

Lucia MG Report Summary

Summary

The ARA microgrants showed a number of successes. They helped in **bringing focus to and concentrating actions on the most marginalised members of society**, such as in Ghana, where the community consultations held by the KASA initiative enabled the voice and opinions of often-neglected stakeholders in coastal development and management (e.g. fishermen and fishmongers) to be heard, particularly regarding different measures to reduce coastal erosion. The co-creation processes that the micrograntees ran highlighted the **multiple benefits of converging different knowledge types and sectoral stakeholders and often led to concrete resilience outcomes and behaviour change**, such as in India, where the young people involved began to educate other community members to reduce water wastage and discuss issues affecting them. The microgrants confirmed that communities are the expert and need to lead the development of solutions; **when adequately involved in co-creation processes, energy is generated among stakeholders and political will, and human and social capital are kindled**, such as in Guatemala where government, community and academic stakeholders at the local level are ready to tackle climate and migration issues. The ARA microgrants have also helped to **trigger new opportunities, beyond what was expected or planned**, such as in the Philippines, where convening health sector and climate change professionals led to a new unlikely alliance and the co-identification of a number of new innovative opportunities to tackle the climate-health nexus.

Key expanded points

1. In 2022 the ARA rolled out 25 microgrants of GBP 10,000 per project to explore burning adaptation issues in local communities. The projects were led by organisations based in the Global South, in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
2. The aim of the microgrants was to unearth ideas and opportunities for adapting to climate change in local contexts in the Global South, linking action and research. Its two purposes were to (i) understand the needs and stakeholders, and (ii) identify opportunities for responding or generating further evidence.
3. Many concrete **outcomes** were achieved, including - among others - six concept notes to be fleshed out into proposals to be submitted to the GCF in Tanzania; the co-production of climate hazard information needs to reduce flooding in Kenya; an integrated urban climate risk assessment tool in Kenya; a future internship programme that will help bridge the community-academia gap and provide technical expertise on sea-level rise solutions in informal settlements in the Philippines; the identification of a suite of traditional to out-of-the-box climate health actions to be undertaken in the Philippines; the integration, in government disaster plans, of adaptation pathways for coastal erosion (developed under the PEMSEA project); a report for city decision-makers on action areas to overcome barriers to ecosystem-based adaptation in urban areas in Colombia; a training of trainers for young women on responses to be taken during natural disasters in Haiti; and a number of other publications.

“Through the results of the geotechnical engineering research, the DRCNAI community will finally be able to integrate appropriate structural design solutions to their proposed housing units along with proper site planning and development strategies in the context of climate change adaptation. Aside from the commissioned geotechnical research component of the project, TAMPEI was able to tap free academic consultancy from the University of the Philippines Institute of Civil Engineering (UP ICE). As an offshoot of the partnership, the two institutions will be collaborating for an upcoming student internship program where UP ICE will extend technical assistance to TAMPEI and its partner communities.” - Ruel Tinong Orcajada, Technical Assistance Movement for People and Environment Inc. (TAMPEI)

4. According to the latest IPCC report released in March 2022, climate resilient development is facilitated “by developing partnerships with traditionally marginalised groups, including women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and ethnic minorities”. Although focused on a small scale, the ARA microgrants played a very important role in **bringing focus to** and concentrating actions on the **most marginalised** (women, girls, indigenous, rural, informal settlement, underserved, isolated local community members, “the ignored”).

“The biggest success achieved was the range of stakeholders we were able to reach, the passion with which issues were discussed and how different interests were managed. The consultations enabled the voice/opinions of minority or often-neglected stakeholders in coastal development and management, e.g. fishermen and fishmongers, to be heard. [They shared that] current adaptation strategies adopted by the government – hard engineering (e.g. defence walls) - only provide temporary solutions to the problem of coastal erosion but tend to be ineffective and worsen the problem in the long run. [But they also showed] increased awareness of local communities of their role in aggravating the impacts of coastal erosion and their willingness to engage and change course.” - Gerald Forkuor, KASA Initiative Ghana/ Center for Earth Observation and Environmental Research

5. The same IPCC report goes on to say that “evidence shows that climate resilient development processes link scientific, Indigenous, local, practitioner and other forms of knowledge, and are more effective and sustainable because they are locally appropriate and lead to more legitimate, relevant and effective actions”. The **co-creation processes** that were undertaken in the ARA microgrant projects showed an example of how adaptation actions can be undertaken, and why collaborative processes at such local scales are so critical. In addition to strengthening social networks and discussing and developing concrete solutions to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience, they are a means to reach the “forgotten” as well as to identify areas of synergy among local actors and ongoing - and possibly partially abandoned - activities, which can be rekindled with minimal amounts of funding. Furthermore, when different knowledge types and sectors are brought together, what emerges is a collective wisdom and “beyond-disciplinary” knowledge which is crucial for addressing the challenges we face.

“The young people who participated in this short co-creation process developed a spontaneous energy to take action. The videos they took became a starting point to generate discussions among themselves. Several of them took the lead to educate

community members to save water (for example, in Ghata young girls started switching off the motors as soon as they saw the overhead tanks were overflowing, or to close a community tap to avoid wastage of a scarce resource). The Master's students from Sushant University were exposed for the first time to the realities of community life and saw first-hand how planning decisions taken in closed rooms affects the lives of the very people in whose name those decisions are taken. During the interaction with community youth, they formed a connection.” - Bindu Baby, Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)

6. The microgrants confirmed that **communities are the expert** and need to be in the driver seat. They need to be engaged more in the development of solutions, whether to reduce coastal erosion, develop adaptive measures or contribute to decision-making processes. Engagement by community members was higher when they had the chance to share their experiences of climate change impacts and when they could co-create solutions with other stakeholders. Many micrograntees made great strides in this direction and have shown the next steps that are required - in their projects - to build on this work. Furthermore, stakeholders who were involved in these processes (across the whole spectrum of sectors, from local government actors to community members, civil society organisations, researchers) showed enthusiasm and a thirst for continuity in such types of interventions.

“Interest has been aroused, there is a political willingness, and it is possible to advance in research and the co-creation of proposals, plans and coordinated actions. At the local level, there is human capital (sensitive people, with knowledge and skills, working for government institutions and civil society organisations that deal with environmental, agricultural and migration issues) and local social capital (community organisation) that facilitates the generation of proposals, plans and their implementation to face climate change and contribute to create conditions so that people are not forced to migrate. This is the most important opportunity to continue: interest and willingness to coordinate among the local key stakeholders.” - Juan José Hurtado Paz y Paz, Asociación Pop No'j

7. The microgrants were most successful where they built on existing processes, relationships and partnerships, they utilised existing data and added fuel to ongoing initiatives, particularly given their short time frame for implementation.

“A great success we had is to have achieved a deep exchange with multiple feedbacks and a strong joint construction of the content of the case studies in a short time period. We believe that part of the success was due to the fact that we have been working with these cities in a sustained manner over time, including within the framework of the network we have constructed as a result of the masters programme we lead, having been able to build trust that the research process is mutually beneficial and can help their internal processes.” - Delfina Godfrid, FLACSO-Argentina

8. However, in some cases they also **triggered new opportunities**, which have great potential for success given they were demand-led. *“Grants may be called small but initiatives are huge”* SDI, Kenya. Here partners originally planned to facilitate cross-learning across a number of Kenyan counties, but through their involvement they were asked to support an entire policy process. A sub-grant has the potential to make a

project or initiative grow beyond its originally intended objectives, as windows of opportunity emerge from there.

“First, the congregation of professionals from multiple sectors and disciplines to discuss the issue of climate and health was the first of its kind. This was conveniently enabled by the online platform for the workshops, allowing easy access and participation for multiple sector representatives whom we may not have otherwise reached in a live workshop. Second, the health sector successfully captured the spotlight as an area for climate action, co-identifying various innovative opportunities to help tackle the climate crisis. The urgency to act while transitioning from siloed to more collaborative and intersectoral efforts was sparked among the diverse group, who’s allyship was initially perceived as unlikely yet possible.” - Ramon Lorenzo Luis Rosa Guinto, St. Luke’s Medical Center - College of Medicine William H. Quasha Memorial