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## ARIN REPORT ON THE ARA AFRICAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP.

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### 1. Background.

At UNFCCC COP 26, in November 2021, the [Adaptation Research Alliance \(ARA\)](#) sought to support global initiatives exploring crucial adaptation issues faced in developing countries that knowledge and research could help solve. Subsequently, funding was provided to several micro grantees including 14 African micro grantees. The ARA micro- grantees were to learn about and share experiences on collaborative approaches and co-production. This was followed by individual co-creation spaces held by the initiatives to address their specific project. Further, as part of the initiative, Regional workshops were held to support the micro grantees in strengthening networks and partnerships toward locally relevant adaptation solutions beyond the grant period.

Towards this end, this African regional workshop was convened as a platform for exchange of ideas and learnings in LLAs as well as an avenue to share project experiences, lessons and make recommendations to the ARA Secretariat for a better delivery of projects by micro grantees.

### 2. Organization of the Workshop.

The lead organiser for the African Regional Workshop was the [Africa Research Impact Network \(ARIN\)](#) on behalf of ARA supported by 13 other ARA Micro grantees in Africa. The workshop took place on 12th April 2022 from 2pm-4pm EAT, virtually on Zoom.

### 3. ARA Regional Workshop Participants.

The workshop brought together African ARA micro grantees and relevant stakeholders invited by them. The workshop teased out key lessons from the project experiences through breakout room sessions on lessons and input from the stakeholders.

### 4. Facilitators.

The facilitators of the Regional Workshop were: Dr. Joannes Atela (ARIN), Jjemba Eddie (Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre), Charles Tonui(ARIN), Jesse DeMaria-Kinney (ARA), Bettina Koelle (Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre) and Leah Aoko (ARIN).

### 5. ARA Regional Workshop Sessions.

The workshop began with a brief presentation from the ARA Africa Micro grantees on their projects. The following were the Projects highlighted during the first session;

- i. **Global Water Partnership Tanzania (GWPTZ), Tanzania:** Building the capacity of the water sector in Tanzania and Zanzibar to develop bankable climate-resilient projects.

- ii. **Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Kenya:** Generation, delivery, and uptake of hydrological hazard information in Kenya.
- iii. **Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN), Kenya:** Using community adaptation labs to develop climate risk maps for local action planning and policy influence in Mukuru informal settlement, Kenya.
- iv. **Shack Dwellers International, Kenya (SDI):** The Uptake of climate action financing for community adaptation plan implementation and local climate actions in Nairobi
- v. **The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), Sierra Leone:** Climate-smart fisheries management for sustainable and resilient coastal communities.
- vi. **Federal University of Technology, Nigeria:** Vulnerability, assessment, and management of incessant flood occurrences at Lokoja, Ibadan and Lagos metropolises.
- vii. **Kasa Initiative Ghana:** Enhancing adaptive strategies to cope with climate-induced coastal erosion in Ghana (ESCOCEG).
- viii. **Meat Naturally, South Africa:** Reinforcing systemic socioecological vulnerabilities of pastoralist communities in the former homelands of South Africa.

The workshop thereafter addressed three crucial limbs of discussion from the presentation of the above projects:

### 5.1. Key insights from the project experiences.

The workshop introductory remarks from ARIN revealed that African countries are passionate about Locally Led Adaptations (LLAs) and their potential in mitigation climate change. The co-production and co creation processes were pointed out to be very important in ensuring that communities embraced the climate adaptation strategies. It was however noted that what exactly entails the locally led adaptation processes varied and depended upon the context of the community and how they perceived climate change.

The projects also highlighted the need to upscale and borrow best practices in implementing LLAs across the continent. This would also have the potential of attracting investment opportunities in LLA projects. It is against this backdrop that the ARA initiated the micro grant process to spur learning and leadership in climate adaptation strategies in Africa. In their remarks, the ARA secretariat noted that the aim of supporting the micro grantees' projects was to capitalize on a bottom up approach in climate change issues in the global south.

Among the key insights shared in the ensuing discussions were:

- i. Some of the projects that focused on climate change in informal settlements (ARIN, SDI) noted the need to disseminate information on climate change in a

manner that could be understood by the local communities. This was crucial for the communities' engagement in the projects and long-term buy in the LLA process.

- ii. It was important to build trust with the local communities for the co creation process to be successful in implementing the LLA. This involved ensuring that the communities understood that the initiatives were for their best interests.
- iii. It was also noted that there was a need in some cases to provide alternative means of livelihood for the communities to enable them to adapt to climate change. This took a long time and had to be based on a background of trust between the organizations and the communities.
- iv. In some cases, the grantees noted that the grant application process was difficult to follow through for African organizations and thus they were unable to seize other timely opportunities for LLA initiatives.
- v. Some projects revealed data capacity gaps. This was especially the case for the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL). Data on climate change and adaptation was pointed out as crucial gap in determining the strategies to employ in climate change mitigation and co creation activities.
- vi. Co-production of evidence in climate change requires expertise and community engagement in ways that would be sustained even after the grant process/project period is over. Meat Naturally highlighted this through their LLA project which focused on tackling socioecological vulnerabilities of pastoralist communities in South Africa. The role of the community was shown to be crucial in co creation and coproduction of climate adaptation strategies.
- vii. Some of the micro grantees such as SDI leveraged on the ARA grant to seize other opportunities for LLA initiatives. They are thus engaged in similar and related projects to support the work that they have begun under ARA.
- viii. Some projects employed innovative ways to tackle climate change such as having designated community labs as part of the LLA. This was especially the case for ARIN who also engaged a multi stakeholder approach in tackling climate change in the informal settlement of Mukuru.
- ix. During the project execution, it was important to first analyse the target group at the grass root level. This further intensified the call for co creation and coproduction efforts with the communities.
- x. Part of the stakeholders were impressed by the innovative ways of executing LLAs such as adopting an integrated climate tool for risk mapping and assessment in Mukuru as has been done by ARIN.
- xi. The projects revealed a need to upscale climate financing for LLAs in Africa. This was highlighted by GWP Tanzania Water initiative and was a common thread in the project presentations.

- xii. The projects revealed a multidimensional and transdisciplinary work being carried out across Africa. Cultural and socio economic perspectives were noted to play an important role in the embracing of LLA initiatives in Africa. For instance, a stakeholder pointed out that some communities who were accustomed to growing tea would not accept to engage coffee farmers in the Mt. Elgon region in climate adaptation initiatives. This scenario then required tact and a multi-dimensional approach in getting the community buy in for LLA initiatives.
- xiii. For LLAs to be successful there is need to, map out key multisector stakeholders who would support and pay attention to the initiatives. The LLAs were noted to not only be a preserve of climate change experts but a platform for other stakeholders (policy makers, community social workers, community leaders etc.) as well to address climate change related issues.
- xiv. It was also important to secure state good will in carrying out the LLAs. This ensures that policy making for climate change strategies is well informed. In this regard, it was important that the communities remained properly informed on the role of the government in addressing climate change initiatives as some of them were suspicious of political motives behind LLAs.

## **5.2. Key challenges addressed in the project highlights and in Locally Led Adaptation initiatives.**

Some of the key challenges noted from the ARA workshop engagement were:

- i. Inadequate climate financing for LLAs in Africa. This meant that fewer organizations were able to access funds for LLA initiatives in communities.
- ii. The language used to explain climate change and adaptation also proved a barrier when engaging local communities as some were unable to comprehend the significance of such initiatives due to the use of complex terminology.
- iii. Getting community buy in was not easy for the projects due to prevailing socio economic factors that made them adamant to engage in the LLA process. This was especially the case when part of the climate adaptation process led to a change in their livelihood.
- iv. The challenges were further exacerbated in informal settlement communities who face other supervening difficulties in getting their daily bread and thus may not be keen participants in climate change initiatives.
- v. Some communities harboured misconceptions on the role of the state in implementing climate change initiatives. Some of them perceived the initiatives as having a political agenda behind them. This had to be clarified by the proponents of the LLAs.

- vi. The short timelines given to the micro grantees proved to be a challenge in project implementation, as they did not have adequate opportunity to engage all the stakeholders who would be instrumental in spurring their LLAs.
- vii. There was a need to ensure that initiatives began under ARA remained sustainable for the benefit of the local initiatives.
- viii. Some of the stakeholders pointed out the challenge in engaging other grants donors as intricate reporting and accounting requirements that they could not keep up. This then meant that only more experienced organizations would be able to apply for prestigious grant opportunities for LLAs.
- ix. Kasa Initiative Ghana pointed out a difficulty in employing nature based climate adaptation strategies at the coastal region and pointed out the need for LLAs to be more innovative in addressing climate change.
- x. The grantees pointed out a challenge in managing different stakeholder interests in their LLAs. It was difficult to balance the interests of stakeholders who, at the same time, were crucial to the implementation of the grantees' project.

### **5.3. Recommendations on the granting process.**

From the insights and challenges shared, the following were the identified recommendations:

- i. There is need to upscale climate financing and technical support for LLAs in Africa.
- ii. There is need for more sustainable grant initiatives so that projects are not began and left halfway. This discourages the communities from engaging in the LLA initiatives.
- iii. There is need to work with government agencies in ensuring that the LLA projects are brought to fruition and that the right policies are put in place for implementation in addressing climate adaptation.
- iv. ARA micro grantees identified the need to diversify and compliment their work by engaging with other grant partners in the LLA process and implementation. This would improve the sustainability of LLAs being implemented.
- v. A multidimensional and multi-stakeholder approach was endorsed as one of the effective ways of implementing LLAs in Africa. This encourages cross learning and tackle challenges that may be faced in trying to get community buy in.
- vi. Capitalizing on previous projects and existing synergies was pointed out as one of the fundamental tenets of LLAs. This would assist the grantees in building up on what other stakeholders have done in climate adaptation initiatives and avoid duplicity of the same.

- vii. It is important for grantees to ensure that the stakeholders involved in the LLAs are reading the same script when it comes to execution to the climate adaptation initiatives.
- viii. It was noted that co-production and co creation takes time. Therefore, the grantees were encouraged to make reasonable proposals that were not over ambitious. This would save them the agony of project implementation with implausible objectives set out by themselves. Grantees should be able to work within an affordable scale of implementation initiatives.
- ix. There is a need for more time in implementing the ARA grantee initiatives for maximum impact in the LLAs.
- x. There is need for the grantees to employ innovative ways of approaching LLAs such as was discussed in developing different community labs for risk mapping and assessment initiatives.
- xi. There is need for establishing sustainable linkages in the implementation of LLAs in the community setup, which other like-minded organizations can build on as well.

## **Conclusion.**

The ARA regional workshop was fruitful and engaging. The micro grantees benefitted from the discussions and input from the stakeholders' perspectives and ARA secretariat. These discussions are essential in sharing best practices from other LLAs and in analysing how the ARA micro grantee experience has been. The recommendations will definitely go a long way in improving the micro grantee experience and upscaling LLAs in Africa Pre Cop 27.

