



Building programme synergies on climate and development: London dialogue

Coordination across climate change and development programmes is essential for achieving the scale of impact that these challenges demand. With this concern in mind, the Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAA) convened a dialogue among initiatives active in climate and development to explore how to strengthen synergies and collective action. This report covers highlights from the event, held on April 1st, 2015 at the Goodenough College in London, UK.



Participants discuss areas for collaboration in small groups

Background

There is an ever-growing range of donor-funded initiatives addressing different aspects of the climate-development nexus in the global South. All too often, these initiatives are designed and launched with insufficient attention to the overlaps they might have with other work that is unfolding in the same regions. As work gets underway it can become harder and harder to identify common entry points and to re-allocate resources for collaboration. However, the current focus on maximising value and impact within the funding agencies, as well as the growing urgency of mobilising action to address climate change vulnerability and impacts makes this kind of coordination essential.

With these concerns in mind, the Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAA) convened a half-day dialogue with a range of other initiatives, most of which are also wholly or partly funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). Many of these initiatives are either in early stages of their implementation, or beginning a new phase of programming, and many are working in closely overlapping areas – either geographical or thematic, making it a good opportunity to discuss collaboration. This report provides a very short summary of the discussions, emerging opportunities and plans for next steps.



Event objectives

- Learn more about the range of climate-related initiatives being undertaken by participants
- Identify areas of potential synergy between these initiatives that could represent opportunities for future collaboration
- Agree on how we can pursue further dialogue on these opportunities, or joint action that might follow from the meeting: between secretariats (info exchange, etc.); between implementing institutions (joint actions, joint needs, etc.); targeted themes and locations

Why collaborate? Understanding incentives and opportunities

As part of the initial introductions, participants were invited to describe what they hoped to gain from strategic collaborations, and what they thought they could offer to those with whom they might collaborate. Here is a sample of the key incentives for collaboration:

- Sharing lessons and knowledge
- Networking and expanding contacts in countries where we're working
- Strengthening the scientific basis of our work
- Linking up with other communities of practice & learning to work better as a community of practice

- Collaborating across sectors/scales
- Linking research findings to generate new insights
- Joining forces to achieve greater impact from our work
- Strategic influencing at international scales

Specific opportunities emerging from bilateral/small group exchanges

After plenary introductions, participating initiatives took part in a series of "speed dates" aimed at getting to know one another in greater detail. These conversations focused in on more focused opportunities for exchange or interaction, at times between two initiatives, and at other times between a number of groups. A sampling of these are listed below to illustrate the range of possibilities for engagement:

- Data sharing and joint access (including joint meta-data) (ASSAR)
- Hosting of post-doc students in partner organisations (PRISE + CIRCLE)
- Creating a funding window for joined up activities between programmes (e.g. knowledge sharing or joint research uptake initiatives)
- Working with CIRCLE on capacity enhancement, establishing linkages between research sites

Programmes represented

Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAA)

Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions (ASSAR)

DEltas, vulnerability and Climate Change: Migration and Adaptation (DECCMA)

Himalayan Adaptation, Water and Resilience (HI-AWARE) Research

Pathways to Resilience in Semi-Arid Economies (PRISE)

Climate Impacts Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement (CIRCLE)

Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN)

Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED)

CGIAR Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security program (CCAFS)

Urbanizing Deltas of the World

Cooperation in the Management of Climate Change (CCMCC)

Climate Knowledge Brokers Group (CKB)

*Future Climate for Africa (FCFA)**

*Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation programme (ESPA)**

**Programme introduced, but representatives unable to attend*

- Inform each other on programme-related activities (workshops, conferences, etc.) and invite representatives of other initiatives to take part
- CCAFS/DECCMA – compare scenarios in Bangladesh
- Potential for site-level collaboration between CCAFS and CIRCLE
- Collective work on building research uptake capacity and policy influence
- BRACED Nepal project and HI-AWARE could be linked up
- Urbanising Deltas of the World and CARIAA should link up for UDW meeting in Bangladesh on November 15th, 2015

Thinking about collective actions

Beyond bilateral actions between initiatives, however, there seems to be scope for more coordinated collaboration involving a number of them. Views on the scope of joint action that we should aim for varied, with many participants emphasising the need to be pragmatic about what is achievable among a set of busy initiatives working together without additional resourcing to undertake the activities. A spectrum of actions emerged ranging from basic information sharing about upcoming events and new research results, to data sharing, collaboration around specific themes or events, and coordinated collective actions in countries of shared focus. Proposals met with differing levels of consensus, but there seemed to be two areas where there appeared to be considerable consensus were:

1. Sharing information on upcoming events, partners in focus countries, key contacts, and technical outputs; and
2. Undertaking a joint engagement activity in countries of common strategic interest. The suggested initial activity was to engage with the Green Climate Fund around its national-level engagement activities in an aim to feed evidence into the planning process.



Geoff Barnard (CDKN & CKB), Mark New (ASSAR) and Emily Wilkinson (BRACED) discuss synergies between their initiatives

Next steps

To take the agreed-upon actions forward the group agreed to establish a smaller working group which would provide leadership on next steps. The working group will identify an appropriate platform for information sharing with the wider group, and will initiate steps toward the joint activity in the coming months. The working group consists of:

Amy Kirbyshire – Overseas Development Institute (CDKN)

Bernard Cantin – International Development Research Centre (CARIAA)

Blane Harvey – International Development Research Centre (CARIAA)

Corrine Lamain - Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) (CCMCC)

Dhanush Dinesh – CGIAR (CCAFS)

Ken DeSouza – UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Information on other events is available on the CARIAA website. CARIAA is funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The program aims to build the resilience of vulnerable populations and their livelihoods in three climate change hot spots in Africa and Asia.

cariaa@idrc.ca
www.idrc.ca/cariala
@CollabAdapt