

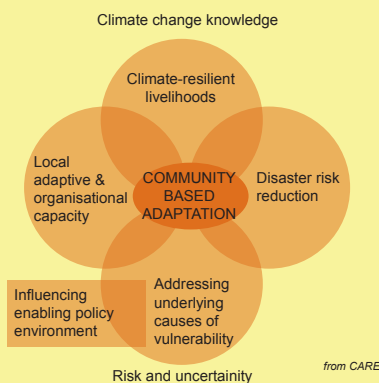
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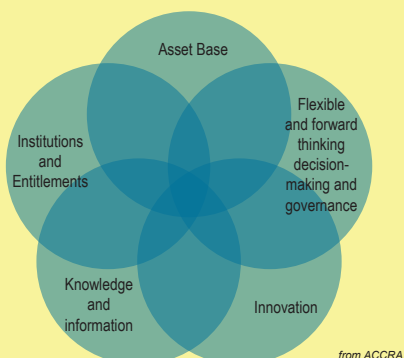
About Joto Afrika

Joto Afrika is a series of printed briefings and online resources about adapting to climate change in sub-Saharan Africa. The series help people understand the issues, constraints and opportunities that poor people face in adapting to climate change and escaping poverty.

Community-Based Adaptation Framework



The Local Adaptive Capacity Framework



Community Based Adaptation - Experiences from Africa

Editorial

Community Based Adaptation (CBA) is increasingly popular as an approach to support vulnerable communities to adapt to climate change. Impacts are already being felt by the pastoralist and farming communities in Ghana, Niger, Kenya and Mozambique, where the Adaptation Learning Programme (ALP) implemented by CARE International is working. Shorter and delayed rainfall seasons, droughts, unexpected floods, and more are challenging both their traditional mechanisms for maintaining resilient livelihoods in the face of external challenges and the effectiveness of development opportunities.

Since early 2010, ALP has been developing and testing participatory approaches to CBA in 40 communities with 11 local governments and 8 local NGOs across the 4 countries. CARE International's CBA framework has provided the basic unifying concept for the work. Realising the importance of adaptive capacity as a pre-condition for effective and sustainable adaptation, ALP is also working with the ACCRA local adaptive capacity framework. ALP has experienced both successes and challenges in facilitating and empowering communities to plan and implement adaptation actions which respond to their priorities and capacities. New approaches have emerged, particularly in accessing and using climate information and enabling vulnerable communities to work with probability and uncertainty so as to gain improved capacity for risk management and anticipatory decision making.

This *Joto Afrika* edition highlights a number of CBA models and their outcomes at community level as experienced by ALP with lessons for effective CBA:

- **Participatory scenario planning** enables multi-stakeholder access to and discussion of seasonal weather forecasts and produces scenarios and advisories for flexible adaptation planning.
- **Farmer field schools** are a popular mechanism for building adaptive capacity in relation to resilient farming systems, promoting environmental sustainability alongside more secure production and fostering farmer innovation.
- **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Early Warning Systems (EWS)** are essential responses where extreme and

chronic climatic events threaten livelihood security. Community based DRR/EWS enable more localised information on vulnerability leading to decisions and actions better suited to the local context. Introducing **rain gauges** to build up local knowledge and data on rainfall empowers communities in Niger and Ghana for seasonal and longer term decision making on crop variety, planting and production choices.

- **Community monitors** or animators help to mobilise the community, record rainfall, monitor risk, ensure inclusion of women and the most vulnerable and support two way communication which allows vulnerable, non literate groups to gain adaptive capacity and contribute their knowledge to adaptation planning.
- **Community based adaptation plans** owned and implemented by such communities are in place in Niger following facilitation of a participatory and gendered community planning process. Local authorities are ready to include these plans and integrate adaptation in their next development planning cycle.

For an effective adaptation response nationally, government policies and plans must support systems for locally responsive adaptation decision making, with access to useful climate information and budget allocations for development and DRR plans which demonstrate adaptation and promote adaptive capacity at the local level. **Civil society climate change adaptation networks**, informed by local experiences of climate change and the adaptation issues discussed in the global United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process make an important contribution to policy decisions.

Recognising that women are often the most vulnerable to climate change impacts, while also having unique capacities and knowledge, and that climate change is influencing gender dynamics at community level, CBA places a particular focus on inclusion of women and ensuring greater gender equality in adaptation decision making. **Rural women's voices** on the meaning of resilience give useful food for thought for CBA practitioners.

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Adaptation through Farmer Field Schools in Mozambique

Conservation agriculture in Sinhanhe, Mozambique
© Fiona Percy 2012

80% of Mozambique's smallholders depend on rain-fed, un-mechanized and subsistence-based farming practices. Extension services and inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and improved plant varieties needed to improve productivity are hard to access. Further constraints for farmers' livelihoods, agricultural productivity and food security are the increasingly more irregular rainfalls, cyclones and high temperatures.

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) exist in many countries all over the world. In contrast to knowledge-transfer from an expert extension agent to a farmer, FFS focuses on participatory teaching methods and are specially adapted to adult learning. Farmers regularly visit the FFS where they experiment with different farming techniques and crop varieties in order to observe and analyse how and why different outcomes are generated, and as a result be able to make informed decisions about their farming techniques.

In Angoche District of Nampula, CARE International and the National Association of Rural Extension (AENA), are using FFS to strengthen linkages between agriculture service providers and to build farmers capacity in sustainable agriculture techniques. Farmers meet weekly on a plot set aside for the FFS to practice Conservation Agriculture (CA) as a live demonstration through the season, focusing on protecting and building soil fertility and introducing a wider diversity of crops and crop varieties. CA uses mulch, green manures (soil enhancing crops, herbs and trees such as mucuna, lablab, *Faidherbia albida*, *Gliricidia sepium*) crop mixtures and rotations of groundnut, pigeon peas and cowpea, between the staple cassava. These cover the soil, increase water retention from the rains that do occur, recycle nutrients and improve soil structure. Resistant cassava varieties are helping combat disease related to climate change impacts.

ALP Mozambique is among the 5 CARE and AENA projects which are implementing 50 FFS with about 1,250 farmer participants in vulnerable coastal and inland communities in Nampula Province. Poor soils, limited access to water, infrastructure and transport, reducing fish stocks and shortened fishing and farming seasons leave these communities in a highly vulnerable situation.

Adaptive Capacity through FFS

The FFS model provides a platform for learning which is directly related to the practices farmers depend on for their livelihoods. Learning is practical on the demonstration plot, sharing observations and experience among the farmers, which has led to replication on their own farms and uptake by neighbours. Through regular discussions, FFS enable farmers to analyse their own techniques and local knowledge, assess the value of new practices introduced by extensionists and promotes their own experimentation and innovation. FFS strengthen farmer organisations and provide social benefits, for example organized access to inputs and markets, savings and credit, increasing solidarity among members or strengthening the voice of women farmers in the community. FFS promote more effective and efficient linkages to agriculture extension and other services that farmers need.

One such service that farmers in Angoche are now discussing is access to weather information via text messages to local disaster risk reduction agents or through radio. Early warning for cyclones and seasonal forecasts which give probabilities for rainfall amount, start and end date through the October to December and January to March rainfall periods can allow

farmers to make better informed decisions on which crop and variety combinations to invest in on their own farms. FFS demonstration plots provide a useful ground for testing different combinations and keeping a record of their success in relation to actual rainfall.

All these aspects of FFS contribute directly to building farmers adaptive capacity – though strengthening their knowledge, access to information and services, innovation, organisation, access to new techniques and assets and in particular increasing farmers' ability to make more informed and anticipatory decisions. ALP Mozambique plans to build on the ongoing FFS system to more deliberately include climate change awareness and adaptation planning, drawing on existing frameworks for Adaptive Capacity, Community Based Adaptation planning and Climate Field School models. Already ALP community members are reporting that their FFS helps them to address climate change impacts and are keen to broaden their adaptation measures for better risk management and more resilient livelihoods.

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Farm preparation in Angoche, Mozambique © Mario Basilio 2012



Culturally sensitive scenario planning for climate resilience

Fodder crop farming in Garissa, Kenya. © Hussein Wario 2011, Kenya

Planning and taking action in the face of a continuously changing climate is a key element of adaptive capacity. Climate forecasts and knowledge of climatic uncertainties and risks facing different vulnerable groups and socio-economic sectors help in identifying a range of response options, contributing to making livelihoods more climate resilient and mitigating the effects of climate related disasters on communities.

The Adaptation Learning Programme (ALP) is supporting communities and local governments to access this knowledge through multi-stakeholder dialogue including participation of meteorological services, as part of the community-based adaptation (CBA) approach.

Immediately after seasonal forecasts are available, ALP Kenya together with a District climate change task force set up in Garissa district, Northern Kenya, have brought together district officers from key ministries, the district meteorological department, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and communities to discuss and formulate a response to the anticipated weather change. Community members included chiefs, religious leaders and women from 6 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities where ALP is working. The district is semi-arid and drought prone, mostly inhabited by pastoralists and a fast growing agro-pastoralist community.

In the event, named **Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP)**, participants are led through a process where first the traditional weather forecast and the scientific forecast are shared and compared. They then, as a group, regardless of position, religion and gender, collectively use the shared climate forecasts and knowledge of the current livelihood status to paint different scenarios. They try to answer questions like: what happens if the rainfall is higher or lower than normal, and if all goes as anticipated what then? What are the risks and opportunities of these scenarios, given current situations of food security, vegetation cover, economic status and land use?

As a next step, participants work in groups to plan a response to each scenario, and based on these discussions, the group prepares 'advisories' for each sector and livelihood group affected. The 'advisories' are used by local government sector departments and broadcasted to the public at large through religious leaders and chiefs, the ministry of agriculture extension services and the CSO information distribution system.

Why Participatory Scenario Planning?

In the past, most government planning has been undertaken at the individual line ministry level, and coordinated under the District steering committee managed by the Drought Management Office (DMO). The meteorological readings and forecasts have been transmitted to the national and international level, with little use at the local level. Most CSOs working on livelihoods have also focused their efforts on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and relief interventions. The PSP process however, allows a proactive response, based on joint planning and recognition of the value of learning from all stakeholders. Communities are realising the importance of their own knowledge and of making decisions using a range of information and their own assessment of risk and probability implications. The government officers and CSOs feel they are better prepared and informed. The process has also proven to be inclusive, gender sensitive and culturally appropriate. In painting the different scenarios with religious leaders and local chiefs, weather forecasts have been transformed from unacceptable predictions, to manageable possibilities.

The PSP process has created a platform where local voices reach the government, and the government can forge partnerships and better apply its resources. The profile of the meteorology department has been raised and it is now at the centre of the planning.

Recommendation

Participatory Scenario Planning has potential for development as a multi-stakeholder learning platform integrated into development planning and adaptation

processes. Through raising awareness for flexible planning using forecasts, continued weather-based planning will enable the actors to build the case for longer-term climate change planning using longer term climate projections for deciding adaptation responses.

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Useful links

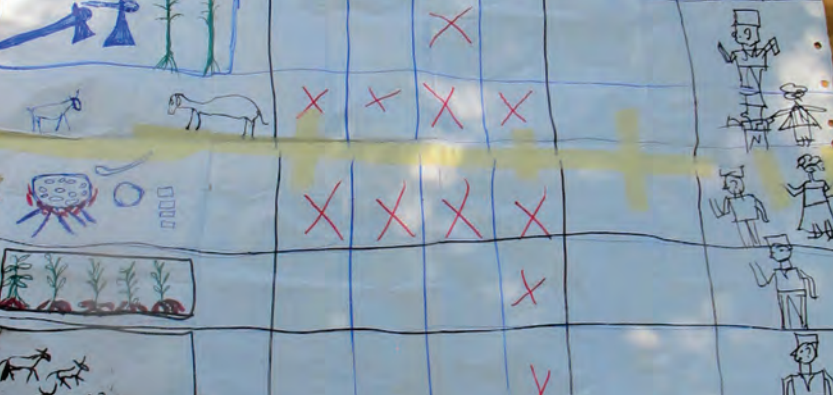
Decision-making for climate resilient livelihoods and risk reduction: A Participatory Scenario Planning approach.
<http://bit.ly/TfiKs6>

'Building resilience to climate change and enhancing food security in north eastern Kenya' a Community story
<http://bit.ly/UJtGuY>

"The work we are doing with CBA is like baking bread. It has several steps that lead to the final product."
Farmer Field School leader in Geba community, Angoche, Mozambique, September 2012.

Useful links

ACCRA Local Adaptive Capacity
<http://bit.ly/SYcqWw>



Community Adaptation Action Planning in Niger

Community adaptation action plan in Soly- Tigriss, Niger, © CARE/Marie Monimart, 2012

ALP Niger facilitated a participatory community based adaptation action planning (CAAP) process with 20 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in its four targeted communes of Bader-Goula, Azagor, Soly-Tagriss and Roubou in Dakoro district, Niger. CAAPs have empowered communities to make their own collective decisions on priority actions they can take to better adapt to climate change impacts.

Steps in developing CAAP

(a) Baseline, tools and training

Tools and methods following the CARE International Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (CVCA) formed the basic guide for the first steps.

The **Baseline study** included community focus groups (men / women / youth) using participatory appraisal tools and individual households' questionnaires to understand how community members perceive climate change, its impact on their daily lives, and coping mechanisms. Main climate risks identified by communities include droughts, floods, winds, climate-related diseases

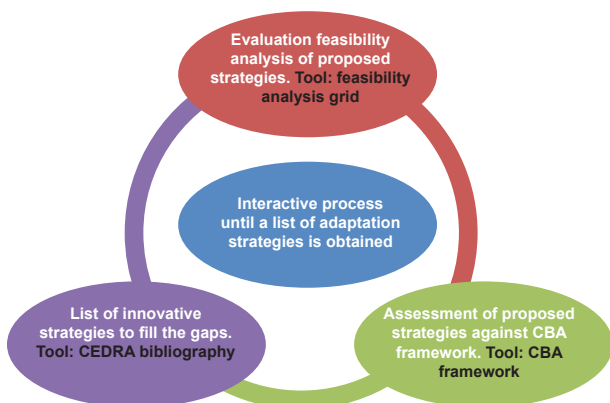
Institutional Analysis: Mapping of actors, institutions and programs with regards to climate change and the four domains of the CBA framework

(b) Identifying Priorities for Adaptation Strategies

A thorough participatory analysis of the causes of vulnerability and in-depth discussions enabled communities to identify and prioritise their adaptation strategies. The causal analysis did not stop at identifying the primary causes, which communities easily point out. Risk analysis trees probed deeper into underlying causes. The communities proposed strategies consistent with the identified risks and which would be sustainable and accessible to the most vulnerable groups. Discussions were made with gender-based focus groups to ensure inclusion of the priorities of men, women and youth alike. The idea was to focus on the most sustainable strategies related to the root causes of their vulnerability. This process resulted in 20 interim Community Adaptation Action Plans (CAAP).

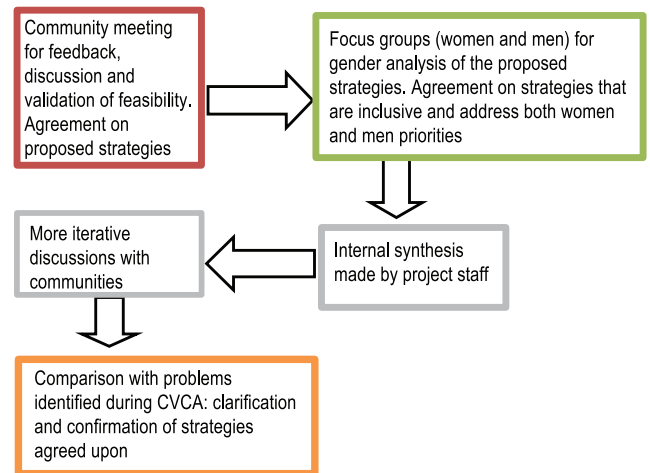
(c) Feasibility Analysis

Analysis of economic, technical, social and environmental feasibility was done using a matrix ranking exercise. This was followed by analysis of gaps for each proposed strategy by assessing them against the CBA framework.



(d) Gender Analysis

Each community validated the outcomes of the feasibility analysis and further analysed the most effective strategies in relation to gender. They assessed the implications for women, men, households and the community as a whole in terms of time, labour, resources and social relations.



Community Adaptation Action Plans

Each community decided on the main strategies suitable for men and women to adapt to the impacts of climate change. The strategies were documented and transcribed onto large flip chart papers using agreed local symbols. This has helped to disseminate the plans to the whole community and ensured their understanding and ownership. Most women and men are able to explain the content of CAAP. Activities focused on resilient livelihoods which also reduce risks and protect the environment, e.g. use of drought tolerant millet seed, tree planting for firebreaks/income and rearing of goats.

ALP Niger are in the process of supporting community implementation of their plans and sharing with the local authorities for their consideration during Commune (Local) Development Planning (PDC). It is envisioned that continuous dialogue between communities, the ALP teams and local authorities will open the way for the PDC to integrate the communities' adaptation priorities over time.

The CAAP process took almost one year, in which communities with ALP have created a space to build their capacities through analysing local climate hazards, exploring how they impact people, assessing and agreeing on future strategies to face climate change. This enabling process was critical for local communities' understanding and ownership. The process of collective decision making has built adaptive capacity and created a demand for more climate information which ALP Niger is now supporting.

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Community monitors take the lead on adaptation in Ghana

Community monitors training, Garu Tempene, Ghana © Thomas Ayamga, 2012

Community monitors have proven successful agents of change in Northern Ghana where they provide a range of services including community-based extension and community mobilisation. Monitors, also called facilitators, animators or motivators, are trusted individuals who gain and share new skills to motivate community action and represent the community in development related forums.

Monitors are often passionate about issues affecting the welfare of their constituents and work in a voluntary capacity, supported by their community. They are selected by community members through a transparent, participatory process. Through ALP Ghana, 8 communities have selected 24 men and 24 women monitors who support community based adaptation (CBA) initiatives

Roles of monitors

Facilitation of CBA planning - This includes community mobilisation and organisation in the design of CBA actions, contact with key informants for triangulating community information given during Climate Vulnerability Capacity Assessments (CVCA), among others.

Climate data recording - Rainfall data recording using rain gauges set up in the community in collaboration with the meteorological services departments.

Implementation of CBA plans –

Monitors facilitate and lead formation and development of community micro-finance groups or Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLAs) where community members mobilise financial resources to diversify their livelihood options. Additionally they host community demonstration farms as key students of Farmer Fields Schools (FFS) and help in dissemination of new agronomic practices learnt there.

Communication and monitoring –

Monitors listen to community views about development issues and explain new ideas and project activities. They facilitate community reflection meetings; convey community views and experiences to project teams and feedback to their community.

Mobilise and lead community advocacy

- Monitors organise citizen and government interfaces which provide platforms for community members to demand services

and information. These include access to timely weather information and early warning system for agricultural planning, access to improved seed at affordable prices among others.

Achievements

CBA monitors are reporting observations of new phenomena, climatic trends and their emerging impacts on people's livelihoods to ALP, which informs community plans and provides evidence for local and national level advocacy. Monitors have influenced services and access. For example, farmers in Zambulugu community received early bulking cassava species from the Savannah Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) as requested during a community Questions and Answers Meeting (QAM).

Appreciation of gender equality for effective and balanced development is growing, especially in the wake of the changing climate, which challenges traditional roles. Male monitors in particular are now gender champions in their communities. They maintain written records and also find ways to work with the knowledge, skills and challenges faced by non literate community members. Monitors are motivated from exposure and learning outside their communities which has proven very empowering as they get to see new things and encounter different experiences which changes their mindset.

A key success related to adaptation is the monitors' role in weather recording. Livelihoods are being affected by reduced yields from shorter, later seasons and erratic rainfall brought on by climate change. Using rain gauges to keep a record of actual rainfall season by season will reflect changing rainfall patterns in the community which can be matched with farmers' experiences of actual yields over time.

As a cadre of community expertise embedded within the community, which strengthens their links to local government, projects and external services and information, community monitors show potential as a sustainable approach to building long term community adaptive capacity to realize resilient livelihoods in the face of the uncertainties of climate change.

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Reading a rain gauge, Farfar community in Ghana © CARE/Erin Hall, 2012

Useful links

Why mainstreaming gender into community based climate change adaptation is a priority
<http://bit.ly/L4gMX5>

Digital photo stories
<http://bit.ly/tkmcrU>



ALP web page
<http://bit.ly/tYpyyo>

CARE Climate change
www.careclimatechange.org

Useful links

CVCA handbook
<http://bit.ly/VFuzp1>



Civil society networking for advocacy

Women discussing Community Based Adaptation in Dan Maza Idi, Niger
© Marie Monimart

National civil society networks on climate change adaptation, working closely with governments, are helping to shape and influence policies and practices associated climate change adaptation in Ghana and Mozambique.

Evidence of the value and importance of Community Based Adaptation (CBA) is emerging from local level experiences in the Adaptation Learning Programme (ALP). To ensure this is prioritised in policy decision making, ALP has supported the creation and strengthening of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) networks that include the Ghana Climate Adaptation Network (Ghana CAN) and the Civil Society Climate Change platform in Mozambique. The two platforms give voice to CSOs from the local and national level to input into climate change adaptation strategy and climate change policy.

In a Learning and Sharing Forum on adaptation, the Ghana Water Resources commission, the Regional Institute of Population Studies of the University of Ghana and the Africa Adaptation Programme (AAP) made presentations on CBA and food security to civil society actors, university lecturers, staff of research institutions, DFID officials, and government sector officials thus promoting learning and sharing on adaptation and resulting in creation of Ghana CAN. This is among the many capacity building activities and policy engagements organized by ALP that brings different CSOs/NGOs together enabling dialogue on key issues for promoting adaptation effectively.

With members from existing networks such as the Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana and Relbonet, the Ghana CAN network has quickly organized itself, increasing membership and credibility. Members of the network have benefited from trainings on adaptation, CBA, mitigation, UNFCCC processes and negotiations. These have enabled CBA to be understood, and dissemination of models and evidence on what has worked well such as participatory planning with communities and using seasonal forecasts for decision making and risk management.

CSOs in Ghana have since been able to input into the different stages of the development and formulation of the National Climate Change Policy and the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy with facilitation from ALP. CSO participation in consultation events in the capital, Accra, and in some provincial towns has brought

concerns of equity, differential vulnerability, accountability, institutional coordination, and integrated development approach to bear on these two policy processes. With direct influence from ALP and Ghana CAN, CBA has now been formally integrated into both.

CSO engagement with CARE, Friends of the Earth and Christian Aid has also enabled members to effectively contribute to government positions during annual preparatory meetings for the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COPs) and some have been accredited as official Ghana delegates at the COPs.

In Mozambique, ALP works closely with the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA) and AAP to support the same process of bringing CSOs/NGOs together and facilitating their consultation with ongoing government policy development work, resulting in a Mozambique CSO platform for adaptation.

Success factors

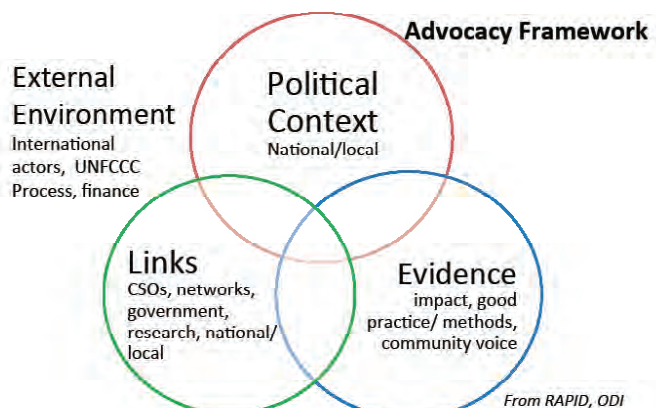
- Timely CSO advocacy when climate change policies and programmes are being developed.
- Joint capacity building for government and CSO actors to better understand adaptation issues and global policy directions together with concrete messages on the need and value of CBA for inclusion in policy.
- Combining direct participation in government policy processes with coordinated advocacy planning and action among CSOs
- Collective expertise and coordinated action gives CSOs credibility and recognition for influencing government
- Creating space for government CSO interaction, joint learning, consultation and feedback from CSOs to government

- Generating and packaging advocacy messages from concrete evidence of experiences of climate change impacts and adaptation actions among the most vulnerable groups
- Linking CSOs to other regional and global platforms (eg. Pan Africa Climate Justice Alliance [PACJA]) builds confidence and exposure to ideas and messages used in global advocacy and provide access to much needed resources to support national networks.
- Participation of CSOs in Africa and global negotiation meetings – raises exposure and credibility of networks (more CSOs as official delegates at COPs, active participants in PACJA meetings)
- Self-led CSO platforms led by a small group or steering committee and facilitated by programmes such as ALP can help overcome competition and gate keeping between CSOs.

With the CSO networks in place and relations built, channels for effective advocacy and collaboration are open and results are already being seen. More collective and strategic advocacy planning is now needed to strengthen influence and impact. Local to national links and access to evidence from community adaptation experiences will help to ensure advocacy represents the voices of the most vulnerable and will influence policy more effectively and maintain momentum and interest of all actors.

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Women speak out on vulnerability, resilience and climate change

Women in Zambulugu, Ghana © CARE/Francis Npong, 2012

'I was losing faith in farming as I repeatedly experienced crop failures because of erratic rains and weather uncertainties. Capacity building on improved farming technologies and testing of improved variety of maize and soya beans on our community block farm has increased yields and given us new hope.'

Tipoa Adjei of Zambulugu, East Mamprusi, Ghana (community opinion leader)

I belong to one of 9 Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA or *Adaka biisi*) groups in my community. We meet every Sunday to collect our weekly savings of GH¢1.00 (USD 50 cents) from our members. The loans system drawing from these group savings has helped me to engage in petty trading to supplement the family food budget. Thanks to this I have income to support our children's education and other family needs, and I have supported my husband to expand his farm. Now we have more happiness at home, my husband for instance picks me on his motor bike and involves me in household decision making.'

Alima Saabri of Zambulugu, East Mamprusi, Ghana (group leader)

'Rainfall has become erratic, and destroys rather than enhances our livelihood activities. People in my community are migrating to southern Ghana because they don't have other options for survival. I have heard CBA will help us solve some of our livelihood challenges and for that reason I support it.'

Aguur Asamari, the Tariganga Magazia (women's leader) On the occasion of ALP regional launch in Tamale 2011

'Women suffer a lot here: you have many children and you must feed them and also your husband. You cannot eat if you see your children hungry. Our situation today is as if we are on top of a mountain which without doubt, we will go down again. We do not ask to always stay at the top of the mountain, we would only wish that we do not descend too low (*into food insecurity*); otherwise we will not have the strength to climb back. If you could build small bridges between the mountains, it will allow us to more easily climb up the next slope.'

Women in Garin Mahamane, Dakoro, Niger September 2012

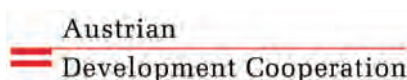
The crisis of 2011, after droughts of 2005 and 2009, was terrible. Women in Azagor dubbed this crisis as "*I want to see your limits!*" Because it left them with nothing. For them, resilience is a matter of survival. In 2012, women's participation in all stages of CBA has created a dynamic for women's representation and empowerment at the community level which both women and men appreciate. Faced with climate change, gender dynamics are changing significantly. The changes from CBA are particularly dramatic in Azagor where Touareg women, usually less involved in farming or tree planting have shown a collective commitment to the strategies adopted by the community and supported by ALP. They defend their Moringa plantations with tooth and nail against pests, they water their home gardens by hand and they have developed their own business ideas, like sales of mobile phone credit, using the income from Moringa sales. Though over 95% of women in the communities are illiterate, they have very well understood the dimension of climate change in their livelihood systems and practices, and that this is a long-term and irreversible phenomenon.

I was especially moved to observe, in those very poor Dakoro communities, the change brought by the raised awareness among women and men of what climate change is, of the consequences for them and the future generations, but, above all, the local accountability for this climate change. I did not hear this time "it is God's will only... "

Marie Monimart, consultant to ALP mid term review with women in Azagor, Dakoro, Niger September 2012

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This special issue is supported by





Early warning systems linked to adaptation in Niger

Insert Early Warning System training in Niger © Awaiss Yahaya January 2012

Like other countries in the Sahel, a majority of Niger's population are highly vulnerable to the worsening impacts of climate change and increased land degradation. Successive droughts, poor land productivity resulting from decline in soil fertility, and exposure to various natural hazards including bush fires, floods, winds, and crop pests put vulnerable rural communities in a situation of chronic food and nutrition insecurity. It is in this context that ALP Niger is supporting community monitoring for early warning purposes in Dakoro.

The Early Warning System (EWS) aims to increase the capacities, roles and responsibilities of communities in preparing for and managing crises that may affect household livelihood systems. It helps the community to determine and act on the most appropriate responses to the coming crisis, which in turn contributes to their regaining of resilient livelihood strategies and improved adaptive capacity in the face of a changing climate.

Key conditions which determine the effectiveness of community responses include:

- Access to and collection of information by communities and for the communities themselves, including identifying indicators and monitoring of community vulnerability in the areas of food security, health, environmental / natural resource management, social relationships
- Definition of alert levels, types of responses, and a range of actions to implement depending on the types of probable crisis and the levels of alert

- Establishment of institutional alliances and relationships at community, local, regional, national and international levels
- Capacity building to support implementation
- Creation and maintenance of trust between formal emergency response systems and the community system
- Decision and actions made at community and local level

Two way communication system

The EWS in Dakoro follows the national system in which community early warning committees monitor selected indicators reflecting changes in household living conditions and the seriousness of the alert; convene a community forum to analyze collected data and propose mitigation measures, and report to an intercommunity group of committee members from each community. Actions and decisions are taken at this level in conjunction with the concerned villages. The committees maintain a functional relationship with Vulnerability Monitoring Observatories (OSV) established at local government level who record the information received, provide advisory support and share external information to the committees. A Sub-Regional Committee for Prevention and Crisis Management ensures the overall institutional framework that links the local to the national level, mobilization of resources and national stakeholders, monitoring of early warning and emergency response activities.

Integrating adaptation into EWS

ALP is strengthening the EWS through training actors in their roles and responsibilities, facilitating external communications with mobile phones and

supporting mobilisation of resources. ALP has enabled the EWS to access and use weather information, with the installation of rain gauges in each community. EWS committee members collect rainfall records and disseminate these to the OSV who pass them on to local radio as well as higher levels of the EWS system. Community members are able to access the rainfall levels directly from their committee member or through the radio announcements, providing instant information. This is a powerful and localised tool for decision making on planting dates and other farming activities which reduces risks of lost seed supplies and reduced harvests.

As a result of the EWS, community information is taken into account at municipal, departmental and even national levels, and emergency responses like food distribution or cash for work are better tailored to reach needy households. The EWS has enhanced social cohesion within communities, improved community knowledge on responses to vulnerability and risks and demonstrated the value of local knowledge.

Community-based adaptation in early warning and response systems can improve community perception of the usefulness of generating and using climate and weather (rainfall) information to inform their livelihood decisions. Likewise, community monitoring of vulnerability and other information to support disaster risk reduction actions is an essential component of community based adaptation.

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