

# R4 Rural Resilience Initiative

**BUILDING RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE FOR LONG-TERM FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS IMPROVEMENT**



More than 1.2 billion people in the developing world live below the poverty line and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Vulnerability to climate-related shocks is a constant threat to their food security and wellbeing. Strategies for reducing and mitigating risks are therefore essential to overcome hunger, achieve food security and enhance resilience.

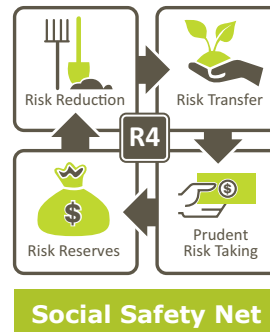
## ABOUT R4

The World Food Programme (WFP) and Oxfam America (OA) launched the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) in 2011 to **enable vulnerable rural households to increase their food and income security in the face of increasing climate risks**. R4 builds on the initial success of the Horn of Africa Risk Transfer for Adaptation (HARITA) initiative, pioneered in Ethiopia by OA, the Relief Society of Tigray (REST) and Swiss Re.

R4 currently reaches over 43,000 farmers (about 200,000 people) in Ethiopia, Senegal, Malawi, Zambia and Kenya through a combination of four risk management strategies: **improved resource management through asset creation** (risk reduction), **insurance** (risk transfer), **livelihoods diversification and microcredit** (prudent risk taking) and **savings** (risk reserves). Between 2015 and 2016, as a consequence of the El Niño phenomenon, about \$450,000 in payouts were distributed through the initiative in Ethiopia, Senegal and Malawi. In 2017, R4 is expanding also in Zimbabwe.

R4 aims to help communities become more resilient in the face of increasing climate variability and shocks. Thanks to R4's comprehensive risk management scheme, **communities will be stronger in the face of disasters**. They will be able to invest in new seeds and fertilizer to guarantee food is on the table all year long. Protected by insurance, households won't need to sell their assets or take their children out of school in case the rains fail.

## The R4 model



R4 has broken new ground in the field of climate risk management by enabling the poorest farmers to pay for crop insurance with their own labor.

*"This insurance is like saving: you put in your money now and you get it back when the rain is bad and the crops don't do well."*

Gebre Michael Geday, Abraha  
Atsbaha village

## WHAT'S INNOVATIVE ABOUT R4?

- R4 has broken new ground in the field of climate risk management by enabling the poorest farmers to pay for crop insurance with their own labor.
- Farmers can access insurance by paying with their labor through **Insurance-for-Assets (IFA) schemes**. When a drought hits, compensation for weather-related losses prevents farmers from selling productive assets and stimulates faster recovery.
- IFA schemes are built into either existing government social safety nets or WFP's Food Assistance for Assets programme. **Assets built through risk reduction activities promote resilience** by steadily decreasing vulnerability to disaster risks over time.
- Insurance facilitates **access to credit** at better rates, serving as collateral. Households can invest in riskier but more remunerative enterprises, as well as in seeds, fertilizers and new technologies to increase their agricultural productivity.
- **Participants establish small-scale savings**, which are used to build 'risk reserves'. Savings help build a stronger financial base for investing – but also act as a buffer against short-term needs and idiosyncratic shocks, such as illness and death.
- To ensure **long-term sustainability**, R4 contributes to the creation of rural financial markets, by building local capacity and gradually transitioning farmers to pay for insurance in cash.

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## THE INITIATIVE IS HELPING IMPROVE FARMERS' RESILIENCE

### IMPACT EVALUATIONS RESULTS

- In Ethiopia, insured farmers saved more than twice than those without any insurance, and invested more in seeds, fertilizer and productive assets, such as plough oxen.
- Women, who often head the poorest households, achieved the largest gains in productivity, through investing in labor and improved tools for planting.
- In Senegal, after two years of bad harvest, R4 farmers were able to maintain their food security compared to others exposed to the same risks.

### R4 achievements

Payouts			\$ 17,000	\$ 320,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 38,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 74,000
Value of premiums	\$ 2,500	\$ 27,000	\$ 215,000	\$ 275,000	\$ 283,000	\$ 306,000	\$ 370,000	\$ 781,000
Total sum insured	\$ 10,200	\$ 73,000	\$ 940,000	\$ 1,3m	\$ 1,2m	\$ 1,5m	\$ 2,2m	\$ 5,1m
Farmers insured	200	1,300	13,000	18,000	20,000	26,000	32,000	42,000
Countries	Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Ethiopia Senegal	Ethiopia Senegal	Ethiopia Senegal	Ethiopia Malawi Senegal Zambia	Ethiopia Malawi Senegal Zambia
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

Our vision: 500,000 insured farmers in 2020.

## COLLABORATION

The R4 Rural Resilience Initiative is a strategic collaboration between the World Food Programme and Oxfam America, with no commingling of funds. Each partner has its own sponsors as listed. R4 is inviting donors to support expansion.



[www.wfp.org/r4](http://www.wfp.org/r4)

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