CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN GHANA:

Strategies, Initiatives and Practices

Briefing

2nd Stakeholder/Policy Engagement Meeting

Central Hotel, Accra, Ghana

Hybrid-style Event

9th February, 2023

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BACKGROUND

The changing nature of Ghana's climate and its effects on livelihoods, health, food security and economic development have been well documented. Effects of these impacts on local communities and their livelihoods include lower crop yields and crop productivity leading to lower income, destruction of forests and natural resources, reduction in fish stocks, water scarcity among effects.
Locally-led climate adaptation initiatives are increasingly being recognized as strategies to effectively and sustainably address these challenges.

This stakeholder engagement meeting was organized by the Africa Policy Research Institute (APRI) in collaboration with the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC) in the context of the 'Climate Change Adaptation in Ghana: Strategies, Initiatives, and Practices Project', which aims to understand the status, challenges and opportunities of climate change adaptation in Ghana with a particular emphasis on locally-led adaptation.

The event attracted a diverse audience, including senior representatives from a range of institutions and organizations such as the NDPC, MESTI, EPA, MoF, NADMO, MoH, Department of Gender, KASA Initiative, Climate Action Network of Ghana, Arocha Ghana, Greener Impact, Abibiman Foundation and Strategic Youth Network for Development as well as from civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and the private sector.

EVENT

AGENDA

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
8:30am - 9:15am	Arrival of Participants / Registration	Afua Asomani (GCIC) Richard Tetteh (APRI)
9:15am	Welcome and Introductions	Executive Director, Ghana Climate Innovation Centre
9:45am	Purpose of event and overview of locally-led adaptation project	Dr Grace Mbugu, Africa Policy Research Institute, Berlin
10:00am	Presentation 1: Key Takeaways from COP27 and Ghana's Progress, Challenges, gaps and opportunities for deepening locally-led adaptation	Dr. Daniel Tutu Benefor, Environmental Protection Agency/Climate Change Unit
11:15am	Group photo and snack break	All participants
11:45am - 1:45pm	Presentation 2: Highlights and lessons from cases of locally-led adaptation research	Dr. Albert Arhin, KNUST/APRI
1:45pm - 2:20pm	Group activity and presentations	Richard Tetteh
2:20pm - 2:30pm	Next steps and wrap-up	Dramani Bukari Rukayatu Sanusi
2:30pm	Lunch break and departure	

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

The workshop provided updates on the recently completed COP27 held in Egypt and presented preliminary observations on ongoing research on locally-led adaptation initiatives undertaken across different ecological zones in Ghana. The workshop further highlighted how communities and different actors are mobilizing to respond to the impacts of climate change and tease out some lessons for deepening locally-led adaptation.

Dr Daniel Tutu Benefor, the Acting Director of the Climate Change Unit of the Environmental Protection Agency, shared highlights and key takeaways from the recently held climate change conference in Egypt (COP27) and their implications for Ghana's progress towards advancing locally-led climate change adaptation in Ghana. He noted that some of the national priorities for adaptation include reducing vulnerability, building resilience infrastructure, strengthening early warning systems and promoting livelihood opportunities for the youth and women in climate-vulnerable agriculture landscapes and food systems.

Dr. Grace Mbungu, the Head of the Climate Change Program at the Africa Policy Research Institute (APRI), stressed that locally-led adaptation empowers local stakeholders and gives communities a voice in decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihoods for greater impact. She further stated that "local communities that are at the frontline of climate change impacts are resourceful, capable, have a deep understanding of their own complexities and are always innovating to respond to climate change in unique ways. They often just need funding, decision-making spaces or other support to deliver their own effective adaptive solutions".

Dr Albert Arhin, a research fellow at APRI and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, presented preliminary results of ongoing research and engagement with national stakeholders and local communities across the Northern and Middle belt and the coastal ecological zones. He showed that communities are actively participating in different actions to adapt to the changing climate and its impact on their lives and livelihoods —but not without challenges. He noted that climate-smart agriculture, community-based conservation actions, community-led irrigation systems, use of energy-efficient cooking stoves, recycling of waste and local home elevation are a few of the strategies exhibited by communities to respond to different impacts of climate change on their livelihoods. He stressed, however, that districts and communities do not receive enough support in designing and implementing climate change adaptation interventions and that communities have limited access to the resources (financial, human, knowledge etc) and agency needed to implement local innovative solutions effectively. He concluded that the examples from the research provide important bedrock for both central and local governments in Ghana allowing them to be deliberate in harnessing local knowledge, agency and power to support adaptation efforts.

CASE STUDIES: BACKGROUND

The case studies resulted from the first policy convening workshop organized by APRI in collaboration with the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC) in Accra on October 20, 2022 with a wide range of stakeholders operating in the climate change adaptation space. The discussions at the workshop coupled with a series of consultations with relevant stakeholders within Ghana's climate change adaptation space aided the selection of four cases representing different ecological zones in Ghana (Northern/Savannah/Middle Belt/Southern/Coastal), the different geographical categories (urban and rural) as well as unique needs associated with these categories (farming, waste management and coastal erosion or flooding).

CASE I

Adapting to climate change in dry-land areas: Strategies and challenges

This case tackles climate change adaptation actions among farming communities (Kpiri and Sor No.1) in the West Gonja District of the Savannah region of Ghana. These two communities are involved in a number of projects aimed at using available local resources to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

CASE II

Adaptation strategies to address coastal erosion and flooding in Ghana: Narratives and voices from local coastal communities

A quarter of Ghana's population live by the sea and recent evidence suggest that climate change is significantly amplifying coastal erosion, which has often led to the wiping out of entire communities. This case explores stories, struggles and challenges and the innovative ways residents in coastal areas, particularly Keta in the Volta region, are responding to the impacts of sea erosion.

CASE III

Locally-led recycling and waste reduction as an adaptation response to peri-urban flood disasters: Challenges, opportunities, and entry-points for scale-up

This case was conducted within the Ejisu and Asokore Mampong Districts in the Ashanti region to explore challenges, opportunities and entry points for the scale-up of locally-led waste management and recycling strategies in peri-urban areas that can inform Ghana's implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions.

CASE IV

Adapting to climate change in dryland areas: Further strategies and challenges

This case was conducted in the Upper East region as an extension of the first case to craft a local narrative on the understanding and awareness of the climate crisis and its impacts on communities in dryland areas.

CASE I

Adapting to climate change in dry-land areas: Strategies and Challenges

MOTIVATIONS

- Improve and diversify livelihood sources
- Improve income levels
- Restore degraded ecosystem
- Make charcoal and firewood production less attractive
- Improve food production

PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

- Use energy-saving stoves
- Produce biogas using cow dung for pito (local drink) brewing (Pilot stage)
- Promote tree planting
- Formulate local by-laws against logging and charcoal burning
- Introduce organic shea processing

CHALLENGES

- Inability to procure processing machines to enhance shea butter extraction.
- Inability to meet production levels due to unavailability of processing machines
- Degraded ecosystem
- Destruction of food crops by herds
- Inadequate support in designing and implementing locally appropriate climate change adaptation interventions
- Inadequate funding support for climate change adaptation-focused local NGOs to assist communities implement locally appropriate strategies to adapt to climate change
- Limited commitment and support from community leaders

CASE II

Adaptation strategies for coastal erosion and flooding: Strategies, challenges and constraints

MOTIVATIONS

- Enhancing livelihood sources and improve income levels
- Combating fear of death, fear of loss/destruction of properties and fear of household displacement

PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

- Building gabions and boulder revetments to prevent sea erosion
- Resettling households to nearby communities
- Transnational fishing
- Replanting mangroves
- Creating water passages (dual canals)
- Placing a ban on sand winning by local authorities
- Placing a ban on building along waterways

CHALLENGES

- Decrease in fish catch as a result of sea pollution
- Extinction of some fish species
- Moving deeper into the sea due to sea pollution,
- Reduced income
- Destruction of fishing equipment
- Storm surges and constant washing away of sea sand
- Destruction of trees (coconut trees) and mangroves along the coast

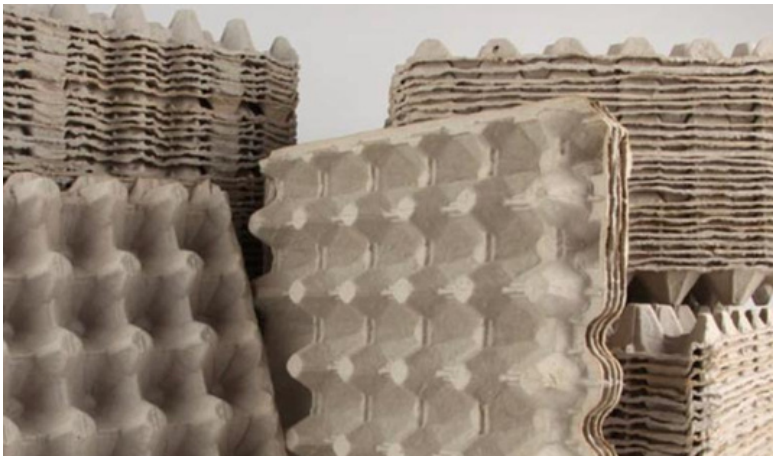
LIMITATIONS

- Inability of communities to mobilize adequate funds or source for external funding support
- Inadequate government support
- Non-adherence of by-laws against sand winning
- Loss of hope
- Superstitious beliefs in communities

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

CASE III

Locally-led recycling and waste reduction as an adaptation response to peri-urban flood disasters: Challenges, opportunities and entry-points for scale-up



MOTIVATIONS

- Improving waste management and health conditions of residents
- Supporting employment creation and minimizing impacts of flood on livelihoods

PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

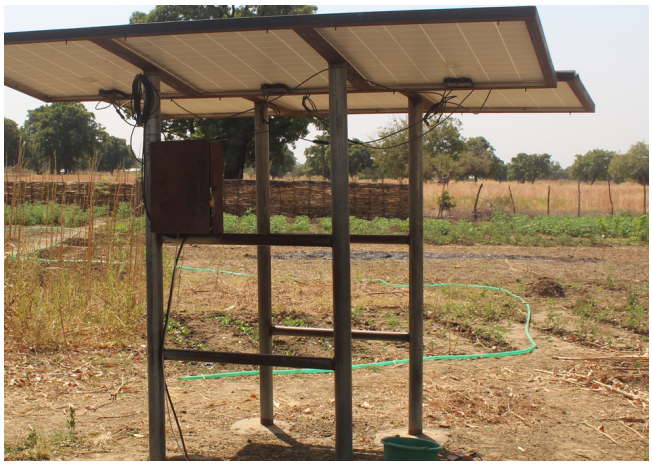
- Desilting of gutters and drainage systems regularly
- Filling flood-prone areas with excess soil to elevate grounds before building
- Social networking to get update on flood issues
- Collection and recycling of waste by social enterprises (e.g., Advanced Packaging). Firm recycles waste and turn it into paper crates

CHALLENGES

- Inadequate funds for scaling up
- Negative attitudes and behavior of local communities
- Machine breakdown

CASE IV

Adapting to climate change in dryland areas: Further strategies and challenges



MOTIVATIONS

- Improving and diversifying livelihood sources and income levels
- Restoring degraded ecosystem and improving food crop production

PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

- Adopting climate-smart agriculture
- Promoting tree planting
- Formulating local by-laws against logging and charcoal burning
- Adopting local irrigation services
- Producing and using organic manure

CHALLENGES

- Reduction in soil fertility of farmlands
- Inability to afford modernized irrigation system
- Destruction of food crops by herds

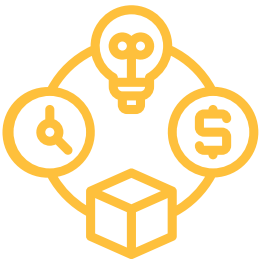
LIMITATIONS

- Lack of adequate support in designing and implementing locally appropriate climate change adaptation interventions
- Inadequate funding to support the implementation of locally appropriate adaptation
- Inadequate commitment of community leaders

LESSONS, GAPS, AND CHALLENGES IN ADAPTATION ACTIONS

Climate actions takes top-down approach in Ghana, which excludes important voices and ideas from decision making.

Districts and communities do not receive adequate support for the design and implementation of locally-appropriate climate change adaptation interventions.



Communities have limited access to the resources (financial, human, knowledge, etc), making it difficult to implement local innovative solutions effectively.

There is very limited spatial and population coverage of climate change adaptation projects funded by national and local governments.

There are multiple national, subnational, and sectoral strategies addressing climate change, but these structures are often not well aligned, resulting in limited coordination.

Climate finance inflows are not flowing enough to support adaptation efforts as compared to investments in mitigation programs. There is some sense of powerlessness in several of the communities.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Community adaptation practices provide a bedrock for further support. Prioritizing these practices can help to uncover a district-specific place-based understanding of the vulnerabilities and impacts faced by people and the entry point for identifying measures to build and strengthen their resilience.

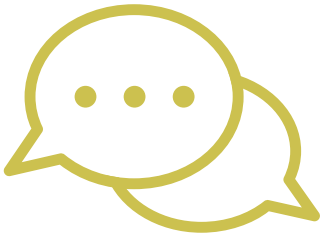
Locally-led adaptation provides opportunities for communities to take ownership of their own development and adaptation efforts. This ownership could lead to greater empowerment and improved governance and decision-making processes and allow communities to participate in developing adaptation strategies and policies.

Prioritizing locally-led climate adaptation gives local communities the power to influence adaptation efforts. Ghana's adaptation effort should, therefore, intentionally, build on community efforts, entrust finances and delegate authority and power to local communities to use resources to protect themselves and build their resilience.

There is the need for government to deepen its engagement with local communities and devolve some decision-making while supporting local institutions and communities to obtain direct access to finance and other resources that will enable them to take actions on the ground to support their resilience to the shocks of climate change.

There is the need for government to do more to channel accessible funding to local communities, organizations and innovative social enterprises to support communities to build their own adaptive capacities.

NEXT STEPS



Conversations on lessons learnt and entry point pathways to deepening locally-led adaptation process are ongoing .

Development of a national report and policy document on locally-led climate change adaptations

Launch of project report and policy document in Accra in early August 2023 in collaboration with the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre

Organization of a hybrid event in Germany to launch the synthesis report on climate change adaptation in West Africa (Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal) before or after COP28.

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