

Strategy Summary – Climate Resilience by 2030

Global context

The climate crisis simmers against a global backdrop of conflict, high food and energy prices, inflation, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, drought and floods now exceed the tolerance threshold for plants and animals. Millions of people are exposed to food and water insecurity.¹ In 2022, the number of people facing acute food insecurity reached nearly 350 million, more than double the number in 2019.²

To be climate resilient is to successfully cope with and manage impacts from a changing climate while preventing those impacts from growing worse.

Objective of the strategy

By 2030, Episcopal Relief & Development intends to equip 30,000 community-based climate resilience change agents and strengthen climate adaptation of 150,000 households in underserved and remote areas across the world. Our interventions will include evidence-based strategies that stabilize households that are experiencing acute primary needs, reduce disaster risk and strengthen sustainable community development. Activities will emphasize cash transfer where appropriate and critical information, financing, linkages and technology for smallholder farmers and others disproportionately impacted by extreme weather.

Our approach to building climate resilience

We prioritize geographies at extreme risk due to the confluence of climate change, conflict and poverty. Through comprehensive vulnerability and risk mapping, informed by national and international climate data and projections, our programs are designed to reach communities with high food insecurity compounded by cyclical climate disasters like drought and flooding. Communities are often rural “last mile” subsistence farming areas that are isolated from the basic infrastructure and markets needed for viable agricultural livelihoods. Our faith networks are present in these communities and bridge them to government and private sector actors that are otherwise inaccessible. We deliver climate resilient solutions that have been demonstrated to be effective in providing people the flexibility and decision-making power they need to adapt and thrive in the face of climate impacts and uncertainty. Specific examples from each intervention area (seen below) include, but are not limited to:

Consumption Support	Information	Financing	Linkages	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash transfers Vouchers Food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate-resilient agriculture Livelihood diversification Natural resource management Disaster preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings Microcredit Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith networks Government Private sector Community-based organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile banking Irrigation Renewable energy Improved seeds

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Assessment (2022)

² United Nations (2023)

The above strategies work alongside cross-cutting approaches including:

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (ABCD)

Our ABCD approach encourages people and communities to identify and use their existing assets (i.e., human, social, natural, economic, temporal and spiritual) together with external resources.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

We promote savings, cash transfers, co-lending and other financial products to support nimble and equitable household decision-making. Savings with Education (SwE)³ is our primary method to mobilize community funds, foster social inclusion and provide wraparound educational services.

These methods are mainstreamed into project design, implementation and evaluation:



DESIGN	Conduct Drought Vulnerability and Risk Assessments to identify priority communities and marginalized households	Engage new implementing partners in strategic localities for expansion or building project capacities	Revise training and assessment resources using most up-to-date information in climate adaptation and livelihood strengthening	Customize microcredit and cash transfers to project context and seasonal variability
	Map and analyze key climate resilience (CR) stakeholders focusing on financial institutions, mobile technology providers and services for climate migrants and displaced people	Design for integration of CR strategic interventions into strong collectives such as SwE farmer groups and disaster committees	Test and build appropriate digital capabilities into all applicable project interventions and include digital risk assessment and management plan	Incorporate non-place-based interventions for mobile populations such as climate migrants and displaced people
IMPLEMENTATION	Ensure project length is sufficient for social and financial capital building and comprehensive climate-resilient livelihood strengthening	Support and assess staff and community facilitators to manage risks associated with microfinance and cash transfer interventions	Routinely capture, analyze and use data for adaptive management including short-term adjustments and long-term shifts	
EVALUATION	Design evaluations to capture quantitative and qualitative data ensuring consultative and awareness-building approaches with respondents	Triangulate data from rapid assessments, research and stakeholder consultations plus findings from humanitarian response and other focus area programs	Conduct cost-benefit analyses to ensure optimal investment in specific interventions	

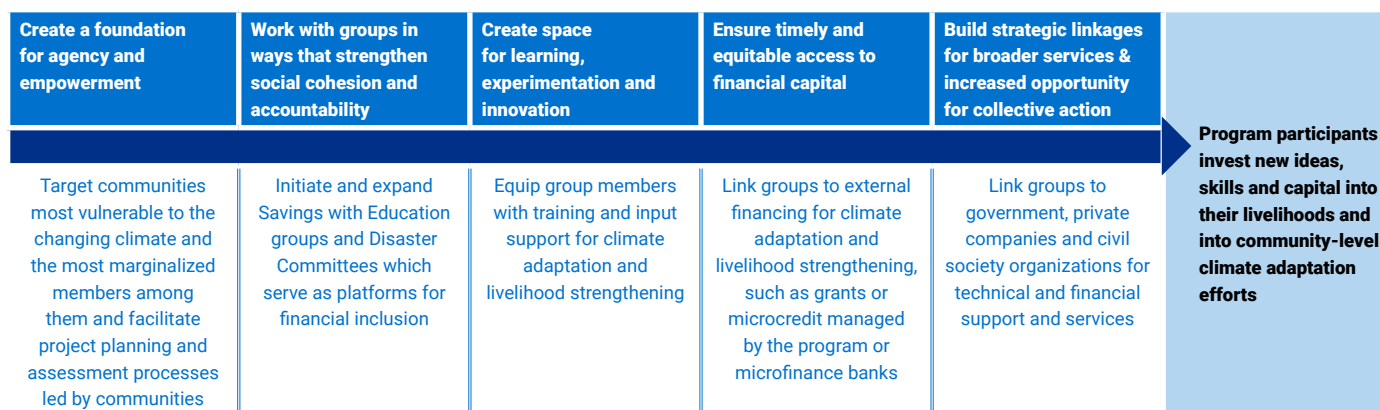
3 Savings with Education is a highly replicable savings-led, microfinance methodology that incorporates simple, relevant, high-impact training in business, finance, and health.

Ways of working

Episcopal Relief & Development invests in change agents and institutions to foster climate resilience:

1. **Community-based facilitators:** Local change agents (e.g. Community volunteers, Savings with Education Facilitators, Savings Group Management Committees, Disaster Committees, Mentor Farmers and Youth Leaders) are trained, equipped and mentored by local partner staff. They work alongside project participants providing skill-building and mentorship.
2. **Local partner staff:** Our local implementing partner organizations are comprised of sector-specialists and development practitioners who live among the communities they serve. We invest in local technical capacity building and institutional systems strengthening with these faith-based and community organizations.⁴
3. **Faith networks and institutions:** We prioritize partnerships with faith networks and institutions that are relational, long lasting, provide reach into the “last mile,” and to the most marginalized. We support partners who walk with people holistically and honor the totality of their dignity.

All of these change agents lead a process of engagement with community members that build agency, social cohesion, innovation, financial capital and collective action:



Episcopal Relief & Development provides immediate cash or other material assistance to stabilize households in need of basic necessities and then layers on strategic information, financing, linkages and technology for longer term resilience building. Initial consumption support in the form of food, cash and/or vouchers enables the poorest households to meet their immediate needs and fully engage in program activities as they progress towards strengthening their livelihoods. After a disaster, this consumption support can prevent households from selling productive assets and going deeper into poverty. Responding to a recurrent acute disaster with emergency relief can be an entry point for longer term climate resilience programming.

The ultimate goal is for program participants and communities to strengthen collective wellbeing, to thrive and to apply ideas, skills, capital and relationships into their individual and collective livelihoods, climate adaptation and environmental restoration efforts. Cooperative formation, renewable energy, communal water points and grain warehouses are important strategies for rural livelihood strengthening. The program also promotes reforestation, farmer-managed natural regeneration and watershed management to strengthen ecosystems while supporting sustainable livelihoods. Episcopal Relief & Development collects data across the project lifecycle to guide any needed course corrections or adaptations.

⁴ See USAID's [2022 Localization Vision & Approach](#)

Measuring our impact | Indicators of change by 2030

As a result of our Climate Resilience programs:

All implementing partners should demonstrate:

1. Improved education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning
2. Increased engagement of climate migrants

All community groups should demonstrate (disaggregated by gender and age):

3. Increased access to capital (i.e. savings and loans, external loans and grants)
 - Proportion of groups who have increased loan rates
 - Percent increase in value of investments
4. Increased community-level asset climate adaptation (at least 1 among indicators below)
 - Water points constructed/repaired
 - Improved crop storage
 - Community gardens/nurseries
5. Increased environmental management
 - Hectares of land restored (degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought, flood)
 - Number of trees surviving after 1 and 2 years
6. Increased value-add services from public or private sector agencies
7. Implementation of local disaster risk reduction strategies

All participants should demonstrate (disaggregated by gender and age):

8. Improved livelihood skills (i.e., business planning, farming technique)
9. Increased income or assets
10. Increased economic stability
11. Diversified income or assets
12. Reduced vulnerability and/or reliance on assistance
13. Increased household decision-making for women

Climate Resilience Learning Agenda Questions

- What is the minimum food, cash or voucher assistance package needed to prevent households from shedding productive assets and necessities in times of crisis (including cyclical, climate-related crises in a specific location)?
- Are our emergency responses (i.e., cash and voucher assistance, food relief, information dissemination) and climate resilience interventions (i.e., savings, microcredit, livelihood training, linkages) reaching the poorest households?
- Are our climate resilience interventions (i.e., savings, microcredit, livelihood training, linkages) equipping households to be disaster-ready (i.e., cope without going deeper into poverty)?
- How are faith networks supporting “people on the move” (i.e. internally displaced people, seasonal migrants, refugees, etc.) across their journey with emergency response, resilience-building, advocacy, pastoral care, etc.? What other strategies are needed?