

Our actions to advance adaptation and resilience goals

Summary

As climate change impacts are growing around the world, more action is needed to support communities in building their climate and disaster resilience. This includes dramatically increasing resources to local levels to help them adapt. To contribute to these efforts, the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is expanding programming to ten more countries and are increasing advocacy efforts to direct more climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction financing to local levels. Donor governments must also meet previous commitments to provide \$100 billion in climate finance, dedicate at least half of their climate finance to adaptation goals, and target local levels and the most vulnerable countries currently left behind. The global stock take in 2023 must ensure accountability to these commitments.

The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance (the Alliance) is a multi-sectoral partnership focused on strengthening the resilience of communities in developing and developed nations to flood risks. We focus on floods, as they affect more people globally than any other type of natural hazard, with over 673 million people affected by floods from 2010-2019.¹ We work at the community level where the impacts of floods are most felt. These impacts will only get worse with increases in population, urbanization, and infrastructure development in hazard prone areas coupled with increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events caused by climate change.

The Alliance consists of humanitarian, NGO, research, and private sector partners who work together to increase public and private investments in evidence-based, community-based flood resilience. In the absence of internationally validated methods for measuring disaster resilience, we have developed the Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC) framework and tool. By measuring resilience at local levels and working with communities to identify interventions that build resilience, we hope to contribute to the evidence based needed to increase social, political, and financial investments in flood resilience.

¹ IFRC (2020) World Disasters Report, 2020 [pdf], <https://floodresilience.net/resources/item/world-disasters-report-2020-come-heat-or-high-water>



By using sandbar cropping, pumpkins can be grown on previously infertile char lands. © Plaban Ganguly, Practical Action

At the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, we committed to:

1. Scaling up our work in climate action, including advocating for the generation of an additional \$1 billion from public and private sources in climate-smart, risk-informed development, which builds resilience.
2. Supporting 2 million people become more resilient to flooding. We will elevate community voices and research findings with international donors and all levels of government to show why increased investment in flood resilience is urgently needed.
3. Engaging with other initiatives, like the Risk Informed Early Action Partnership.

We have made strides in reaching these goals. As of July 2020, the Alliance has both influenced \$243 million in financial commitments and spending on flood resilience, and improved policies, policy guidelines, and tools across sub-national, national, and global spaces.²

Our increasing ambition

However, considering the great and growing needs for communities to adapt to climate change, and in support of the broader aims of the Race to Resilience campaign and Climate Adaptation Summit, we are increasing our ambition, and are:

- Expanding to 10 more countries and 203 additional communities for a total presence in 24 countries.
- Further investing in the validation of the [FRMC tool](#)'s useability and reliability to maximize the impact for measuring community-level flood resilience across the globe.
- Systematically gathering data about Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) financing at local levels through the FRMC, using this empirical data to find critical gaps, and advocating with government officials to close these financing gaps.

² This figure has been weighted by Alliance contribution to account for the fact that spending 'wins' often result from the efforts of multiple stakeholders and coalitions.

- Supporting the implementation of the Principles for Locally-Led Adaptation Action.
- Expanding ecosystem based DRR and nature-based solutions to support mitigation efforts and address worsening climate related hazards across a range of contexts.

We also urge bilateral donors and multilateral organizations to meet previous climate finance commitments, including reaching the \$100 billion target, increase funding for adaptation to at least \$50 billion, and target the most vulnerable communities and countries, who to date, have received insufficient financing to adapt to the climate crisis.³ Additionally, every effort must be made to ensure COVID-19 recovery and stimulus packages build resilience to climate change and reduce climate-related risks. In particular, we advocate for a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery from the social and economic impacts of COVID-19.⁴

We must hold ourselves and governments accountable to these commitments. The “Global Stocktake” in 2023 is an opportune moment to report on increased financing for adaptation reaching climate vulnerable countries and communities and to assess whether these commitments are delivering a holistic whole of society approach, where finance has reached the people on the frontlines of climate impacts, supporting actions to build their long-term resilience.

There is a global consensus that the world must prioritize adaptation. Now is the time to act. We look forward to working toward these concrete targets and welcome the opportunity to partner with others to help define and advance steps that can be taken to help communities around the world build their resilience to floods and other hazards.

3 Alcayna, Tilly (2020). At What Cost: How chronic gaps in adaptation finance expose the world's poorest people to climate chaos. <https://floodresilience.net/resources/item/at-what-cost-how-chronic-gaps-in-adaptation-finance-expose-the-world-s-poorest-people-to-climate-chaos>

4 See Norton, R, et al. (2020) "Building back better: Ensuring COVID-19 response and recovery builds long-term resilience to climate impacts." <https://floodresilience.net/resources/item/building-back-better>

Case Study

Only 10% of climate finance is estimated to reach local levels.⁵ Ensuring additional finance reaches communities impacted negatively by climate change is critical to building resilience.

Each year in Nepal, local government planning follows a formal process which often lacks information on community needs. Practical Action saw an opportunity to inform the Local Disaster and Climate Resilience Plans in three municipalities in southwestern Nepal by leveraging the knowledge generated by the Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC).

Using existing relationships with local leaders the team was able to introduce recommendations based on the FRMC at opportune moments in the local planning calendar. This resulted in the local planning committee submitting these recommendations to the ward-level planning committee for financing by the local government budget.

The FRMC provided evidence on how past government support had been used, and how this had failed to address community needs. As a result, the local administrative system has integrated resilience needs into their plans and budgets.

As of June 2020, \$170,000 has been mobilized for implementation. This has improved response capacities, access to early warnings and climate information, and increased livelihood options and access to emergency health services. Although these commitments do not respond to all their needs, local communities feel empowered to be more involved in local planning process in the future.

5 Soanes, M, Rai, N, Steele, P, Shakya, C and Macgregor, J (2017) Delivering real change: getting international climate finance to the local level. IIED Working Paper. IIED, London. <https://www.iied.org/climate-finance-not-reaching-local-level>

The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is a multi-sectoral partnership which brings together community programmes, new research, shared knowledge, and evidence-based influencing to build community flood resilience in developed and developing countries.

We help people measure their resilience to floods and identify appropriate solutions before disaster strikes. Our

vision is that floods should have no negative impact on people's ability to thrive. To achieve this we are working to increase funding for flood resilience; strengthen global, national and subnational policies; and improve flood resilience practice.

Find out more: www.floodresilience.net

The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is made up of the following organizations:

