Livelihoods for Resilience

Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy

November 2017

Contents

Background

Feed the Future Ethiopia – Livelihoods for Resilience is part of the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative designed to reduce food insecurity and increase resilience for Ethiopia's poorest households. It complements and supports the government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP 4) along three pathways: 1) crop and livestock, 2) off-farm livelihoods, and 3) employment. This five-year activity (2016-2021) is being implemented in 27 PSNP woredas of Amhara, SNNPR, and Tigray with a total budget of nearly $ US 53 million). It is being implemented by a consortium led by CARE and including REST, ORDA, ASE, and SNV-USA. A sister project, led by Catholic Relief Services, seeks similar outcomes in nine PSNP woredas in the Oromia Region.

Livelihoods for Resilience is a follow-on to the Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development (GRAD) project. GRAD has been influencing key stakeholders through producing and sharing a number of communications and knowledge products. In spite of being prominent in sharing communications and knowledge products to key stakeholders regularly, there is a room for improvement and to be more effective. To that end, Livelihoods for Resilience has decided to put in place a communications and knowledge management strategy from the beginning of project implementation..

Definitions

The Knowledge Management space is one that is full of contradicting definitions and terms, which can create confusion about what the roles and strategies should be for a project hoping to do knowledge management well. Clarity around key definitions is important to ensure that team members are aligned in their understanding of what each person should and should not do to move knowledge management forward. For the purposes of Livelihoods for Resilience, some key definitions are:

Knowledge Management: According to NASA, "Knowledge management is getting the right information to the right people at the right time, and helping people create knowledge and share and act upon information in ways that will measurably improve performance."[1] The goal of a knowledge management strategy is to ensure "the agency's practitioners have access to critical knowledge when they need it – now and in the future – to increase the likelihood of mission success."[2] This implies that knowledge management is about more than organizing and storing information, and is instead a critical tool for ensuring adaptive management and project success. Additionally, it highlights that knowledge management is not just in the hands of a few designated staff, but must permeate the entire team culture to achieve results.

Knowledge management also refers to how knowledge is brought into a project, how it is generated and used within a project and how it is packaged and disseminated outside of a project.

Critical Knowledge: A key goal of Knowledge Management is not only to store and organize data, but also to lift out critical knowledge: important lessons that can influence program

---

[1] https://km.nasa.gov/what-is-km/
[2] https://km.nasa.gov

decisions and help focus critical thinking for the staff. The goal of KM is to analyze information to prompt both changes in program strategies and critical reflection on how to continuously improve. In the case of Livelihoods for Resilience, the Learning Agenda guides the team on some kinds of critical knowledge we know we hope to build over the course of the project. (Summary of Learning Agenda in annex)

Communications: In the context of development programming, communications is the act of sharing critical knowledge with a view to prompting action. It is not a goal in and of itself, but rather a tool to influence policy, improve programs, generate more impact, and prompt innovation. Communications can have audiences within the program team, with key government stakeholders at the local and national level, with the donor, and with global stakeholders who can learn from the project experience.

KM Systems: The combination of technology platforms, individual staff behaviors, and the enabling environment that management sets in order to facilitate learning and analysis, sharing critical knowledge, adapting program activities, and advocacy agendas.

The Knowledge Cycle: This cycle demonstrates ways to break down knowledge management into discrete activities that each team member can engage in to promote knowledge management and learning.
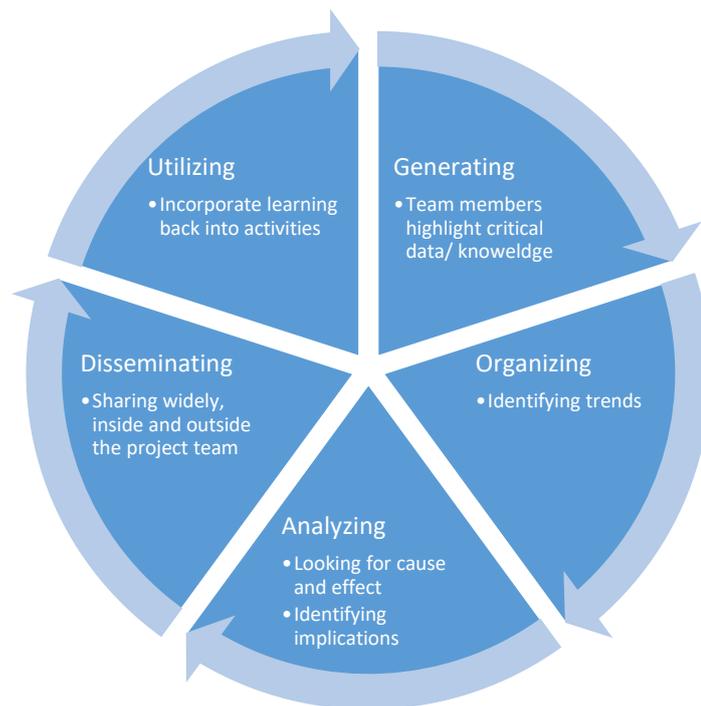
Goal

Strengthen project learning, and communications towards influencing key stakeholders including PSNP-4, other government and non-government organizations, and the donor to adopt best and tested project interventions in their programming, ultimately to help poor households graduate from the safety net program.

Objectives

- Ensure systematic knowledge management and learning among Livelihoods for Resilience consortium members;
- Improve the quality of learning and communications products and platforms;
- Strengthen the image, position, and brand of the donor, CARE, and other consortium members.

Key Audiences

Knowledge management and communications do not work in a vacuum. It is important to identify the target audiences and desired actions that they can take in order to design KM systems and communications strategies that will be most effective for reaching project goals. The key audiences for learning generated by Livelihoods for Resilience include:

- **Primary direct beneficiaries**: the 97,900 chronically food insecure rural, poor, households (women, men, children, youth) in 27 woredas in the three Regions of Tigray, Amhara, and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNPR). The strategy will work to take these people's needs and feedback into account in program adaptation, as well as continually sharing information with the field teams.

- **LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE staff:** the coordinating team in Addis as well as field teams and implementing partners who are responsible for carrying out project activities. The KM strategy will ensure that the project team learns from each other and data and information generated by M&E systems in order to make project activities more effective leading to the best possible results from the project.

- **Field-level change agents:** the government partners and service providers who are expected to contribute to strengthening capacity of the direct beneficiaries as well as affect change and strengthen the enabling environment including: government extension agents, cooperative leadership, private sector actors, financial service providers, and others. The strategy will support these actors in their access to knowledge that will help make their jobs easier and more relevant, as well as performance data and new learning to prompt adaptation.

- **CARE Ethiopia staff:** the hundreds of staff members who work in CARE Ethiopia. The strategy will aim to influence other projects within CARE Ethiopia to continuously improve programming and allow the CARE Ethiopia team to continue to influence at a national level, as well as invest in future programming building on lessons from GRAD and LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE

- **Government of Ethiopia:** the key actors in implementing PSNP4, including the Ministries of: Agriculture and Natural Resources; Livestock and Fisheries; Environment and Forestry; Youth and Sports; Women and Children; Health; Federal Micro and Small Enterprises Development Agency, and regional and woreda offices under those ministries. LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE will share relevant and timely information with these actors to support achieving their own Ministry goals and targets, using best practice and consistent learning from the field.

- **CARE Global:** More than 9,000 staff around the world who work with CARE to deliver poverty fighting programs in 90 countries. Livelihoods for Resilience will share

its experiences and learning with CARE as a global organization in order to improve programming and impacts worldwide.

- **USAID:** The relevant staff in USAID's Ethiopia mission and headquarters, including: the communications team and Feed the Future office, USAID's Bureau for Food Security; the Resilience Center; and the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning. LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE will focus on sharing performance data and lessons learned to streamline the CLA approach and continually improve project performance and future programming.

- **Technical Peers:** USAID implementing partners, large INGOS at a global scale, NGOs in Ethiopia, and development actors—especially those interested in economic development, social safety nets, gender equity, and making markets work for the poor and extreme poor. LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE also seeks to influence other organizations to improve development work, including sharing best practices, highlighting contextual changes, and providing evidence of what works and what doesn't.

- **Other donors:** Foundations, the private sector, and other governments interested in food and nutrition security and market-based approaches. LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE can leverage the learning from its programming to attract additional resources in Ethiopia and globally to continue to deliver cutting-edge development work to fight poverty here and around the world.

Key Messages

As of July 2017, some key messages that LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE has identified are:
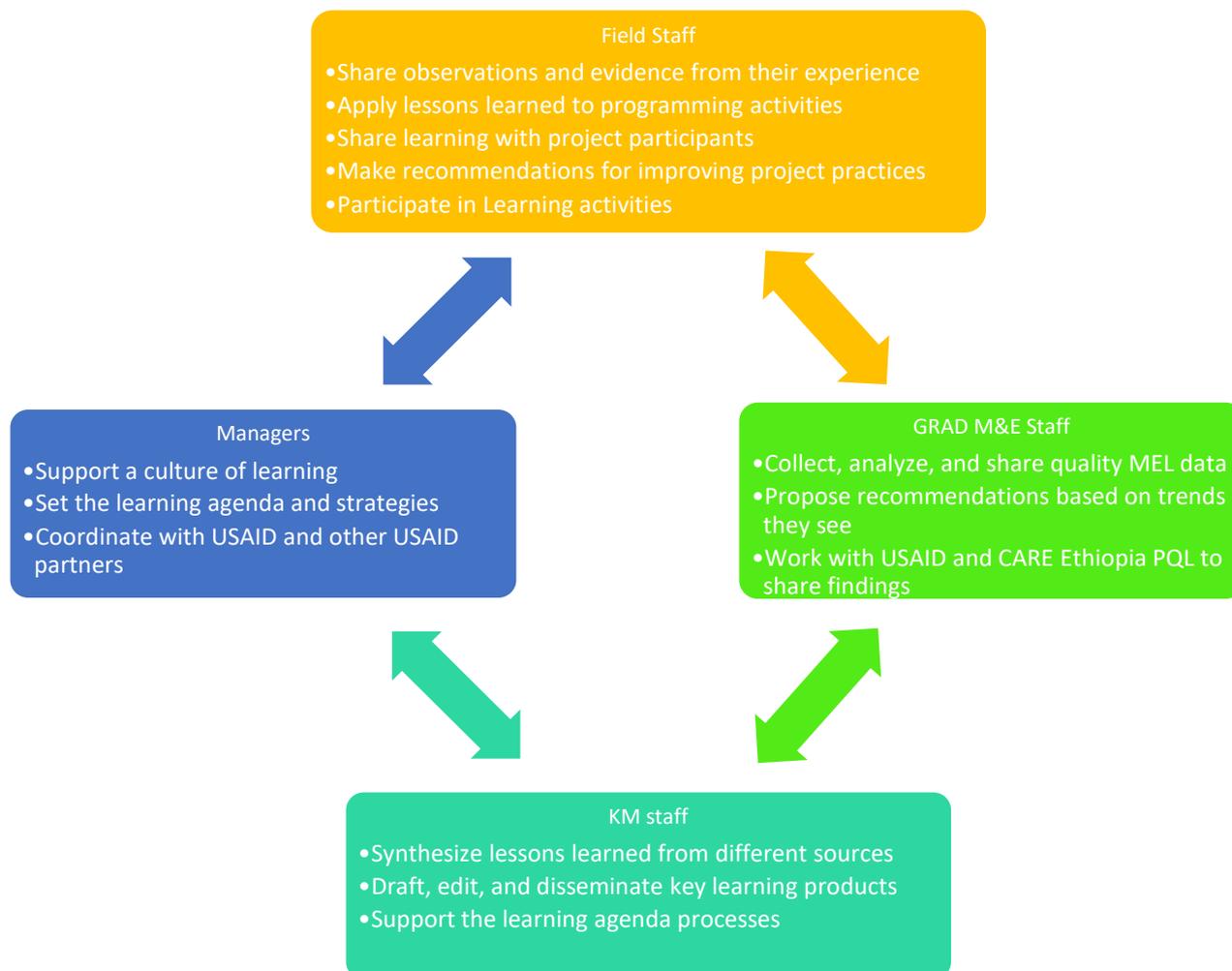
- The GRAD model of building VESAs, group cohesion, and a culture of savings is a critical first step to significant increases in both aspiration and graduation from the Government of Ethiopia Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP).
- Access to tailored financial services and market systems increases resilience women, men and youth in PSNP households. MFIs and RUSSACOs are viable mechanisms for supporting access to tailored financial services when we overcome specific barriers around loan repayment and existing perceptions of PSNP participants as clients. Loan guarantee funds are one mechanism that supports partnerships with MFIs.
- Increasing off-farm livelihood opportunities is both a viable and critical pathway to resilience for PSNP households. Agro-dealers and input supply models, collective marketing for products, and creating local businesses in appropriate value chains are all models that have demonstrated success in GRAD 1 and provide opportunities for off-farm livelihoods.
- Working to improve gender equality and women's empowerment—through models like VESA and SAA—has been critical to getting results in communities and changing underlying behaviors that make it difficult for poor families to escape poverty. These models depend on engaging men, women, and leaders throughout the whole project.

- Extension systems are key to success for poor rural households. It is possible to dramatically improve extension services by working to build capacity, support relevant tools. Partnership with the private sector is another important avenue to improved extension services.
- Agro dealers and input supply are critical market factors to consider when designing push-pull interventions for PSNP households, and have big returns for households and the market.
- Projects must build in crisis modifiers and be able to adapt to changing circumstances. GRAD's response in supporting families during the El Nino crisis was based on the idea of triggering a new strategy when the external context changes. This led to improved resilience for families in the project.

These messages have been critical in developing LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE, and helped evolve the program from its initial design to a phase 2 that incorporates our learning. As we continue the implementation of this phase, we will continue to test these messages to provide more evidence of what works. This testing will help evolve both the program activities and strategies to improve impact. It will also feed into developing new messages for our target audience to continue improving programming across all actors.

Team Roles

Every member of the project team has a key role to play in the implementation of knowledge management and communications strategy.

Field Staff
- Share observations and evidence from their experience
- Apply lessons learned to programming activities
- Share learning with project participants
- Make recommendations for improving project practices
- Participate in Learning activities

Managers
- Support a culture of learning
- Set the learning agenda and strategies
- Coordinate with USAID and other USAID partners

GRAD M&E Staff
- Collect, analyze, and share quality MEL data
- Propose recommendations based on trends they see
- Work with USAID and CARE Ethiopia PQL to share findings

KM staff
- Synthesize lessons learned from different sources
- Draft, edit, and disseminate key learning products
- Support the learning agenda processes

Some specific actions that each member should focus on are:

Field Staff	
Project staff	Participate in learning and reflection activities. Surface critical knowledge, key experiences, and field-level knowledge regularly in order to promote a culture of learning.
MEL Staff	
M & E Team	Collaborate with knowledge management adviser in sharing inputs for learning from regular reports, and observations from M & E field visits for further research and reflections.

	Manage data collection and synthesis for managers and USAID to support the CLA plan.
MIS specialist	Gives technical support in connection with creating photo/image library on social media platforms and other IT related issues.
KM Staff	
Adviser- Knowledge Management	Design and maintain project KM systems, including technical platforms such as websites, social media accounts, and document databases. Serve as the key project manager for all communications materials, KM processes (such as learning events), and project collateral (such as photographs, videos, etc.). Give guidance to project staff on what activities and information will support the KM/Communications strategy. Own and update the KM and Communications strategy for LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE.
CARE Ethiopia PQL team	Provide necessary infrastructure support and guidance to ensure GRAD's KM/Comms strategy supports the broader CARE Ethiopia goals and activities. This includes support for social media activities, websites, office-wide learning activities, and program wide communications and advocacy priorities.
Deputy Director, Knowledge Management and Learning, CARE USA	Support the Knowledge Management Advisor to refine and finalize communications and knowledge management materials. Advise on the creation of KM/Comms strategies, systems, and platforms. Disseminate LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE materials at a global and US level as appropriate. Participate in LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE learning events when needed. Liaise with CARE USA communications and IT teams to facilitate KM and communications.
Managers	
Chief of Party	Provide guidance to the KM Advisor on project goals, advocacy targets, and key messages, as well as how KM can support those key goals. Participate in developing a

	learning agenda for LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE. Set the tone for LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE staff and partners on learning and adaptive management as key outcomes of a KM/Comms strategy.
Deputy Chief of Party	Own and guide the learning agenda for LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE. Support adaptive management and help hold staff accountable to KM/Communications responsibilities. Manage the CLA plan and activities.
Regional and Technical managers; Implementing Partners	Include KM and Learning activities as part of team member's performance goals. Including learning and reflection activities as a regular part of team meetings and team performance review. Adapt approaches based on learning from the project.

Knowledge Management Platforms

Livelihoods for Resilience will focus on a few key platforms to serve as the technology supports for KM/Comms at the project level.

- **Office 365**: this will serve as the key repository for internal documentation, draft learning briefs, photos, etc. CARE staff access Office 365 as a part of their e-mail accounts. As the CARE Global IT and Knowledge Management systems converge around Office 365, this will also help LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE influence the larger CARE world by more easily sharing information and knowledge across the network.
- **CARE.org**: The CARE USA website www.care.org has the capacity to create micro-sites that are specifically branded to a project or team, and are publicly available on the net. This takes advantage of the CARE USA broad audience (over 500,000 followers) and infrastructure, but also allows for customization and ownership for the project team. It is also possible to upload Livelihoods for Resilience documents on www.care.org/grad as far as the site is functional. The team will continue to refine and update this site to provide a platform for key GRAD and Livelihoods for Resilience projects content.
- **Social Media**: Livelihoods for Resilience will maximize its social media presence by regularly posting content that comes from the rest of the KM/Comms strategy. Success stories, key reports, findings, innovations briefs, etc, can all be shared through its social media accounts. The project should also prioritize using Feed the Future, USAID Ethiopia, CARE Ethiopia, and CARE USA social media accounts as amplifiers for its key messages.
- **Other technical platforms**: A number of global actors host key technical platforms that bring together practitioners from around the world and can spread Livelihoods for Resilience Project's messages more broadly. These include, but are not limited to: the World Bank, USAID, TOPS, Feed the Future, Agrilinks, Microlinks, FAO, the SEEP

network, InterAction, and the BEAM Exchange. The LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE team will aim to post at least one piece of content a month on these external platforms to raise awareness of the project.

- **National broadcast media (National and regional TVs, FM radios)**: The number of TV stations and FM radios have been increasing recently in Ethiopia. Currently, there are at least 10 TV stations, and more than 10 FM radios. We use them for better visibility, and messaging of the donor & consortium members.
- **National Newspapers**: There are a few government and private newspapers with various target audiences and circulation capacity. They can give coverage to Livelihoods for Resilience major events, and publish project's success stories through organizing media tour to project sites.
- **CARE regional and international newsletters**: Livelihoods for Resilience can make use of the opportunity of existing CARE regional newsletter, Shiriki, and "The Village".
- **Major Livelihoods for Resilience events:** This include field days, multi-stakeholder platforms, annual review meetings, evaluations, and workshops on thematic areas. The events by themselves are learning platforms, but it is important to capture specific learning from the events, analyze, and share them to wider audience.

KM/Communications Deliverables

Though the major focus of the strategy is on Livelihoods for Resilience, it is important to make sure that all GRAD learning products listed below are posted, and shared to relevant stakeholders.

GRAD

Product	Theme	Distribution Channels	Responsible	Date	Remark
GRAD Learning Briefs (ALL seven to get posted on website and Village so links are available to others when we create custom content)	Outstanding Loans VESAs Loan Guarantee Funds Financial Products	SEEP Agrilinks Check with Christian and Regine for other channels	Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA	July-January 2017	A few of the briefs have been shared in some platforms. KM adviser will collect all the links to avoid duplication of efforts.
	CCA Awareness to Action	Check with Karl and Aarjan for relevant platforms			
	Gender Outcomes	World Bank Gender Blog	KM adviser		
Innovation Briefs (ALL five to get posted on website and Village so links are available to others when we create custom content)	Diffused Light Storage		Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA	July-January, 2017	See above
	Agro-dealer				
	OFSP				
	Micro-franchise				
	Livestock Marketing Center		KM adviser		
Social Media	Stories from Aspire Banners Videos Posts about learning briefs	CARE Social Media CARE Ethiopia Social Media Feed the Future (has Twitter and Facebook) Livelihoods for Resilience Facebook		July-January, 2017	

Product	Theme	Distribution Channels	Responsible	Date	Remark
		CARE Website—create microsite for GRAD			
Infographics	Pick key themes or approaches	Social media		July-January, 2017	
Videos	Agrodealers			July-September 2017	See above
	Microfranchise				
Photos	Share with CARE Images libraries (CI and CUSA)			July-September 2017	

Livelihoods for Resilience

Product	Theme	Distribution Channels	Responsible	Date	Remark
A total of 15 learning briefs during project life time.

(ALL to get posted on website and Village so links are available to others when we create custom content) | Resilience | TOPS on Resilience | Respective adviser + KM adviser for content development

Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA support in editing, distribution

CoP/DCoP | Average three learning brief per year during the project life time. | A bit difficult to give specific date for the task. But it should be included in advisers' annual plan |
| | Crisis Modifier | CaLP
USAID | | | |
| | Adaptive Management | Learning Lab
CLA forum | | | |
| | Graduation from safety nets | World Bank Safety Nets blog/annual report | | | |
| | Value Chain Selection (pro poor, gender equitable)? | Microlinks
Check with Elly for other options | | | |
| | Off farm livelihood opportunities | | | | |
| | Nutrition | | | | |
| | Gender:
What impact do interventions have on women's empowerment in production, resources, | | | | |

			approval, further editing		
	Resilience: How can we ensure that households are resilient prior to graduating?				
	How can we help MFIs expand and improve financial services to PSNP households?				
	What are the lessons learned from scaling up of VESAs within the PSNP?				
	How can we best empower youth to build a viable economic future?				
	What are the costs and benefits of project layering and sequencing?				
	How can we best facilitate linkages to employment for PSNP youth				
A total of 15 innovation briefs (ALL to get posted on website and Village so links are available to others when we create custom content)	On various thematic areas (see above)		See above	Average three innovation briefs per year	See above

Videos	A total of six videos on various thematic areas including individual short case stories.	You Tube, USAID website, CARE.Org	KM adviser	two videos per year, starting from third year of the project	
Presentations		We'll use slideshare if it is free			Depends on accessibility of slideshare
	Presentations of the key value chains and their content	Exploring the use of Prezi as an option here			
Social Media	Banners Videos Posts about learning briefs	CARE Social Media CARE Ethiopia Social Media Feed the Future (has Twitter and Facebook) Livelihoods for Resilience social media CARE Website—create microsite for GRAD	KM adviser, GRAD 2. Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA		
	Success stories (bi monthly) Report releases as they come out.	See above	KM adviser		

Infographics	Pick key themes or approaches	Social media	KM adviser Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA		
Newsletters	15 over life of project (break into smaller sections with links to articles, using MailChimp (www.mailchimp.com) The newsletters will link to articles on www.care.org	E-mail Social media CARE Website	KM Adviser,		
Blog Posts	Aim for at least 1 every 2 months drawing from other material (ie: human interest stories, learning briefs, innovation briefs), and target mainly external platforms.	CARE Blog World Bank TOPS Agrilinks Microlinks BEAM exchange InterAction SEEP USAID/Feed the Future	Respective adviser + KM for content development Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA support in editing, distribution CoP/DCoP approval, further editing		

	Gender: What impact do interventions have on women's empowerment in production, resources, income, leadership, and time?				
	Resilience: How can we ensure that households are resilient prior to graduating?				
	Graduation and what that means—individual stories • Assessment of graduate households (GRAD and others) • FGD with existing PSNP households GRAD sustainability study		Knowledge management adviser, in collaboration with IPs M & E teams	-Learning briefs - Newsletter	
	Longitudinal photo & videos studies of beneficiaries.		KM Adviser in collaboration with IPs M & E teams. Consultants		
Photos	Share with CARE Images libraries (CI and CUSA)		KM adviser, GRAD 2		

	Create protocol for longitudinal photo studies with beneficiaries		KM adviser, GRAD 2 in collaboration with IPs, M & E teams		
Brochure	Updated brief for GRAD 2	Hard copy Post on website	KM adviser		
Website		Create micro-site for GRAD on www.care.org to load all of the content products and house articles/stories/links TBD: If CARE Ethiopia creates a website, we can re-visit how this gets put together, or migrate to support that site			
Quarterly/Annual Reporting, Research studies, baseline, etc.	Create summaries of annual reports, IR reports, and any key analyses, research products, or special studies (ie, the baseline report, market analyses, etc.) (no more than 4 pages)		KM adviser with COP/ DCOP approval		
Publication of book/magazine/ on project outcomes			KM adviser Deputy Director, KM and L, CARE USA COP/ DCOP	On the final year of the project	

Monitoring and evaluation

Effectiveness of implementation of the knowledge management and communications strategy shall be evaluated at least on annual basis. Based on results of the evaluation, the communications and knowledge management plans, as well as the strategy might be revised.

Evaluating effectiveness of implementation of knowledge management & communication strategy is not easy and perfect. But we can use the following as evaluation criteria.

- **Progress on the activity plan:** This is a basic monitoring exercise to ensure that our activities are in line with the workplan and we are delivering on commitments.

- **Assessing the size & type of our audiences:** we can use hit counts on websites, views on social media posts, the tracking feature on the newsletter software, and the number of publications we are able to place on external platforms to measure how we are effective in reaching the right audiences. Office 365 also allows tracking of page and document views to see what is most effective.

- **Audience engagement:** Social media and the newsletter software will allow us to see how much audiences are liking and sharing content. Similarly, comments on blogs or feedback on conference presentations will help us understand how the audience is connecting to the messaging.

- **Adaptation:** The number of key lessons and evidence generated through the KM and communications strategy that influence program decisions—inside and outside LIVELIHOODS FOR RESILIENCE—will help us see if the messages are both relevant and influential. A basic contribution tracing approach looking at adaptations annually and if they are related to the strategy and activities will help measure our impact. We will especially look at the behaviors and attitudes we've changed, and actions we've inspired stakeholders (eg. PSNP, NGOs, and the donor) to take.