

**Entretien avec Daniel Kull
(Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), The World Bank, Switzerland)**

Cette interview fait partie d'un panel d'entretiens réalisés par Inter-réseaux sur la thématique de la résilience aux crises alimentaires au Sahel.

IR: What is your position within the World Bank?

Daniel Kull: I work for the GFDRR (Global Facility for Disaster-Risk Reduction), a partnership of 42 countries, the United Nations and a number of other international organisations. Inside the World Bank, it is the focal point for disaster management.

IR: What definition do you use?

We do not really operate with an institution-wide definition. From my standpoint, resilience is risk-management for development. Resilience is a goal that we try to achieve through all of our sectoral investments. I should add that to us, resilience is not limited to reducing risks and shocks in order to maintain a status quo: it's also about growth. Progress cannot be achieved without taking risks, so we need risk-informed sustainable development to take advantage of opportunities.

IR: How has the World Bank mainstreamed the concept of resilience into its policies?

There's a lot happening in the World Bank around resilience right now. Resilience is becoming a stated target of our programming, but it is also operationally flexible depending on the theme of an investment.

Here are a few examples. Our 2011 World Development Report, titled "Conflict, Security and Development," has formulated recommendations regarding resilience. Our Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries Group is in charge of the operationalization of these recommendations; they are also coordinating the development of our Sahel response strategy.

Another one is a 10-year environment (2012-2022) strategy called "Toward a Green, Clean and Resilient World for All". Our "Social resilience and climate change operational toolkit" is designed to support project teams for integrating socially-inclusive resilience into our climate change operations. In the socio-economic field, we have a 10-year strategy (also 2012-2022) called "Social Protection and Labor: Resilience, Equity and Opportunity".

Finally, at the WB-IMF Annual Meeting in October, together with the Government of Japan we hosted the Sendai dialogue to engage Annual Meetings delegates as well as other stakeholders in developing a global consensus on the urgent need for mainstreaming disaster risk management in the global development agenda. The resultant "Sendai Report" was endorsed by the Development Committee and paves the way for greater World Bank investment in disaster risk management.

Our 2014 World Development Report will be titled "Managing Risk for Development."

As you can see, resilience lies at the core of our policies.

IR: How was it introduced?

In fact it has primarily risen up from the operational sectors of the World Bank. However at the highest levels the GFDRR has been organising "Resilience Dialogues" during the IMF-World Bank Spring and Annual Meetings for the last few years. These dialogues involve political and institutional leaders from around the world that tend to also be members of the Political Champions for Disaster Resilience, which includes our Vice President for Sustainable Development and is co-chaired by the UK and UNDP. Of course recent and on-going experiences in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel are also helping to raise the profile of the resilience agenda.

IR: Is resilience a real departure from your previous practices in disaster management?

We are not making major changes to what we do, but I would not call resilience a mere re-labelling. Everything we do should contribute to resilience, so proactive risk-management is being integrated into all of our sectoral approaches. Sustainable development needs to be risk-informed.

IR: Resilience has been put forward as a bridge between emergency and development. Do you agree with that?

Yes, I do. We think preparedness, in particular, is an appropriate link between emergency and development, as well as recovery.

In the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, for example, we are following a three-phased approach:

- in the first six months: as we do not have a humanitarian mandate, we do not deliver food and shelter directly, but we can and do trigger financing, making money immediately available to governments generally for distribution through existing safety nets;
- in the following two years: we support economic recovery, providing livelihood and employment support to ensure that markets are functioning and stable. PDNAs (Post-Disaster Needs Assessment) are performed, led by governments with support from the World Bank, UN and European Commission, to identify recovery and reconstruction investment needs and priorities, ultimately for planning longer-term recovery;
- the following five years: we support risk-informed sustainable development (what, in our field, we call “resilience”). It involves risk reduction activities such as improving resource management, strengthening preparedness such as supporting early warning systems, and risk mitigation such as strengthening safety nets.

IR: Is it easy to coordinate with local governments, and between different institutions and agencies?

Governments are our clients, so we follow their priorities and leave the ultimate coordination responsibility to them. Of course we also work with UN agencies, for example making sure our Country Assistance Strategies (CAS) are coordinated and complementary with United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) in support of national development priorities. We participate in existing inter-agency coordination frameworks. Naturally, the level of cooperation with UN agencies may vary, depending on the country.

We also recognize the need to work with civil society, but always with the government's endorsements.

IR: How do you think resilience may affect governance?

This is a difficult question. Governments and therefore political leadership at all levels (national to local) need to recognize and act upon their obligations to protect citizens. This does not necessarily mean that governments accept all responsibility for risk management, but rather that they create the enabling environment for individuals, households, communities and the private sector to manage their risks, as well as put systems in place to support this. At a broader societal level the public needs to hold their political leadership to account regarding issues of human security and risk management. This starts first and foremost with an enhanced public understanding of the risks they face and the responsibilities of the state vis-a-vis these risks, and of course dependable and effective opportunities for the public to feedback on and guide government performance. In an ideal situation politicians who failed at reducing risk would not get re-elected...as opposed to now when they tend to receive plenty of political mileage for only responding to crises.

IR: Do you have other tools to help governments implement a pro-resilience agenda?

One of the things we focus on is helping governments plan, develop and access disaster risk financing, for example through contingent credit arrangements and sovereign risk insurance.

These programs are designed to help people and governments react quickly: they bring resilience through financial preparedness.

We do however have to be somewhat cautious about insurance: while in the past years it has become a very popular topic, it remains only a part of the solution. Insurance often does not make sense for the most vulnerable, as it tends to be the most expensive risk financing option.

IR: How are your resilience initiatives targeted?

We target both rural and urban areas, with disaster risk weighing more and more on urban areas.

Our overall mission is to reduce poverty so by definition we need to target the most vulnerable. Perhaps counter-intuitively, many of the most vulnerable populations in terms of absolute numbers actually live in middle-income countries, where huge pockets of poverty remain.

All the countries of the Sahel are low-income. We help these governments develop safety nets and support for example child nutrition, disease control, and rehabilitation of health systems and schools, which is not very different from what a development-oriented NGO would do. The difference is that we work with governments and aim for our investments to complement those of the UN and civil society.

IR: Are there risks and limits associated with resilience?

We should avoid resilience being just another buzzword that does not lead to changes in how we operate.

Second, as agencies, international NGOs and donors take resilience on board, they might define it strictly along the lines of their own mandates, potentially hindering our ability to work together. This would be counter-productive.

IR: What are the main obstacles to resilience-friendly policies?

Most governments are more open to it, but you need to take operational and political realities into account.

IR: Should conflicts be included in resilience thinking?

Conflict is the most overlooked area in the discussion about resilience, because people tend to shy away from the subject. Disasters are an easier topic because they are not political, whereas conflict is by nature political. The World Bank, though, has set up a Center for Conflict, Development and Security in Nairobi, to provide technical leadership on issues related to conflict and fragility.

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