

RESILIENT WATERS PROGRAM BASELINE STUDY KONGOLA

USAID’s Resilient Waters Program aims to **build more resilient and water-secure communities** in the Okavango and Limpopo river basins. Resilient Waters focuses specifically on transboundary water security and resource management; safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services; climate change adaptation; and conserving biodiversity and ecosystems.

The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide the community of Kongola with feedback from our study;
- Highlight priority areas for Kongola to become more resilient; and
- Facilitate a planning session based on the information we have collected.

KONGOLA AT A GLANCE

We interviewed **59 people** in Kongola

Most of the people interviewed were older than 35 years.



Most of the people interviewed were female.



In Kongola, **farming** is a key sources of income.

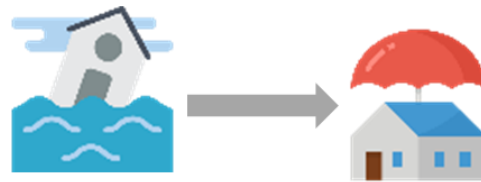
Understanding of resilience in Kongola

! Sources of natural shocks and stressors in Kongola are **droughts and water shortages**

➔ These shocks and stressors negatively impact households involved in agriculture and other water-based livelihoods; and result in there being **hunger and lack of food**.

★ In Kongola, resilience is seen as **changing farming methods**.

What is resilience?



Resilience is the ability to respond to shocks and stressors. There are four dimensions of resilience.

Absorptive Capacity



Can we **protect** ourselves and **cope** with events?



Adaptive Capacity

Can we **adjust** the way we live after an event has happened?

Anticipatory Capacity



Can we make a **plan** for other events that might happen to us?



Transformative Capacity

Can we **change the way that we do things** based on what we have learned?



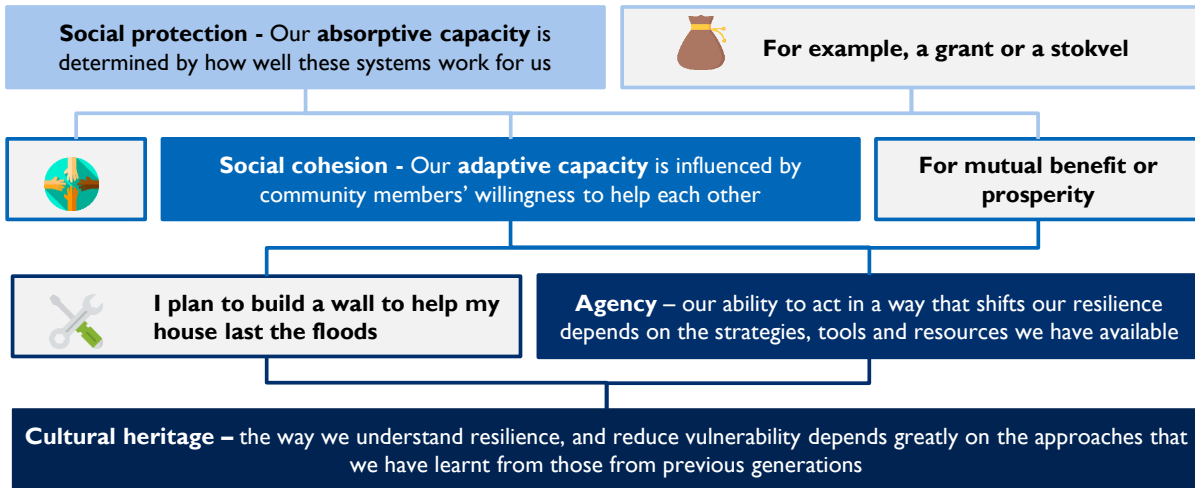
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BASELINE STUDY

We did a baseline study in 13 communities in seven countries in the Limpopo and Okavango river basins between July and August 2019. We did this to find out how households understand resilience, how communities are building resilience, and what this means for our work. One of the areas that we surveyed was Kongola, Namibia. Kongola falls into the Okavango River Basin which covers central Angola, Namibia and Botswana.

WHAT DETERMINES RESILIENCE?

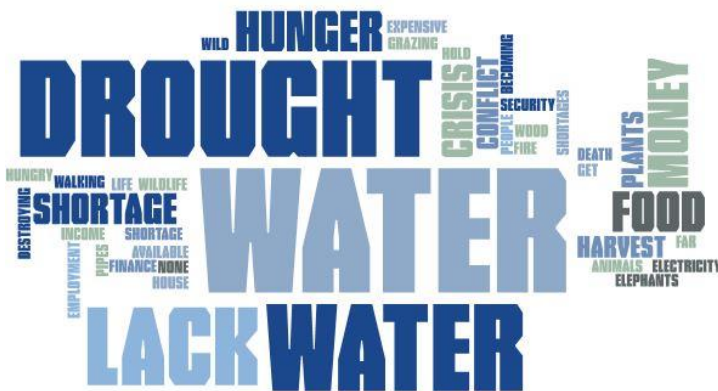
Our baseline study found that resilience is determined by four factors: **1. Social protection, 2. Social cohesion, 3. Agency, and 4. Cultural heritage.**



WHAT DID WE FIND OUT IN KONGOLA?

Droughts and water shortages are the biggest challenges in Kongola. Natural resources are a source of food and income, while animals pose a threat for households in Kongola. Weather and climate are the forms of shocks and stressors in the area. The effects of shocks and stressors have been less access to food and water, less income/resources and social support. The effects of the shocks and stressors were felt mostly by respondents and their immediate family as well as their community.

WATER SHORTAGES ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN KONGOLA



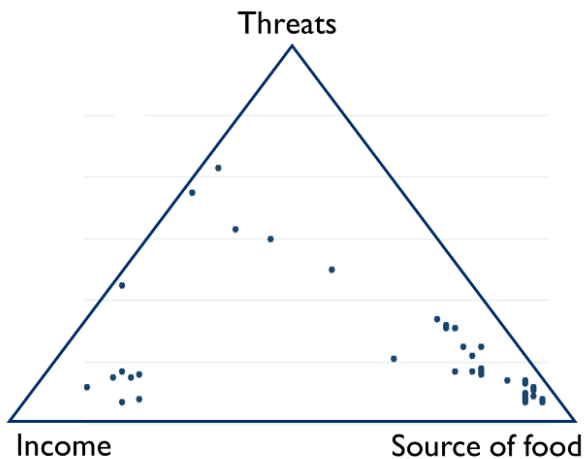
Water shortages, caused by droughts, are the biggest source of stress for households in Kongola. The lack of water has resulted in food shortages and hunger in the community.

The expense of water was also raised by households as a problem. Some incidents of wildlife conflict was mentioned by respondents. It is likely that this will continue to increase as competition over diminishing natural resources grows.

KONGOLA AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are source of food and income, but also pose a threat for households in Kongola.

The heatmap below shows that water is primarily a source of food / livelihood in Kongola.

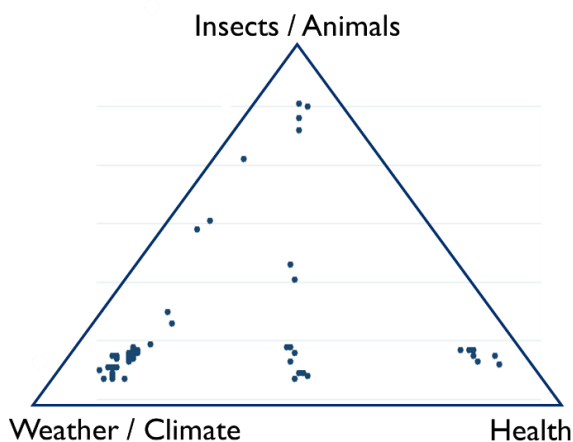


- Plants are seen as both a source of income and food
- Animals are seen as both a source of income and food; and as a threat because of some human-wildlife conflict experienced in the area.

THE CAUSES OF SHOCKS AND STRESSORS

Weather and climate are the main forms of shocks and stressors for households in Kongola

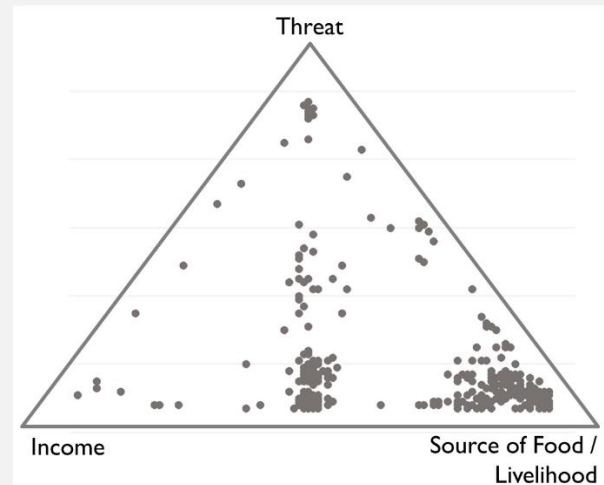
Kongola is heavily affected by drought conditions and water shortages.



KONGOLA COMPARED TO THE OKOVANGO RIVER BASIN

As with Kongola, natural resources in the Okavango River Basin are a key source of livelihood but can also be threats.

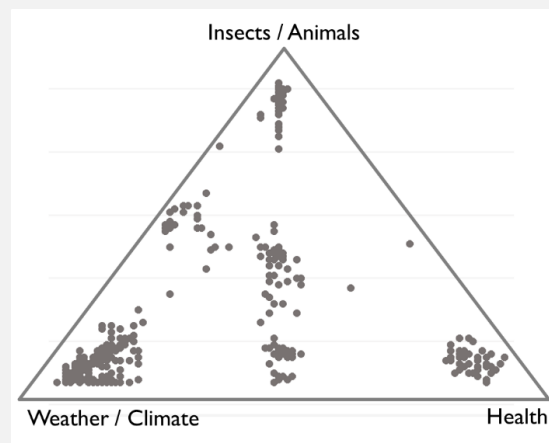
When compared to Kongola, water is more acutely seen as a source of food / livelihood. Similar to Kongola, water is also seen as a threat in that the whole basin has been subject to extreme droughts.



- As in Kongola, plants are largely seen as a source of income and food.
- As in Kongola, animals are seen as both a source of food, income as well as a threat. The latter is likely to increase as competition over natural resources worsens.

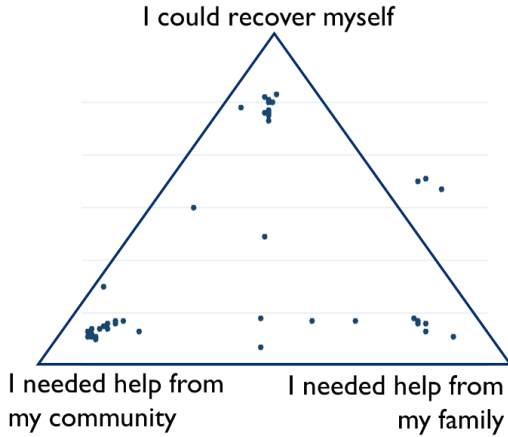
THE CAUSES OF SHOCKS AND STRESSORS

As with Kongola, weather and climate are the main forms of shocks and stressors in the Okavango River Basin. Similar to Kongola, insects / animals are also viewed as a source of shocks and stressors.



RECOVERY FROM SHOCKS AND STRESSORS

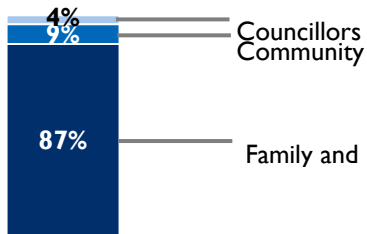
Households in Kongola were either able to recover themselves, or needed help from their community and to a lesser extent their family.



SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR SHOCKS AND STRESSORS IN KONGOLA

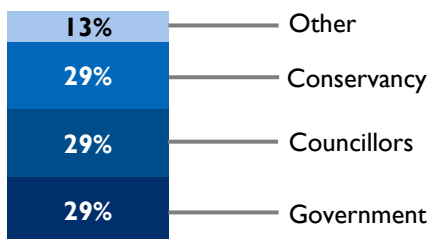
39% of households have people that they can turn to for support.

There are therefore relatively low levels of support in Kongola. Of those that **do have people to turn to**, most ask family and friends for support.



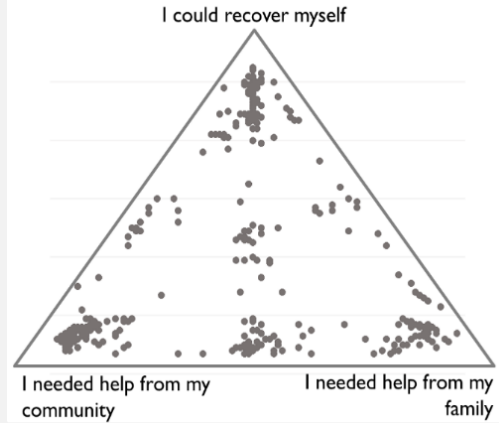
24% of households have organisations that they can turn to for support.

Of the 24% of respondents in Kongola who indicated they can turn to organisations, people are equally likely to turn to the conservancy, the local councillors or government.



KONGOLA COMPARED TO THE OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN

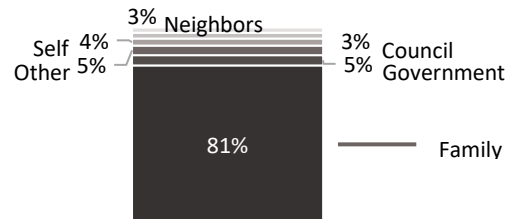
As in Kongola, households in the Okavango River Basin can either recover themselves or draw on a combination of community and family.



SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR SHOCKS AND STRESSORS IN THE OKAVANGO BASIN

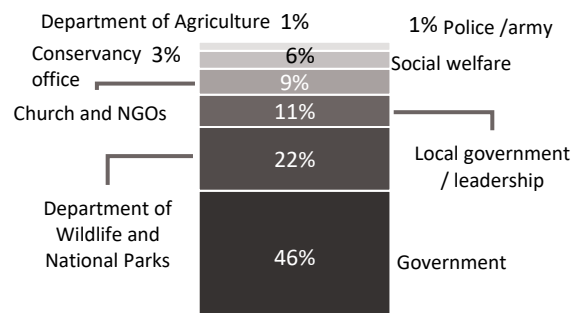
48% of households in the Okavango River Basin have people that they can turn to for support.

This is 9% higher than the 39% in Kongola. Similar to Kongola, of those who do not have people to turn to, most (81%) could turn to their family.



54% of households in the Okavango River Basin have organizations that they can turn to for support; substantially higher than in Kongola.

Of the 42% who have organizations to turn to, the majority (as in Kongola) rely on various government departments and their local representatives.



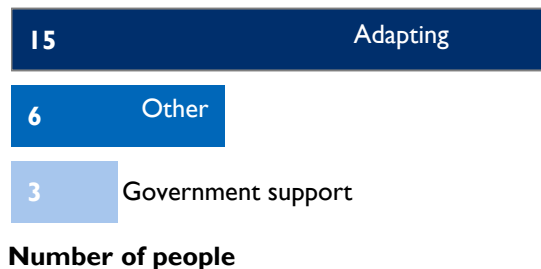
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Overall, households in Kongola felt **that more resources, knowledge and stronger social networks would help them to respond better** to shocks and stressors in the future.

Personal beliefs and what others do in the community are critical to people's decision-making. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that communities have access to reliable and helpful information so that they can plan better.

41% of households in Kongola **have a plan** for future natural shocks and stressors. Of the 41% of households in Kongola that have a plan, these plans were largely related to changing ways of farming in order to become more resilient. Examples of the plans that people reported included:

- **Adapting Farming:** Change sloughing seasons, planting drought resistant seeds, start cultivating early.
- **Other:** Getting education on natural shocks, starting self-employment projects.
- **Government support:** Reporting issues to councillors.



A lack of resources and support prevents people in Kongola from implementing their plans.

HOW COULD KONGOLA BECOME MORE RESILIENT?

In Kongola, residents cited concerns about the lack of resources and support which limited their ability to plan appropriately. Natural resources are key sources of both food and income and thus are greatly affected given the drought conditions and water shortages prevalent in this region. Animals have always posed a threat to communities but this is increasing as human-wildlife conflict increases as competition over limited resources increases.

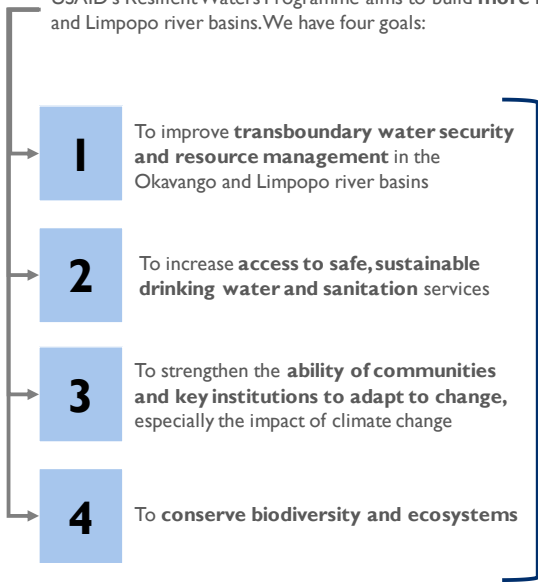
To improve their resilience, residents in Kongola may benefit from the following actions which have been developed understanding the context of the community, its climate and initiative feasibility:

- **Adaptive farming:** given the increasing human-wildlife conflict and severe drought, historical farming methods are unlikely to bring forth the same yields. Experimental methods and drought-resistant crops can help keep yields high in the face of climate variations.
- **Collective seed purchasing:** a collaborative approach to purchasing seeds may provide additional opportunities for funding through government or non-profit organisations. Such an approach also allows for a wide variety of seeds to be shared between residents, broadening the types of crops grown, and thus nutrients available from which all residents can benefit. This type of approach reduces individual risk thus increasing overall resilience of the community.
- **Collecting rain water:** given the increasingly dry climate, it is extremely important to maximise whenever the region has rainfall. Jojo tanks provide a safe and relatively low-cost solution for storing rain water to be used at a later stage. Furthermore, multiple residents in the community can have jojo tanks without interfering with each other's water supply, as opposed to boreholes.
- **Community information hub:** Residents in Kongola cited the lack of reliable information as one of the reasons preventing them from planning for shocks and stressors. Only 39% of residents indicated they had people to turn to for help. Our research shows that communities who can protect themselves from events and adjust their way of living after an event have strong communication channels and social networks. This suggests a need to establish a regular community forum to support sharing of ideas, solutions and support networks. This may also be frequented by the local councillors providing them a platform to share any updates with the entire community.

Based on the findings of our research, the effects of shocks and stressors are multi-faceted affecting access to food, water, social support, resources and income. The initiatives highlighted above seek to enable the community of Kongola to improve their preparation for future shocks, and to recover from these shocks quicker. This is enabled by creating more resilient methods of communication, food production and water collection.

OVERVIEW OF USAID'S RESILIENT WATERS PROGRAMME

USAID's Resilient Waters Programme aims to build **more resilient and water-secure communities** in the Okavango and Limpopo river basins. We have four goals:



In order to do this we will build:



RESILIENT INSTITUTIONS

- Institutions are central to managing resources and building resilience
- We are supporting institutions in building capacity to plan, building strong networks, enhancing an enabling environment and meeting their objectives.
- Institutional ownership is important for sustainability.



ROBUST INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- To manage resources better and build resilience, we need information that is accessible and that can be used to make decisions.
- We are working on filling information gaps, synthesising information and integrating it into decision-making.



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- We need to consider new ways to live to adapt to climate change. To this, we need to understand what these practices are and how we can use them.
- We will support the innovation and systems of dynamic adaptation.