investing in, capacity development** and the importance of sustained investment in evidence, systems and learning for individuals, social organisations and institutions. A resilience approach requires that we recognise and work with existing capacity and strengthen what is there before we introduce new systems, organisations or ideas. Ensuring that information and learning are rooted in, and feed back into, local level experience, is an important element of capacity building. As a donor, Irish Aid has a role in linking local level efforts to more transformative processes at national level.

#### 4. Foster coherence & collaboration: Share outcomes, analysis and evidence

- A resilience approach provides a common framework that is relevant across all of Irish Aid’s work. This allows us to identify **collective outcomes** across business units and sectors. Of particular interest is the potential of a resilience approach to bridge the humanitarian-development divide. This is addressed in the next section.
- Where possible, we should adopt a holistic approach (see box) with clear **coherence and linkages** between policy, programmes and resource allocations based on stronger, shared context analysis and focus on collective outcomes. Resilience offers a chapeau that links different partnerships or programmes – essential services, climate, protection, disability, livelihoods, nutrition, GBV, gender equality, governance, rights, markets, security – working with the same institutions or target groups. Working holistically does not mean that our programmes and partnerships need to address all the shocks and stresses that are relevant to our target group. Nor does it mean that all our efforts need to address the root causes of poverty and vulnerability. It means that we are aware how our intervention affects our target group and links to other factors

**A holistic approach** refers to a way of working in which all efforts are interlinked and connected. .  
 ‘What matters in a holistic approach is not the inclusion of all the parts of a system, no matter how comprehensive, but the fact that they relate to each other; the emphasis on the relationships; the understanding that it is such relationships that define the ‘parts’ of a system, and no ‘part’ exists or can be correctly analysed if separated from the relationships that define it. A programme that focussed on only one area of intervention could qualify as holistic if such an area was understood by its relationships with the relevant context. A programme that combined a large diversified portfolio of activities covering all possible sectors of intervention, but which still understood each of them as a discrete set of problems and solutions, would remain sectoral.

- Encourage a mix of **humanitarian and development** approaches in fragile contexts, recognising the role of each approach while using common analysis and outcomes. A resilience approach is particularly relevant in our engagements in fragile situations and acute, chronic, recurrent and slow onset crises, whether there is conflict or not. Ongoing short term humanitarian assistance is an important tool but is inadequate by itself in such contexts; a longer term strategy with a balanced engagement is needed.

There is significant potential to increase our effectiveness, sustainability and impact by improving linkages between longer term development and humanitarian assistance. All actors have a role to play in building resilience. The five principles set out in the policy brief remain relevant in humanitarian situations and we should encourage our partners, including local and national authorities where appropriate, to apply them and to seize opportunities to understand and address the root causes of fragility and vulnerability. Context should inform the approach taken. Where humanitarian assistance is delivered in response to an acute emergency, such as a natural disaster, or where it needs to focus on meeting immediate needs, it can and should still be delivered in a way that builds resilience and paves the way for early recovery. This is discussed further in Annex 2.

- Our political analysis suggests that the crisis in Syria will not be resolved within a decade. In addition to providing over €40m for humanitarian response, Irish Aid is supporting a multi-annual initiative called the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) which supports refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. This approach recognises the long term implications for communities and countries affected by complex crises.
  - In South Sudan, 25% of our funding over the past four years was for longer term development through programme grant partners. Concern used their programme grant to build health systems with the South Sudanese health boards. When rapid surveys showed a dramatic deterioration in nutrition levels, they supplemented this programme with a humanitarian grant to provide additional emergency health and nutrition services.
  - In Northern Nigeria, funding is being provided for FAO's response in Borno state and surrounding areas to: (i) restore agriculture livelihoods of IDPs, returnees and host communities (ii) rebuild their ability to withstand shocks (iii) prevent the deterioration of the overall food security situation that has already reached extreme levels in some area (iv) contribute to peace building and conflict resolution efforts; (v) avoid longer-term reliance on external assistance. This complements other emergency assistance for areas affected by conflict funded through ICRC.
- Encourage **people-centred approaches** with accountability to beneficiaries and information shared with people and communities.
    - The operational research programme in Tigray, Ethiopia allows farmers to set the research agenda of the Tigray Agricultural Research Institute and ensure that inputs and technologies are specifically designed to respond to their needs.
    - The Programme Grant appraisal process measures the extent to which beneficiaries participate in decisions that affect them at all stages of the programme cycle, through a process of engagement that is representative and inclusive, notably of women and girls and includes strong and systematic accountability to beneficiaries, partners, local and national authorities.
    - Social accountability mechanisms such as community scorecards allow for communities to access data and hold authorities and partners accountable for services delivered.

## 5. Act on feedback: Use monitoring and data for adaptive learning

- Encourage partners to include **learning objectives** in the design of their programmes, to better document what is working or failing, to promote good practice, innovation and to feed analysis, data and learning back to communities and authorities in order to build capacity, understanding and accountability. Be aware of the risks of mal-adaptation with unintended consequences of interventions sometimes increasing vulnerability to shocks and stresses e.g. new income generation activities can increase exposure to debt or inflation.

## 2. Advocate for a resilience approach in our policy engagements

As a respected donor focused on sustainable poverty reduction, Irish Aid has a role to play in advocating for a resilience approach to be embedded in development assistance and political engagements. Building on the five principles, this includes advocating for:

- Longer term commitment to situations of fragility;
- Strategies based on strong analysis that considers shocks and stresses and their inter-connections in an integrated manner and from the perspective of beneficiaries;
- An appropriate and balanced mix of financial support, recognising the need to be responsive to changing needs and contexts;
- A clear link between programmes and political engagement to address the root causes of poverty and exclusion.

## 3. Strengthen DFAT systems and processes to enable a resilience approach

DFAT is working in a range of contexts to deliver an ambitious policy agenda with limited resources and presence. A real value of adopting a resilience approach across Irish Aid is the possibility it provides to approach all of our work with a common framework that will maximise synergies and impact.

- Strengthen Irish Aid's **organisational focus** in line with OWOFF and Agenda 2030 by increasingly directing our resources towards the poorest and most vulnerable countries and populations to address root causes of chronic poverty, exclusion, fragility, conflict and natural disasters. Invest in, and use, shared analysis to inform our allocations.
- Improve our **results based management, monitoring and evaluation** for individual interventions by stress- testing our expectations and assumptions and ensuring that a focus on short term results does not come at the expense of robust, appropriate and sustainable processes of engagement.
- Strengthen our **organisational learning** and knowledge management by better capturing the results of our programmes and the approaches used to achieve those results and use this learning to inform our procedures, processes, partnerships, policies, programmes and funding decisions. Ways of working that involve broader engagement across programme teams in appraisals and evaluations could encourage more integrated learning and holistic approaches.
- Invest internally in processes to analyse investments and results in a way that allows **reflection and adaptive learning**. The CSP and Programme Grant processes allow time for this and have

informed regular adjustments. A recent exercise mapping Ireland's engagement in South Sudan allowed a full picture of our investments through different channels in order to facilitate reflection.

- Improve our **risk management** by deepening our understanding of the context in which a programme, intervention or strategic plan is, was, or will be, delivered. This helps to put progress and challenges in context and to manage risks for Irish Aid, and for beneficiaries, in a more appropriate way.
- Strengthen **communication of Irish Aid's work** to explain our approach in an accessible yet robust way. In addition to communicating tangible results, it is important to emphasise the dignity and capacity of the people we work with, and the structural and political change processes in which we engage. A resilience approach will promote a consistent way of thinking across the programme aligned with the Framework for Action outcomes. It can be used to break down the false dichotomy and perceived competition between sectors or between development and humanitarian resources.
- Improve **coherence and linkages** across our humanitarian, development, policy, multilateral and civil society units, so that different types of programmes - humanitarian assistance, governance, livelihoods, peacebuilding, elections, health and education systems strengthening, climate change adaptation, gender based violence, etc. - are reinforcing each other and there is more synergy across all of our and our partners' programming. Efforts are underway to link our work on nutrition, climate change, social protection and disaster risk management to build the resilience of vulnerable people. An integrated approach to essential services is also being explored. Country level frameworks with shared high level outcomes could be considered for protracted crises and fragile states where full country strategies are not feasible. A recent desk review of our humanitarian, development and political engagement in South Sudan identified opportunities to better link our efforts under shared objectives.

## Measuring resilience

The intention is that adopting a resilience approach will lead to more dynamic, responsive, integrated and sustainable investments that deliver lasting positive change for poor people and countries.

Building resilience is not a simple process and careful measurement on two levels is required:

1. Whether a resilience approach is being adopted by ourselves, our partners, and by their partners (measurement of resilience in terms of the quality of the **process**);
2. Whether our efforts are building resilience at an appropriate level – individual, community, institutional or national (measurement of resilience as an **outcome**).

Measuring resilience as a **process** involves assessing to what extent the principles introduced in this note have been applied. For programme and project grants, the appraisal questions in Annex 2 provide useful guidance for this. The questions can be adapted for government partners, pooled funds, sector budget support and large programmes.

In measuring resilience as an **outcome**, we need to measure whether our target group of people, communities and countries have the capacity to protect and build their assets – property, knowledge, well-being, security and social cohesion – in the face of a range of shocks and stresses. DCD Policy

What builds resilience capacity depends on the context, who our target group are and what shocks and stresses are most relevant to them. Indicators for strengthened capacity might include early warning and monitoring information, emergency response and adaption plans, participation in decision making and institutions, levels of influence and networks, access to assets, access to public services or diversified revenue.

In terms of adopting a resilience approach for Irish Aid country strategies, strengthened resilience as an outcome for people, institutions and countries should appear at quite a high level in the logic model and in some countries, may be an overarching objective. It is not necessary to use the language of resilience as long as a systematic consideration of the five principles is evident.

Many outcomes of Irish Aid's Framework for Action, which guides implementation of OWOF, are indicative of strengthened resilience. Of particular relevance are outcomes 1, 2 and 10:

**Outcome 1:** When crises and conflicts occur, the loss of life is minimised and human suffering is alleviated;

**Outcome 2:** Poor citizens, communities and states are better prepared for, better able to cope with, and better placed to recover from stresses and shocks;

**Outcome 10:** Poor and marginalised citizens realise their rights and actively participate in the development of their societies.

Depending on the type of intervention or policy in question, outcomes 3, 7, 8, 9 may also indicate stronger resilience at individual, community, institutional or national level.

**Outcome 3:** Poor individuals, families, and communities have improved food and nutrition security;

**Outcome 4:** Better functioning, climate resilient food systems and markets are accessible to and benefit the rural poor;

**Outcome 7:** Poor and marginalised citizens are better able to attain a decent living, including improved health and education, and improved employment opportunities;

**Outcome 8:** Reduced inequalities between women and men in accessing resources and benefits of development;

**Outcome 9:** Public governance systems and structures are more responsive and accountable to citizens, in particular the poor and marginalised.

A number of useful resources are mentioned in Annex 4, including tools to measure people's perception of their own resilience (GOAL and ODI); characteristics of resilience that could be considered as indicators (SIDA, OECD DAC and ACCRA); tools to measure whether systemic changes have taken place and whether they have led to development outcomes (IIED). DCD Policy

## Building resilience – examples from Irish Aid

There are many examples of resilience principles being applied across the Irish Aid programme and the list below is not exhaustive. In some cases, deliberate efforts were made to adopt a resilience approach and build resilience. In other cases, key resilience principles have been adopted as good practice through a process of learning and reflection. There are a few examples of programmes where all five principles of a resilience approach have been applied.

- **Allowing time for sustainable change.** Multiannual, typically five year, country strategy papers (CSPs) in our key partner countries offer an opportunity to build the resilience of our target group. CSPs generally include a comprehensive approach, with a range of demand- and supply-side governance initiatives, investment in the quality and coverage of key social services – health, education, nutrition social protection - and increasing household income or production. All these elements are themselves highly vulnerable to various shocks and stresses. The CSP process allows time for political economy analysis and poverty analysis and risk analysis to be undertaken. This multiannual strategic framework, with increasing flexibility on how outcomes are achieved over the five years, enables adoption of a resilience approach. The Programme Grant and Humanitarian Partnership Plan similarly allows a reasonable timeframe (5 years and 3 years respectively) for programme design and implementation. Unfortunately longer term monitoring is rarely in place to assess whether results were sustained over time.
- **Linking absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacity.** Conflict, political instability, natural disasters and slow onset events such as drought or climate change add to vulnerability, food insecurity and malnutrition. In many of our partner countries, e.g. Malawi, Ethiopia, strategies include a comprehensive approach to food security and nutrition that consists of targeted assistance to immediately tackle hunger for the most vulnerable; medium- to long-term investments in sustainable agriculture and rural development and programmes to address governance, gender equality and public sector reform. More investment could be made in surveillance and information systems for early warning and preparedness.
- **Combining humanitarian and development programming.** In seeking to link our humanitarian and development work, we are increasing collaboration and coordination across relevant units. This includes practical steps such as joint appraisals, joint monitoring visits and joint meetings, but also the development of joint approaches and collective outcomes that support our efforts to build resilience (particularly in protracted crises). In 2016, we have developed a new approach with our NGO partners whereby they will apply for humanitarian and development funding through a joint application process for the first time from 2017 onwards for protracted crises. Missions are increasingly incorporating humanitarian analysis and budgets into their 5-year strategies.
- **Investing in genuine partnership.** A number of NGO partners – Trócaire, Christian Aid – have strong partnership models based on long term engagements and investment in organisational capacity building with interventions based on partners' local understanding, networks and

knowledge. A strong shared results focus is complemented by beneficiary accountability and grievance mechanisms. The appraisal questions in Annex 2 are a useful example of how Irish Aid encourages this. The Enhanced Community Resilience Programme (ECRP) funded by Ireland, UK and Norway in Malawi is an example of a multi-layered approach to building resilience to climate risk. The approach includes short-term and long-term action at community, district and national level. Projects are identified through a community diagnostic exercise to identify the key shocks and stresses affecting each community. Decisions and capacity are devolved as local as possible while actions needed at district or national level are raised in sectoral meetings. A number of humanitarian pooled funds that we support are increasingly funding local organisations.

- **Strategic planning with a resilience lens.** The Malawi directions paper places poverty and vulnerability front and centre, with a particular focus on the food and nutrition security of rural Malawians. Resilience is understood in terms of building capacity to withstand shocks and stresses, particularly through cash transfer programmes, agricultural productivity, household energy, nutrition, climate smart agriculture, disaster risk management. Resilience capacity will also be built through good governance, gender equality and public financial management. The overall resilience of the national economy can be examined in economic and political terms. A development partner paper led by the embassy on ‘Breaking the Cycle’ explored some drivers of recurrent humanitarian crises and suggested alternative strategies to transition to a multi-sectoral, multi-annual, national resilience building approach. In Mozambique, the concept of resilience is being used to foster integration between social protection and climate change adaptation. An Irish Aid study with IIED looks at options to link social protection and climate resilience objectives and interventions to benefit poor climate vulnerable households. Recommendations include ways of integrating climate risk management into social protection provision e.g. by assessing climate vulnerability as a component of the social protection programme eligibility criteria and linking social protection programmes with local adaptation plans.
- **Investing in research, knowledge and learning.** Research partnerships with Young Lives and the Sustainable Livelihoods Consortium in ODI are deepening our understanding of vulnerability and the changing contexts in which people live. Organisations such as CGIAR are investing in global knowledge on new and adapted seeds, policies and farming practices. IIED is co-hosting a learning platform to bring together experience on integrating climate change into development policy and programming. More could be done to document experience to date with our interventions to capture good practice and where more effort or knowledge is needed.

## Next steps for promoting resilience in Irish Aid

A systematic approach to building resilience is needed in order to place it at the heart of our policy engagement and programming. A number of steps were proposed to SMG in April 2016. A number of these steps will be led by the DCD Policy Unit. Others will require engagement from across the Division. The Policy Unit will offer support to other business units to help build resilience approaches and risk management into key processes, including:

- CSP guidelines, particularly vulnerability and poverty analyses, political economy analyses, , results based management and risk management;
- CSP implementation, particularly in relation to programme design and appraisal, partnership selection, contingency planning for emergencies and humanitarian crises, planning for flexibility and responding to feedback from monitoring;
- CSDEU and Humanitarian unit funding guidelines and appraisal tools; Progress has been made in linking our HQ NGO funding instruments, particularly the Humanitarian Partnership Programme and Programme Grants in order to allow more flexibility for partners to respond to country contexts. This will need follow on support and monitoring;
- Building understanding of synergies and distinctions between this note and the DFAT note on fragility and conflict once completed.

More work is needed to link HQ funded programmes through civil society and humanitarian unit to our country strategies and to ensure relevant principles are captured through DFAT's Grant Management System. In implementing a resilience approach, it will be important to extract learning on efforts to build resilience from our country strategies, civil society, humanitarian and global partnerships, particularly through the multilateral system. The climate change and development learning platform has made some good progress on capturing learning and case studies from Missions and partners.

In 2016, the Policy Unit will disseminate this paper and identify useful tools and guidance for colleagues. Intranet resources will be complemented by lunchtime seminars and sessions with missions and business units, to build a shared understanding of resilience across the organisation. Development and roll out of training modules on resilience approaches will be considered. Efforts will be made to disseminate this note in tandem with other guidance being developed across the Policy Unit. A guidance note on integrating climate change into development identifies a process of six steps from risk identification to monitoring and learning. The upcoming social protection strategy recognises social protection as an important policy instrument to reduce extreme poverty and build resilience, with important state-building elements and flexibility to adapt to changing needs. Funding frameworks are being developed to situate HQ engagement on nutrition and climate change within an overall resilience framework. Opportunities to build resilience will be identified through policy and technical engagement on climate change adaptation, nutrition and disaster risk reduction.

All policy teams and business units are encouraged to draw on this note to identify opportunities to embed a resilience approach into their work.