Adaptation Planning with Communities:
Learning from Practice in Embu County, Kenya

Acknowledgements

This report was written by Agnes Otzelberger with inputs from Emma Bowa, Josephine Kawira, Anne Mbugua, Peterson Mucheke, Philip Oyoo and Fiona Percy. It draws on reports prepared by Pamela Kimkung (CVCA) and Stanley Mutuma (CVCA), as well as consultations with communities from Kamarandi and Embu stakeholders working with ALP (see Annex 1 and 2).

Cover images:

Top: Eric Aduma/CARE Kenya, 2016.

Bottom: Scene from a fruit and vegetable market in Maragua, Muranga County, Kenya. Francesco Fiondella/International Research Institute for Climate and Society

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Acronyms

ALP	Adaptation Learning Programme (for Africa)
ASDSP	Agriculture Sector Development Support Programme
CAAP	Community Adaptation Action Plan
CBA	Community-based adaptation (to climate change)
CDF	County Development Fund
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CVCA	Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
FGD	Focus group discussion
GCVCA	Gender-sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
KCEP	Kenya Cereal Enhancement Programme
KEFRI	Kenya Forest Research Institute
KII	Key informant interview
KMD	Kenya Meteorology Department
KMS	Kenya Meteorological Services
MCA	Member of County Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NDMA	National Drought Management Agency
PSP	Participatory Scenario Planning

INTRODUCTION

Learning from early efforts to support community-based adaptation to climate change in Kenya and beyond showed that the introduction of new "hardware" (climate resilient livelihood strategies or technologies such as new seeds and irrigation practices, diversified income, etc.) must be combined with strengthening the "software", in other words processes, capacities, skills and behaviours which help social systems from households to communities and government to be agile and proactive in the face of changing risks and uncertainties.[1]

ALP has introduced a number of such processes and activities in Ghana, Niger, Kenya and Mozambique, which build on tried and tested approaches as well as new ideas, adapting them for a context of climate change. They are similar across the different places, but there have been variations from country to country, from locality to locality, and over time, depending on circumstances and in response to emerging learning.

Participatory vulnerability and capacity analysis, and adaptation planning processes have formed critical elements of the "software" everywhere. This was also the case in Embu County where ALP worked in the communities of Iria-Itune, Kamarandi, Mutwabare and Ntharawe. In parallel with this, starting in Garissa in northern Kenya, and then spreading to northern Ghana, southern Niger and beyond, the Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) approach has emerged as a success story in community-based adaptation. PSP is a local government level, seasonal planning process producing livelihood advisories in response to the seasonal rain forecast. It has been instrumental in linking different levels and different actors and improving forward-looking decision-making by producing user-appropriate climate information.

At the core of all this work is a focus on planning – as a platform facilitating community participation and empowerment, forward-looking and proactive strategies, and more trusting relationships between actors whose collaboration is required for tackling climate change. This brief illustrates how the Community Adaptation Action Planning approach was implemented in Embu's Mbeere North and Mbeere South Sub-counties in 2015 and 2016. The starting point was the CAAP process formulated based on experiences from Ghana, Niger and Kenya and documented in Practitioner Brief 1: "Adaptation Planning with Communities". Highlighting what adjustments were made, challenges encountered and lessons learned, it is meant to make a contribution to continued learning on the growing body of guidance on community-based adaptation.

PRACTITIONER BRIEF 1:
ADAPTATION PLANNING WITH COMMUNITIES

The practitioner brief describes ALP's community adaptation action planning (CAAP) process, which has proven to be a key approach for building motivation and capacity for action on community based adaptation among communities, while also strengthening community participation and influence in local government decision-making. The brief provides a conceptual overview of the process, as well as explanations and examples of how it works in practice, based on ALP's experiences in Ghana and Niger. It describes how to progress from climate vulnerability and capacity assessments in a participatory community planning process. ALP's community plans have a focus on livelihoods and natural resource issues, but the CAAP process described applies to all climate sensitive sectors.

This brief can be downloaded from:
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CBA_Planning_Brief.pdf

1 AC Brief

2. ADAPTATION PLANNING WITH COMMUNITIES IN EMBU

Eric Aduma/CARE Kenya, 2016.

2.1 The context: Climate change and vulnerability in Embu

Having worked in Garissa between 2010 and 2015, ALP began its work in Embu in October 2015, in four communities: Iria Itune, Kamarandi, Mutwabare and Ntaware, which are located in the Mbeere North and Mbeere South Sub-counties, in an area characterized by high poverty rates and vulnerability to climate change impacts.

Situated to the southeast of Mount Kenya, the area counts a number of rivers and streams, and receives an average annual precipitation of up to 1200mm, thus being at the more humid end of the semi-arid scale. Nonetheless, the area is being hit increasingly hard by both floods and drought, and water access and soil erosion are key challenges for local smallholder farmers and livestock keepers, who make up around 70% of Embu County's overall population.

The overall picture of climate change across Kenya – featuring temperature increases, increasing frequency of hot days and nights, more irregular, extreme and unpredictable rainfall patterns, changes to the onset and length of rainy seasons, and more prolonged droughts and floods[2] – matches the reports from the four communities in Embu, where droughts, floods and strong winds were identified as the main climate change-related hazards. Droughts in particular have been changing in frequency and duration, happening more often and lasting longer. More dynamic and unpredictable rainfall patterns have also been observed and felt by community members, the changes in the onset and distribution of rainfall being key; in addition to droughts there has been an increase in heavy downpours, destroying crops. The high variability of climate and in particular rainfall across Kenya makes it difficult to estimate how national level climate projections will affect specific parts of the country, including Mbeere North and Mbeere South. The government is working to downscale climate change projections using Regional Climate Models.

The climatic hazards identified have been having a series of knock-on effects on the local population's key resources, livelihoods and wellbeing, which, in part, lead to a series of unsustainable coping strategies that aggravate the problems. Changes in rainfall have exacerbated soil erosion, both during the dry and wet seasons. The main water sources being mainly seasonal – mostly rivers and rainwater, with the exception of boreholes in Mutwabare, mean that water availability is also affected. There has also been an increase in flooding and heavy rain, which is destructive for crops and property. Pests and diseases have also increased.

Climatic shifts are thus affecting land and water – the resources most highly valued by the four communities – particularly badly. These changes, along with other dynamic factors affecting local people's resources and capacity, are having adverse knock-on effects on crop production and livestock, the two primary livelihood activities in the area.

Increasingly, people are resorting to livelihood activities other than farming and livestock: they are engaging in setting up small businesses, charcoal burning, sand harvesting, and providing casual labour. Sand harvesting and burning of charcoal, however, are further exacerbating the state of the areas water and land resources. Bee keeping as an alternative is disappearing alongside the tree species that are crucial for it, as they have fallen victim to charcoal burning. In Ntharawe, people report that even charcoal

2 Source and more details: ALP CVCA report Garissa

burning is no longer an option as the area is completely running out of trees. Strapped for cash and unable to sustain their herds, people sell livestock at low prices, or borrow cash at high interest rates. All these developments paint the picture of a vicious cycle between climatic shifts, livelihood struggles, and ecosystem deterioration. Community Adaptation Action Planning provided an opportunity for community representatives to become aware of these dynamics, and think of ways to overcome them.

2.2 Overview of the CAAP approach

Building on good practices in community action planning from other areas of work, the emphasis of Community Adaptation Action Planning approach lies on 1) action planning at the community level and 2) integration of these plans at the local government level, into local development planning. Overall, the process is broken down into the seven steps, pictured below, which are explained in more detail in the above Practitioner Brief 1: Adaptation Planning with Communities.

Participation, ownership and leadership by representatives of the population, local traditional leaders, community-based organisations and government are critical – the core of the process involves a number of steps that foster community participation, shown in green in the below table and diagram, and two elements that focus on creating links between community planning and local institutions, shown in blue.

Figure 1. *The Community Adaptation Action Planning process in 7 steps*

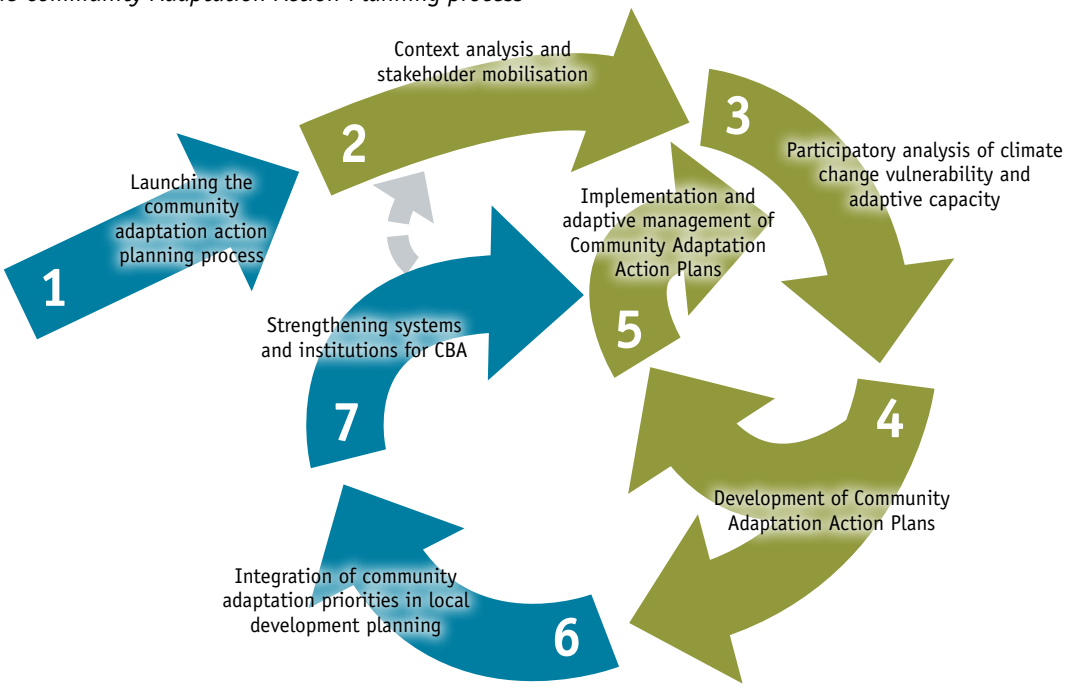
Step		Purpose	Key Activities
1	**Launching the community adaptation action planning process**	Identify purpose, process and stakeholders for the CAAP process	Establish the CAAP facilitation team; define the CAAP process; initial background research; stakeholder analysis; training for CAAP facilitation team
Community adaptation action planning			
2	**Context analysis and stakeholder mobilisation**	Understand the overall context; mobilize stakeholders to support and/or participate in the CAAP process	Detailed background research; institutional mapping; analysis of existing policies and programmes; meetings with local institutions; community entry and mobilisation meetings
3	**Participatory analysis of climate change vulnerability and adaptive capacity**	Build common understanding of climate change vulnerability and adaptive capacity of different local level institutions and groups within the community	Climate, risk, capacity and livelihood analysis; gender and diversity analysis; local government and community institutional analysis
4	**Development of Community Adaptation Action Plans**	Agree a Community Adaptation Action Plan, to serve as a road map to guide implementation, revision and monitoring of community adaptation priorities and support financial resource mobilisation.	Community visioning; identification and prioritisation of proposed adaptation strategies; screening feasibility and implications of proposed adaptation strategies; identification of complementary actions; decisions on organisation, roles and responsibilities, finalisation and validation of Community Adaptation Action Plans
5	**Implementation and adaptive management of Community Adaptation Action Plans**	Strengthened adaptive capacity and reduced vulnerability of different groups to climate-related risks	Capacity building for communities; implementation of planned adaptation actions (livelihood strategies, disaster risk reduction including early warning mechanisms, and advocacy); community monitoring, regular review and flexible adjustment of plans; climate information to support decision-making
Creating an enabling environment for planning and implementation			
6	**Integration of community adaptation priorities in local development planning**	Ensure that local development plans are responsive to and supportive of community adaptation priorities identified in their action plans	Presentation of Community Adaptation Action Plans to local government institutions; integration of community adaptation priorities in local development plans and budgets.
7	**Strengthening systems and institutions for CBA**	Strong local systems and institutions (community, government, private sector and civil society) that enable CBA	Capacity building for local institutions; promoting participatory planning processes; strengthening/ institutionalising climate information services and DRM systems; linking with existing community-based systems

While this may look like a linear process, the idea is it is cyclical and reiterative, as pictured below in Figure 2, whereby the implementation and adaptive management of a given Community Adaptation Action Plan feeds back into a renewed analysis of the context, and an updated plan, and so forth. Activities linking the community process with the wider institutional and policy context (steps 6 and 7) happen at the same time.

The reality can look even less linear, as demonstrated in Embu. The different elements overlapped and happened in parallel rather than in a consecutive, step-by-step fashion. Analysis adjustments and improvements were made in repeating different parts of the process from community to community. Also, at the time of writing, implementation of the CAAPs had happened in more of an ad-hoc and emergent, rather than systematic way, which was in part to do with the short time span of the initiative so far, but in part due to challenges which will be discussed further down. And finally, the case of Embu also demonstrates that the integration of community adaptation priorities into local development planning can take different, shapes from the procedures suggested in the table above, including less formal processes.

The following sections will describe how the CAAP process was carried out in Embu, and highlight what changes and adjustments were made in relation to the guidance.

Figure 2. *The Community Adaptation Action Planning process*



2.3 CAAP in practice

Preparations in Embu and at the community level (steps 1 and 2): Following preliminary stakeholder analysis and selection, in October 2015, ALP held a launch event in Embu for local government and some community representatives to introduce the community-based adaptation initiative. A meeting with some local government representatives led to a pre-selection of sites for the initiative, the idea being to identify a range of climate-vulnerable sites that are fairly representative of the larger area. Ultimately, Ntharawe and Mutwabare were selected as two slightly drier sites, and Kamarandi and Iria-Itune which are slightly more humid. The four selected communities are similar in terms of ethnic, socioeconomic make-up, and key challenges faced, although some variations in topography and infrastructure lead to different situations and opportunities. They have comparatively high levels of poverty and fewer development projects underway.

Given ALP's focus on planning, climate change and on communities living in rural areas and dependent on rain-fed agriculture, the Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries and of Planning, the National Drought Management Authority and the Kenya Meteorological Department were priority stakeholders. These local government (county) partners assisted with the identification of further community representatives to take part in the process.

Following the preparations at county level, a mini launch at the community level, assisted by ward administrators, and provided opportunity to introduce the entire process to community representatives. Back in Embu, enumerators for the analysis process were recruited and trained.

Community Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (step 3): The community adaptation action planning was grounded in a participatory and gender-sensitive analysis of vulnerability and adaptive capacity to climate change, which took place in November 2015. This is an interactive process that combines community knowledge and perceptions, and scientific data to help generate an initial assessment of different social groups' vulnerability to climate change impacts, including a range of tools and questions to facilitate analysis of how gender dynamics interact with climate vulnerability. Instead of extracting information from communities and then analyzing and summarizing the data in their absence, the participatory methods employed in a GCVCA are intended to guide a conversation that helps people in communities articulate and understand their own vulnerabilities and capacities in the face of climate change and natural disasters. The results provide the foundation for the identification of adaptation strategies, and for ensuring that these strategies would reach the appropriate groups and are based on an inclusive and affirmative decision-making process. This process is expected to amplify the needs and priorities of those groups who are most vulnerable to climate change impacts and natural disasters.

The GCVCA exercise in Embu County was conducted as part of ALP Kenya's baseline, immediately after the initial community entry meetings in the County. Government partners took leading roles in facilitating the exercise in collaboration with the recruited and trained enumerators, who were mostly students from the area. The participants – a total of 185 (110 men; 85 women) – were drawn from the four communities (Iria-Itune, Ntharawe, Kamarandi and Mutwabare) and local government departments (NDMA, NEMA, ASDSP, Min. of Agriculture and the Kenya Meteorological Department). 168 of them (88 men; 80 women) participated in focus group discussions, while 17 (12 men; 5 women) were respondents in key informant interviews.

Focus group discussions were the main method of data collection; the tools utilised for focus group discussions included resource mapping, daily calendars, wealth ranking, risk ranking, hazard mapping, daily activity mapping, and a vulnerability matrix (see annexes for field and interview guides and examples).

Four FGDs (young men, elderly men, young women and elderly women) were held in each community – this enabled the inclusion of the voices of both genders and different generations and, at the same time, provided opportunity for a degree of triangulation and comparison between different perspectives. This is illustrated by the daily activity calendars below, which demonstrate the difference in the roles and workloads of women and men.

Figure 3. *Daily activity calendars as indicated by older women and men of Kamarandi*

MEN	Early Morning	Morning	Early afternoon	Mid Afternoon	Early evening	Late Evening
Grazing		X				
Watering Livestock			X	X		
Farming (ploughing)		X			X	
Wazee barazas						X
Charcoal burning	X					
WOMEN	**Early Morning**	**Morning**	**Early afternoon**	**Mid Afternoon**	**Early evening**	**Late Evening**
Cooking	X		X			X
Cleaning	X					X
Grazing		X	X			
Farming (planting, cultivating, harvesting)		X				
Milking	X					
Fetching firewood	X		X			
Fetching water			X			
Preparing the children	X					

From the data, women have no activity happening during mid-afternoon and early evening, however it is likely that their early afternoon activities continue into these periods and even into late evening. It is unlikely that women have no activities during this time.

The focus group discussions were complemented by key informant interviews (KIIs), observation and secondary data review.

As such, the GCVCA process provided a framework and tools for dialogue within communities, as well as between communities and local government partners concerned with livestock, farming and meteorology. It helped community members discuss and understand how climatic hazards, such as changing rainfall, drought or floods affect people's lives and livelihoods in the four communities, and what conditions either make people more vulnerable to these impacts or allow them to adapt and prepare better.

Over the months following the focus group discussions, the analysis was written up in a report and livelihood profiles for each community. The findings were continually refined and updated through literature reviews, and during other meetings such as the community and county level validation meetings discussing the results of the CVCA, as well as seasonal review meetings for Participatory Scenario Planning (see below).

Selection of community groups, monitors and recorders: The community CVCA validation meetings February 2016 also served as a platform for identifying so-called "community monitors" (local champions and leaders of community-based adaptation activities) and weather recorders, as well as community-based organisations to lead the implementation of CBA strategies.

Selection criteria for community groups applied in Iria-Itune, Kamarandi, Mutwabare and Ntharawe

- Vulnerability – the group with majority members classified as poor, marginalized or vulnerable in the community. The group that has not benefited from other programs or development organizations working in the area (this was meant to give all groups equal opportunity to benefit and capture the most vulnerable but a viable group).
- Group that is willing and ready to test adaptation strategies on behalf of the larger community
- Membership – 25 to 50 members
- Gender representation – at least a third from either gender; this is applicable to farmer and youth groups
- Members should be from within the selected sites for the ALP project and the group operations based in the area.
- Be reorganized by the community and / or at least legally registered
- The farmer group should have a site for demonstration purposes
- Geographical distribution - group's distribution within the community sites; if for instance a women's group is selected from one village then farmers group automatically goes to the next village within the community site. This is to ensure that all areas of the community site are represented.

Scene from a fruit and vegetable market in Maragua, Muranga County, Kenya. Francesco Fiondella/International Research Institute for Climate and Society

Alongside the group selection, communities also elected so-called "monitors" – in other words individuals who would take on a role as local champions and leaders for community-based adaptation initiatives. The following criteria were applied:

Selection criteria for community monitors

- The person selected should have at least form four qualification/literate.
- Each site was to select two members each a male and female
- Should come from the location selected for the CBA project.
- Should be committed to serve the community and readily available.
- Should be responsible and a person of integrity.
- Should be ready to serve the community without pay or expecting anything in return.
- The representative should be trustworthy and honest
- Can work with all community groups i.e. youth, women and the old

Finally, community recorders– individuals to be trained by Kenya Meteorological Services officials on issues related to rainfall data collection and recording – and sites for rain gauge installation were selected. The plan was for the recorders to document rainfall amount from a rain gauge to be installed in each community. The community recorders in all four sites were chosen from the respective farmers' groups, and the sites selected according to a number of criteria (see below). The rain gauges, however, were yet to be installed at the time of writing.

Rain gauge site selection criteria

The site should be

- Set in a secure place.
- Installed on flat ground.
- Installed away from homesteads and secured from human and animal destruction.
- Installed in a central place so that it can serve and record the right information for the particular community.

Community Adaptation Action Planning (step 4): In addition to the GCVCA process (step 3), which formed the starting point for analysis, the community adaptation action planning process entails further steps to deepen the understanding, by the facilitators and community members, of problems, trends and possible strategies. They include a visioning and planning exercise helping community representatives to identify and prioritise problems, and devise an action plan in response to these.

The basic process of planning at the community level involves analysing information, identifying actions and prioritising and operationalizing them. These are critical skills that underpin adaptive capacity, enabling people to learn and use their knowledge and experiences to manage the risks and uncertainty associated with climate change. Participation is key to the CAAP process, with community members and local stakeholders at its center.

The visioning and planning process in Embu took place between June and September 2016. Each exercise involved four focus groups of 12 people each from every community (some of whom had participated in the previous step and some not), chiefs and assistants, the selected community monitors and recorders. Ward administrators, the representatives of Member of County Assembly (MCA) and Member of Parliament (MP) were involved, and local government partners from Agriculture Sector Development Support Programme (ASDSP), Ministry of agriculture and livestock officials at Sub-County level and Kenya Meteorological Services actively participated in hosting and facilitating the discussions.

The 6 days in each site unfolded as follows:

1. **Trend analysis:** The first day was spent analysing resource trends over time (20 years back to present), including access to and control over resources between various groups in the community.

2. **Institutional analysis:** The second day focused on analysing the role of institutions both internal and external to the community, and community interactions with these institutions, using a Venn diagram.

3. **Visioning:** Day three was about imagining the future and an ideal vision for the community, followed by identifying the key problems/ barriers getting in the way of this vision, and listing possible solutions to address them.

4. **Feasibility analysis:** On day four, participants screened the identified solutions against a number of financial, environmental, socio-cultural and technical criteria to ensure, for example, their contribution to climate change adaptation (as opposed to maladaptation) or their likelihood to create or maintain social cohesion.

5. **Action planning:** Day five eventually focused on the formulation of an adaptation action plan by each focus group based on the previous steps.

6. **Consolidating the action plan:** On the final day, participants from all groups came together to merge their four plans into one, consolidated Community Adaptation Action Plan.

Participatory Scenario Planning (steps 6 and 7): Creating an enabling environment for the implementation of a CAAP goes beyond each individual community: it involves the integration of community adaptation priorities into local development planning, and strengthening systems and institutions whose support roles and adaptive capacities are critical for successful outcomes of adaptation planning.

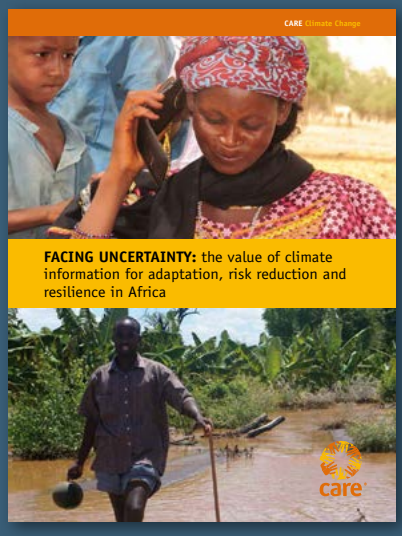
In Embu, there is, as yet, no formal process or mechanism to facilitate the integration of community adaptation priorities identified by the CAAP process in local development planning, more specifically the County Integrated Development Planning process in its five year iterations and yearly operational planning. However, the Participatory Scenario Planning process initiated in Embu in parallel with the CVCA and CAAP processes, does provide one such link between community planning and local government, and a way of strengthening systems and institutions for CBA.

Climate information is most useful when it is produced and understood as a result of dialogue between climate scientists, local expert forecasters, intermediaries who provide related support services and users such as farmers, pastoralists, project and programme staff, government planners and others who benefit from climate information. The PSP process brings together these different groups and strengthens relationships between them as they jointly review past and predicted seasonal rain forecasts and plan for responses, issuing advisories with recommendations for e.g. farming and livestock keeping. This helps ensure that community priorities are communicated to key technical offices and, as such, provides an indirect way to influence local government planning. At the same time, it facilitates the uptake of recommended strategies in the CAAP process.

FACING UNCERTAINTY: THE VALUE OF CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR ADAPTATION, RISK REDUCTION AND RESILIENCE IN AFRICA

This brief explains why and how climate information is a valuable resource for rural communities and those working with them in confronting climate variability and change. It is based on lessons from the Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa, working together with the national meteorological services in Ghana, Kenya and Niger. The document helps those working in adaptation, agriculture, sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and other climate-sensitive sectors to connect with and use meteorological services and other sources of climate information. It demonstrates how, through Participatory Scenario Planning, climate information can inform decision-making, planning and policy development in these areas.

This brief can be downloaded at: http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/Facing_Uncertainty_ALP_Climate_Communications_Brief.pdf



2.4 Changes and adjustments to the process

The step-by-step process laid out in Practitioner Brief 1: Adaptation Planning with Communities provides guidance, but certainly no exact blueprint for CBA planning that will work in the same way in any location. The differences between this guidance and the CBA planning process followed in Embu, summarized in the table below, illustrate how the process was adapted, in part, to contextual circumstances and in part to constraints on resources, time and capacity.

The reality captured here looks a lot less linear than the flow chart in figure 2. While figure 2 suggests a sequence of actions whereby step 1 is concluded before step 2 begins, and so forth, the reality in Embu demonstrates that it makes more sense to think of the process as incremental – the gradual addition of more and more components, which run in parallel, with some fading out eventually and others continuing. There are a number of reasons for this: For example, the various activities have different time spans; some of them are of cyclical nature and require repeating, and there can be opportune overlaps between them.

For example, actions forming part of "strengthening the enabling environment for CBA" (steps 6 and 7 in the flow chart) at local government level, happened at the same time as, or indeed in conjunction with, the analysis and planning processes at community level. Context analysis, while concentrated in step 3 (CVCA), continued throughout.

Several further changes were made to the process during implementation, in response to emerging challenges and learning. The CAAP exercises happened one community at a time, so some challenges that were encountered along the way could be addressed on the go, resulting in differences between how the exercises were conducted, particularly between Mutwabare on the one hand where the first CAAP took place in June 2016, and the other three communities. There were of course, other, more substantive challenges which have not be addressed so far but provide useful learning for this initiative going forward as well as for others seeking to start similar initiatives. These challenges are discussed in the later chapter on learning.

Figure 4. *Particularities of, and immediate changes to the CAAP process in Embu*

Step		Key Activities Foreseen	Distinctive features of the implementation in Embu	Further fine tuning during implementation in Embu
1	**Launching the community adaptation action planning process**	Establish the CAAP facilitation team; define the CAAP process; initial background research; stakeholder analysis; training for CAAP facilitation team	External enumerators (rather than staff of local partner organisations) hired and trained for CVCA	Trained the facilitators before going to the field so as to understand exactly what was needed from them
Community adaptation action planning				
2	**Context analysis and stakeholder mobilisation**	Detailed background research; institutional mapping; analysis of existing policies and programmes; meetings with local institutions; community entry and mobilisation meetings	More basic background research and institutional mapping	
3	**Participatory analysis of climate change vulnerability and adaptive capacity**	Climate, risk, capacity and livelihood analysis; gender and diversity analysis; local government and community institutional analysis	A more basic institutional analysis provided a list of organisations involved in the local context and, for some of them, their roles in supporting CBA-related activities. Four focus groups per community (young/older women and men) were held to enable safe spaces and better understanding of differential vulnerability and capacity Analysis continues throughout the planning cycle as it should be a continuous part of ongoing adaptation efforts rather than a one-off exercise	Deeper analysis of livelihood information looking at how the climate has affected different social groups and response mechanisms

Step		Key Activities Foreseen	Distinctive features of the implementation in Embu	Further fine tuning during implementation in Embu
4	**Development of Community Adaptation Action Plans**	Community visioning; identification and prioritisation of proposed adaptation strategies; screening feasibility and implications of proposed adaptation strategies; identification of complementary actions; decisions on organisation, roles and responsibilities, finalisation and validation of Community Adaptation Action Plans	Feasibility screening emphasized over climate and gender screening of adaptation strategies (for time saving reasons) The finalization of the CAAP included the election of an "executive committee", whose mandate it would be to lead and oversee the implementation of the CAAP. Four focus groups per community (young/older women and men) were held to enable safe spaces and the amplification of different perspectives in the process. The actions plans built on what the community members were already doing in order to cope with the effects of climate change	Strengthening the link with the outcome from other processes: findings from CVCA relevant to trend analysis are factored into CAAP process; and the same people participate in community CAAP exercises and PSP to ensure one is informed by the other. Training of facilitators (local partners) as they initially struggled with their brief Simplification and removal of some tools Removal of "assumptions" from the action plan template as there was confusion about the concept Plenary meetings between all four focus groups in each community to facilitate triangulation and joint analysis, and make the process less extractive Managing expectations early on, emphasizing the focus on software Improvement of the process identifying success indicators to make them more tangible and realistic
5	**Implementation and adaptive management of Community Adaptation Action Plans**	Capacity building for communities; implementation of planned adaptation actions (livelihood strategies, disaster risk reduction including early warning mechanisms, and advocacy); community monitoring, regular review and flexible adjustment of plans; climate information to support decision-making	Action of the executive committees for CAAP implementation was still pending at the time of writing, and the plans have not been reviewed or adjusted yet. In the meantime, more emergent, community-group- or household-driven implementation of activities foreseen in the CAAP has taken place, especially of those that provide quick wins at low cost.	
Creating an enabling environment for planning and implementation				
6	**Integration of community adaptation priorities in local development planning**	Presentation of Community Adaptation Action Plans to local government institutions; integration of community adaptation priorities in local development plans and budgets.	More idiosyncratic (and sometimes informal) than systematic integration of CAAPs into local government institutions – some government officials have taken some plans/ strategies on board. Some of this happens during CAAP exercises (step 4), as local government officials participate in them, and even during analysis stages (step 3). CAAPs have not been integrated in local development planning (County Integrated Development Plan) in their entirety; there is opportunity for further integration in 2017.	A county stakeholders meeting scheduled in February 2017 aims to share the plans with various departments within the county with an effort of having the action plans integrated into the local development plans and budget.
7	**Strengthening systems and institutions for CBA**	Capacity building for local institutions; promoting participatory planning processes; strengthening/ institutionalising climate information services and DRM systems; linking with existing community-based systems	Primarily, this step has been focused on strengthening and institutionalizing climate information services through Participatory Scenario Planning, which, together with the CAAPs process, has improved relationships between government agencies and between government and communities, and the usability and uptake of seasonal climate forecasts. This began in parallel with other steps of the CAAPs process so the PSP advisories have had an impact on CAAPs.	Fine-tuning of stakeholder selection for participation in each step of the multi-stakeholder process with the question: "Who has what stake in what stage?"

3. LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCES GAINED IN EMBU

Jane Wairimu Ndungu is a farmer in Maragua, Muranga County, Kenya. On her half acre of land, she produces bananas, beans, maize, sugar can and vegetables. Francesco Fiondella/ International Research Institute for Climate and Society

The Community Adaptation Action Plans of the four communities present a range of technologies and livelihood strategies such as e.g. installing irrigation systems, setting up rain water harvesting, improving access to health and education services or strengthening the infrastructure for markets to be critical for adaptation to climate change. But successfully addressing the local impacts of climate change requires more than the implementation of a set of strategies identified at one point in time. Living with the uncertainty and variability that come with climate change requires community mobilisation, capacity to anticipate and plan ahead, an ongoing process of continuous adjustment, and informed decisions on the part of community members and actors involved in local planning and decision-making.

The community planning process itself, in Iria-Itune, Kamarandi, Mutwabare and Ntharawe, strengthened – and was strengthened by – these capacities in a number of ways. At the same time, its prerequisites and characteristics, and the context it was embedded in, implied a range of challenges.

This section first discusses both successes and the challenges, and the insights drawn from these experiences, in relation to a range of issues at the heart of adaptation planning with communities – from participation and agency to governance, institutional considerations and the facilitation and design requirements for such initiatives. The challenges are in part inherent to the design of the process, and in part arise from the context the planning is embedded in. It would be wrong to think of these contextual challenges as "context-specific", however – in fact, many aspects of them relate to long-standing challenges familiar to those implementing similar initiatives elsewhere.

The later part of this section features a number of specific ideas for tweaking the design of CAAP processes. They respond directly to how the process was designed in Embu, yet can be of use for future CAAP initiatives beyond that location.

3.1 Communities at the centre of adaptation: Strengthening participation, decision-making and agency

Opening eyes and minds: The CAAP process has helped propel communities into awareness and action on climate change. Capturing views and voices from different gender and age groups, it appears to have led to better awareness and understanding of changes, of vulnerabilities, vicious cycles, differential vulnerability, and adaptation strategies. Local collaborators report changes in attitudes, knowledge and in people's capacity to make decisions, prioritize solutions and meet livelihood challenges across all four sites. In other words, following the CAAPs, people feel equipped to do something – they know what to plant, they harvest rain water, engage in soil conservation and make use of climate information services.

Some describe the analytic elements of the community adaptation action planning process as an "eye opener" or "mind opener", which has given them a starting point and structure for identifying proactive solutions. Local community groups appear to have been mobilized, bolstered by the process, to act on climate change together, and proactively: women's groups jointly save for and purchase water tanks, goats, and more.

These successes are more pronounced in communities benefitting from strong leadership, better-connected locations and better education. In Kamarandi, for example, the local chief and his deputies picked up and drove the process assisted by community monitors – motivating people to participate, ensuring they turned up at meetings, explaining the overall process at every opportunity and supporting linkages with county level political actors.

Informed and anticipatory decision-making: In Embu – as in other sites ALP has worked in – community vulnerability analysis, adaptation action planning, and Participatory Scenario Planning complement each other well. The interplay between different elements and products of the CBA planning process is strengthening people's ability – in terms of both information access and skills – to make more forward-looking and anticipatory livelihood decisions. This can serve as the basis for a multiplier effect of incremental benefits observed in other sites where these processes have been underway for longer: people, over time, learn to apply a number of autonomous and externally supported adaptation strategies flexibly, in response to changing circumstances and forecasts. PSP has facilitated access to useable weather information and corresponding advice (in local language and directly relevant to local livelihoods), which are spread through barazas (community meetings), community monitors, by word of mouth, etc. For many, especially younger people, this learning is accelerated by the rapidly increasing access to information via mobile phones and data.

Community motivation and expectations: The success of participatory action planning, or indeed Community Adaptation Action Planning, is limited in areas of high poverty and vulnerability when the process is implemented without providing more immediate and tangible benefits. As a number one issue that makes the planning process challenging, community members and local stakeholders appear to be in agreement that it is hard to keep up motivation and momentum of collective planning and action if the initiative does not also entail some form of handout (e.g. seeds) or other material benefit. According to local leaders and extension officers, this is in part a problem of attitude and expectations – more specifically, a "project mindset" cultivated by previous initiatives whereby a project signifies "receiving things". However, the participation in time-intensive processes does present a sizeable opportunity cost, in particular for the poorest households whose members need to sell their labour for food or cash.

The benefits of investing time in such a process can be oblique, especially when it identifies adaptation strategies which could hugely improve the situation but require major investment – e.g. irrigation systems, access to piped water. Poorer households often cannot even afford the materials needed for basic adaptation strategies such as improved seeds, or installing tanks for water harvesting, which presents a problem for sustaining motivation in community adaptation action planning over time.

Community representation in the process: Representation is another challenge that comes with dilemmas common to participatory initiatives of this kind: CAAP facilitators in Embu spoke of difficulties identifying community representatives who were at once capable of taking the responsibilities that came with the various roles (from focus group respondents to community monitors and members of the executive committee for implementing the CAAP), likely to speak on behalf of the wider community, act in the wider community's interest, keen to be in such a position and popular enough. Also, it takes a considerable amount of time and insight to be able to identify such individuals. In one of the four sites, for example, facilitators realized only too late that the individuals forming the young women's focus group in the CAAP exercise had all married into the community recently, and thus were fairly unfamiliar with the place they were selected to speak on behalf of. Ultimately, local stakeholders agreed there are no perfect representatives – only appropriate compromises in light of local circumstances.

Capturing and acting on differential vulnerability: The CVCA and CAAP exercises provided for amplifying the voice of gender groups and generations, but they lacked in analysis of economic factors – the processes appear not to have resulted in adaptation action plans that are truly relevant to heavily resource constrained households.

Also, while Community Adaptation Action Planning process entails various initial steps revealing how different social groups are affected by climatic and livelihood trends, and who is most vulnerable and why, these nuances seem to disappear further down the line when the planning process focuses on identifying strategies. The first steps of action planning in the

four communities took place in four gender- and age-segregated groups (younger and older women and men), before one collective plan per community was agreed. However, this and a wealth ranking exercise revealing the community socio-economic make-up earlier in the process, do not seem sufficient to ensure that the realities and needs of the most vulnerable groups are reflected in the outcome; many of the chosen strategies require significant external input or a minimum of household assets. According to government partners at the county and sub-county levels, this gap between practical realities and proposed adaptation choices for very poor and vulnerable groups is even wider in the advisories resulting from Participatory Scenario Planning: the farming, livestock and other strategies recommended in these advisories are mostly relevant to households of moderate or higher wealth.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR ENSURING CONTINUITY AND SUSTAINING MOTIVATION FOR THE PLANNING PROCESS:

1. The comparative successes of some of Embu's communities in relation to others with Community Adaptation Action Planning indicate that social, human and institutional assets – leadership skills, education, trust, relationships, collaboration skills and mechanisms – can be more significant in determining livelihood outcomes than physical and financial assets. Therefore, it seems worth emphasizing and expanding on those elements of the CBA planning process that strengthen these social, institutional and human assets, even though their outcomes may be harder to measure than physical and financial ones.

2. In contexts of high poverty and vulnerability, balancing the trade-offs between responding to basic development challenges and adaptation to climate change is not about choosing one or the other, but about combining them. ALP, in its early stages, quickly realized that community-based adaptation was as much about processes as it required tangible incentives to participate in such processes. Particularly due to the food crisis in Niger, "quick win strategies", in other words direct handouts or inputs, were imperative. They seem instrumental for fueling motivation for the community to participate in the planning process to an extent that other, deeper but less tangible benefits can be achieved.

3. Community-based adaptation planning appears to have an ongoing communications problem in that it always requires clarification, at first, about what it is about and its value added. Leading with a name that puts the goal or value added of CBA at the center rather than CBA itself, could make a significant difference. If target populations and partners understand that it is, for example, about securing people's livelihoods in the face of change and uncertainty, or the wellbeing of people, animals and nature, there may be higher levels of tolerance for process.

4. Another possibility is making climate information, and specifically participatory scenario planning, the first entry point in the overall process, before proceeding to community adaptation action planning. PSP appears successful in engaging and motivating stakeholders and in communicating its value added despite the absence of direct, material handouts. The process is short in comparison to CAAPs, and once people witness, for example, the difference in yields climate information can make, they see the value added of the process. Learning from Niger suggest that adding an element of "live" climate information such as the use of rain gauges for decisions on planting is seen as useful; people are highly motivated to sustain this activity in the absence of external resources. These processes build decision-making and information processing capacities that can generate more fertile ground for adaptation planning.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ADAPTATION PLANS:

4. There are questions around whether individual CBA champions – such as the community monitors – or specifically mandated committees are better set up to lead on the implementation of CAAPs. In Embu, setting up new groups who need to meet regularly to implement plans – the executive committees for the implementation of a CAAPs – has been a challenge in terms of motivation and time commitment. In northern Ghana, CAAP implementation is overseen by community monitors who have received training in this, and this appears to have been more successful. In any case, the Embu experience has highlighted the importance of working with existing groups rather than creating new ones. This comes with trade-offs such as limited influence on representation, but has a higher chance of succeeding in the long run.

5. It would be useful to include guidance for a light-touch, periodic CAAP review process as, without it, there is a risk that the review either does not happen, becomes too laborious in repeating all the steps from the beginning, or groups simply copy the first plan without giving much thought to how circumstances may have changed. This guidance should include how to identify the right interval and forum for reviews so that these don't take up too many resources and make sense in relation to other planning processes. For Embu, it was suggested that the events disseminating PSP advisories could be an appropriate forum for CAAP reviews.

3.2 Creating the institutional conditions for adaptation planning and action

Stakeholder engagement and knowledge brokering: Based on feedback from community members and local partners, the overall process stood out for its strong engagement and empowerment of key stakeholders. Conducting the process as a multi-stakeholder effort, assigning key responsibilities to local government partners such as KMD, ASDSP and NDMA and inviting leaders such as MCAs and MPs along to important meetings has resulted in better relationships between the local administration and technical offices, and between these agencies and communities. This is difficult to measure in tangible ways, yet critical. The improved linkages have made information from the government more easily accessible to local farmers, livestock keepers, etc., and improved their knowledge on government agencies' roles and responsibilities.

PSP appears particularly useful in this regard as it seems to have elevated the status of the Kenya Meteorological Department in the planning process. While KMD was previously seen as an insignificant actor, its services are now seen as an important basis of planning, especially since agricultural officers appear to have witnessed increases in productivity as a result of the dissemination of PSP advisories in response to KMD's seasonal forecasts. They have ensured the dissemination of advisories to areas beyond the sites working with ALP (specifically, Tarafa, Mukima, Manyata, Gachoka, and Runyenjes).

Situating CAAP in relation to other planning processes: With climate change adaptation at its core, community adaptation action planning is in an awkward position as a process which is relevant across different sectors, but cannot be too "generalist" so as to remain practically feasible both in terms of stakeholder engagement and implementing the action plans. While the planning process in Embu – as in other locations ALP has been working in – focused on livelihoods relying on rain-fed agriculture and as such involved actors and actions closely related to these sectors, in theory, adaptation planning can have multiple areas of focus crossing any sector from education to health, transport or infrastructure. For practical reasons, however, there is a need to draw the line somewhere, and the question of how adaptation planning should be situated, practically, in relation to wider development planning is repeatedly subject to controversy and confusion.

This is perhaps part of the reason why, in Embu, there has not been a specific institutional "home" for CAAP within local government – for example, the County Integrated Development Plan in its 5-yearly iterations and annual operational review. There are various ways in which local plans and budgets are influenced – for example through the participation of local level functionaries in the CAAPs process, or through the strengthened relationships between communities and local technical services – but more is needed to close the loop between county and community level planning more systematically.

Challenges for the implementation of action plans: The development of CAAPs includes the allocation of responsibilities and timelines for their implementation. However, action on the strategies so far has been taking place in a more ad-hoc than as systematic way, both in terms of action at the community level and support by local government, and there are question marks (with some exceptions) as to how the implementation of those elements in the CAAPs that require substantial external support will be secured. There are a number of interrelated issues underpinning this challenge:

- **Lack of finance:** As mentioned before, not all households can afford implementing the strategies recommended by advisories and noted in the CAAPs, and projects that would bring substantial improvements such as dams and domestic water supply require significant external financial support.

- **Need for linkage with local development planning:** The CAAP approach, in theory, foresees the integration of CAAPs into local government planning such as, in this case, the County Integrated Development Plan. Some individual commitments have been made by local government officials to incorporate adaptation priorities into budgets and plans, but a more systemic integration of CAAPs into local planning is challenging in particular in the face of political change.

- **Lack of community capacity:** In the CAAP process, each community established an executive committee with the mandate to lead and oversee the implementation of the CAAPs. These committees, however, as well as the various local community-based organisations taking matters relating to particular adaptation strategies into their hands, lack skills in fundraising, leadership, advocacy, participatory monitoring and evaluation, and, crucially, time. Strong community leadership in particular has been instrumental for community organization, self-reliance and empowerment – including women's empowerment – but such leadership skills appear to be the exception from the norm.

- **Barriers for women's groups and youth:** Both women and young people are enjoying improvements in their economic situations due to a number of changing livelihood and social trends, but they continue to be under-represented in community leadership and local government, which may be a hindrance when it comes to gaining support for their priorities.

- **Provisions for a sustained planning effort:** As climate change adaptation is not a one-off exercise but an ongoing process, Community Adaptation Action Planning, too, requires continuity to deliver sustained successes. The question emerged how the CAAPs might best be reviewed in a time-efficient way whereby, rather than repeating the entire process, key elements are revisited and updated.

- **Need for clear ownership of the plans:** The planning process in Embu engaged a selected group of community members (48) per community to represent a large geographical area. These 48 were then further divided into gender groups (older and younger women and men, 12 each) and taken through the planning process, resulting in four group-specific action plans, which were eventually merged into one plan. There are questions as to whether the wider communities feel ownership over the final, common action plans, and who in the respective community feels responsible for them. The implementation of strategies identified in the CAAP is constrained by the limited dissemination through *barazas* and similar means. Especially facilitating such a process within a large jurisdiction, it is difficult to capture whether and how information and learning is communicated, by what can only ever be a small group of local representatives, to the wider population.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR ADAPTATION PLANS

1. Rather than following the CAAP process as a step-by-step template, the steps focusing on local government planning, systems and institutions for CBA (steps 6 and 7 in the practitioner brief, or figure 1 on page 5) can and should be initiated in conjunction with the community level planning exercise (steps 2-5), so that:

   a. The involvement of local government in the community level planning exercises happens with the explicit aim to strengthen institutional support and work toward the integration of CAAPs into local development planning.

   b. Community adaptation action planning is informed by related processes at the local government level, such as PSP, from the outset.

   c. There is enough time to strategically work around local planning cycles, election periods, etc.

   d. Institutional support for community adaptation strategies materializes at an earlier stage.

2. A comparative analysis of different strategies for integrating community adaptation action planning into local development planning in Ghana, Niger, Kenya and elsewhere, could help generate a menu of options and recommendations for future community adaptation action planning initiatives. Without such guidance, there appears to be a risk that this step is left too late and strategic opportunities are missed.

3. Local partners, especially government partners, appear to be confused about a very flexible initiative without a clear, pre-determined work plan. Including steps to clearly communicate the characteristics of, and explicitly involve local partners in, an ongoing learning process, could help further strengthening ownership by local partners.

3.3 "Behind the scenes" of adaptation planning: process facilitation and learning

Adaptation requires agility – the flexibility to change course: Adaptation, by definition, is ongoing learning – not just for the population adapting to climate change but also for those facilitating the process. The flexibility inherent in the design of ALP – the ability to not work on auto-pilot and change tack as needed, take emerging opportunities, or abandon elements that had less traction – has played a huge part in its successes. There was almost suspicion of a project without a clear, specific agenda, but the flexibility and lack of a detailed plan also helped in getting the communities and stakeholders on board.

A critical lesson on the subject of learning has been the realization that it can be drawn as much from successes as from mistakes. In ALP's experience, this ongoing learning been facilitated by the creation of spaces for reflection at regular intervals, both internally and between partners engaged in the programme, across different countries.

Indispensable skills in facilitating participatory processes: Participatory planning exercises such as CAAP require preparatory and continued fine-tuning of skills for participatory engagement and its attendant benefits for the overall process. ALP's approach to this has focused on learning by all participants, valuing diversity (through engaging gender lenses in analyzing local conditions), supporting groups to improve their internal and external interactions and honouring the importance of context.

For many, to learn these skills means to unlearn old habits. Because of their own professional experiences, the facilitation team comprising government technical officers in Embu were used to applying directive approaches when engaging communities, often resulting in limited input from community representatives. There was constant tension between providing a predictable and goal-oriented structure (the format that the field personnel were familiar and most comfortable with) and allowing sufficient flexibility and space for creative innovation and the pursuit of unexpected avenues and activities.

The trade-off between using staff capacity and the capacity of externally hired help in conducting CVCAs: Running a process such as CVCA – which is meant to be participatory and the beginning of a long term learning process of deepening the understanding of the local context – with temporarily hired enumerators is a tall order. These temporary helpers typically have a tendency to be focused on templates, using the field guides like a survey questionnaire, and struggling to recognize and capture, in focus group discussions, the most relevant content in comprehensible form for those using the content further down the line. This is a challenge shared by many participatory inquiries across sectors, as the cost of training and deploying staff is much higher than hiring, for example, external enumerators as was the case in Embu.

Flexible learning approach vs. stakeholder expectations: Community-based Adaptation Action Planning in Embu has been implemented in the context of a rather emergent, flexible learning programme which takes a "learning-by-doing" approach and, as such, often changes tack when circumstances demand it. While this agility is an asset, in particular in dealing with the new and uncertain business of adapting to climate change, it has also been a challenge for local partners in Embu who, for their own planning purposes, may wish for more predictability in form of more concrete plans at an earlier stage. Agility in responding to changing circumstances risks to be seen as a lack of transparency.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP IN ADAPTATION PLANNING WITH COMMUNITIES

1. The facilitating team's capacity needs to be built as necessary in the following areas:
    a. facilitation
    b. social learning
    c. collaborative decision-making and co-development of decisions and approaches
    d. fostering representation and voice, curiosity and interest – especially to learn
    e. understanding underlying causes and dynamics
    f. respect for local knowledge, and
    g. a focus on community and local ownership and systems rather than implementing project activities.
2. The facilitation team also needs to be set up with attention to the "side effects" that team composition can have on relationships: e.g. in the Embu experience, intra-departmental grouping created better team working; inter-departmental grouping created better partnership working and understanding of complexity; while direct line management relationships occasionally complicated issues and needed to be carefully negotiated or avoided altogether.
3. Regular times and spaces for reflection should be created, both internally and between partners.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING THE PARTICIPATORY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING PROCESSES

1. With regard to the challenge of achieving more depth in the analytical process underpinning the planning exercises, ideas included i) reducing the scope/ number of questions and ii) conducting the analytical process over a longer period of time rather than as a one-off exercise.

2. It is important to be clear, from the beginning, about who is going to do what, how and why. Setting clear parameters from the outset is as critical as being prepared to change them – balancing clarity and structure with an ability to adapt and respond.

3. These ground rules should guide the CAAPs process and include clarity of objectives, how community expectations will be managed, how the facilitators present themselves to the community, rules for continuous reflection and review of the tools and methods, rules for the involvement of external resource people in group processes, rules for meetings, sharing, confidentiality, language and process style.

4. These terms should then be revisited throughout the process. This is because outcomes from the group processes could easily be influenced heavily by individual facilitator biases (technical, cultural, attitudinal) and knowledge of the adaptation landscape.

5. In introducing the process to a community, attention needs to be paid to whether all partners are conveying the same, or complimentary (rather than conflicting) messages in an appropriate way.

6. Field guides for CAAP could include guidance and questions to prompt analytic thinking, especially with a view to connecting information gained from the use of different participatory mapping tools. Capacity-building for facilitators and community representatives should emphasize these skills. This could, for example, help ensure that information gained from a wealth ranking exercise informs further analytic steps and, ultimately, the planning exercises.

7. There is a need to experiment with, and compare, different strategies for selecting focus group discussion participants and other individuals in representative roles, as this seems to be a recurring challenge with a lack of satisfactory answers.

8. The process should take into account the participants' learning styles and try to mix activities that are "familiar" and those that are more daring, unusual or creative – the learning was that it can be worth pushing people to do something different.

9. The quality of both Participatory Scenario Planning and the CAAP exercises, could be increased by investing in planning the communication and dissemination of outcomes in a more systematic way: clearly identifying the sources, channels, use and users, and feedback channels for key messages – especially PSP advisories – in advance.

10. Institutional analysis requires strong guidance (including questions) to ensure that the analysis informs the planning process in a useful way and, in particular, so that it can inform efforts to integrate the CAAPs into local development planning. Based on existing guidance, the product of institutional analysis often remains limited to lists of organisations and their roles – which do not help communities understand and strategise on the politics involved in getting support for their adaptation priorities.

11. Time to pause and reflect on what's happening within the group of facilitators is critical – especially to become aware of and discuss differences in technical orientation, position, style or perspective, rather than switching focus (on the approaches to be applied) or skimming over potential areas of conflict. Rich lessons can be learnt from working with diversity.

12. Consider a symbolic for the ending of the process, which frees up energy for going forward with new things, and identifies what might be regarded as closed or completed, and what needs to be continued.

3. FINAL REFLECTIONS

Sheri Lim/CARE, 2015.

The experiences from Embu County documented in this report provide a practical demonstration of the benefits of the community-based adaptation process itself – from its analytic to its more planning-oriented elements – beyond identifying specific adaptation strategies, and indeed beyond community-based adaptation to climate change: Efforts to tweak and deepen approaches to adaptation planning with communities can make meaningful contributions toward wider the bigger and wider goals of improving the livelihoods and wellbeing of people living in poverty, and strengthening relevant governance systems to that end.

These qualities – outcomes of adaptation planning whose benefits are crucial for but not limited to community-based adaptation – include, for example:

- increasing awareness, among populations affected by poverty, environmental degradation and climate change, of the vicious cycles between them and specific livelihood strategies
- confidence and know-how among poor and climate-vulnerable populations, not only in which strategies to apply to improve climate resilience, but also in their own ability to initiate and organize action to disrupt these vicious cycles
- the slow but steady erosion of gender stereotypes and of long-standing gender-related barriers to the advancement of community empowerment and livelihoods
- improved governance and accountability as a result of stronger, more trusting relationships between citizens institutions, and increased demand for their services
- stronger anticipatory decision-making and planning skills among local institutions and the wider population
- improved the exchange, and co-creation, of knowledge and information in a way that makes better use of scientific data as well as locally held knowledge, and is relevant to the end users

By the same token, some of the key difficulties encountered in community adaptation and action planning have relevance to wider development efforts and, as such, efforts to resolve them will have wider benefits:

- managing community expectations and sustaining motivation in “process-heavy” initiatives especially in contexts with “residues” from previous projects, where people’s expectations for immediate, material benefits are heightened

- Locating and securing community ownership of a planning process which is conducted with a limited number of representatives, and whose benefits can be oblique until significant community efforts have been invested.
- the tightrope walk, familiar to all those working on participatory processes, between deep engagement, appropriate representation of diverse demographics and time and resource efficiency in the process
- the challenge of making a meaningful difference for people living in extreme poverty and/ or people who are socially excluded
- the challenge of finding, building, retaining and continuously deepening the capacity to facilitate such processes, in contexts where project staff and partners are chronically engulfed in a heavy workload of reporting, planning and implementing, and under time pressure.

The learning from Embu has highlighted the continued challenge of situating community-based adaptation in relation to other areas and sectors in development. Only a decade ago, little was known on what adapting to climate change at the local level means in practice. Today, practitioners are faced with a multitude of frameworks, templates, guidance pieces that have been emerging around community-based adaptation, resilience building and adaptive capacity strengthening. The relationship between these frameworks on the one hand and planning and policy processes at various levels on the other is often complex. The question arises, time and again, what the best way of framing and acting on climate change adaptation looks like at the local level: It is better to create a standalone adaptation planning process that provides enough space for the intricacies of dealing with climate change, and honours the relevance of climate change across a wide range of issues? Or is it better to avoid, creating new structures outside existing sectoral and wider development planning processes, and therefore integrate adaptation planning directly into, e.g. planning for agriculture, livestock and the environment?

Finally, ALP staff and partners in Embu also provided the insight that learning itself is not easy – it has been difficult to make space and time for real learning, which crucially involves acknowledging mistakes and difficulties, even for a programme like ALP which has more flexibility than most others. At the end of the day, ALP teams, too, follow a logical framework with outputs and a heavy reporting load, and they barely find time to document the process well, let alone reflect on their learning. In times when the flexibility of development programming seems to be reducing rather than expanding, it is all the more important to maintain that adaptation, by definition, is a learning process and, to succeed, must supported as such.

FURTHER READING

CARE/ALP (2012) Decision-making for climate-resilient livelihoods and risk reduction: A participatory scenario planning approach.
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ALP_PSP_EN.pdf

CARE/ALP (2013) Community-based Adaptation: "Community-based Adaptation: An empowering approach for climate resilient development and risk reduction"
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CARE/ALP (2014) Facing Uncertainty. The value of climate information for adaptation, risk reduction and resilience in Africa.
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/C_Comms_Brief.pdf

CARE/ALP (2015) Practitioner Brief 1: Adaptation Planning with Communities.
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CBA_Planning_Brief.pdf

CARE/ALP (2015) Practitioner Brief 2: Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and adaptation to climate change:
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/CBA-and-DRR-Brief.pdf

CARE/ALP (2015) Practitioner Brief 3: Understanding Gender in Community Based Adaptation
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/CBA-and-Gender-Analysis-Brief.pdf

CARE/ALP (2015) Practitioner Brief 4: Strengthening Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Adaptive-Capacity-Practitioner-Brief.pdf

CARE/ALP (2015) Adaptation Strategies Compendium
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Adaptation-Strategies-Compendium.pdf

CARE/ALP (2016) Adaptation Good Practice Checklist
http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Adaptation-Good-Practice-Checklist.pdf

The Adaptation Learning Program (ALP) for Africa aims to increase the capacity of vulnerable households in sub-Saharan Africa to adapt to climate change and climate variability. Since 2010, ALP has been working with communities, government institutions and civil society organisations in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Niger to ensure that community-based adaptation approaches and actions are integrated in development policies and programmes. This is achieved through the demonstration and dissemination of innovative approaches for CBA, supported by practical tools, methodologies and evidence of impact. ALP is also working to create an enabling environment for CBA by working directly with local and national governments and with civil society to influence national and international policy frameworks and financing mechanisms for adaptation.

The programme is implemented by CARE International with financial support from 2010 to 2015 from UK Aid from the Department for International Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Austrian Development Cooperation

Contact us

Adaptation Learning Programme
CARE International
P.O Box 2039 - 00202 KNH, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 2807000 /730 113 000
alp@careclimatechange.org

www.careclimatechange.org

ALP is supported by

UKaid from the Department for International Development

FORMIN.FINLAND.FI
MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

WITH FUNDING FROM
AUSTRIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Danida