



HAKIKAZI CATALYST

Knowledge
Action
Change



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OVERVIEW

IIED Climate Change Group

Project name:

Stronger voices

Project leader:

Sam Greene

Time frame:

2018–2020

Budget:

US\$500,000

Objective:

To develop participatory tools to enable women and young people to articulate their priorities for climate resilience, in order to respond effectively and in gender- and youth-transformative ways.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The 'Stronger Voices' project has developed community-based planning tools for local government, community members, cooperatives and civil society organisations to identify the climate priorities of marginalised groups and find solutions if these priorities are not being met. The tools take the form of a two or three-day participatory workshop conducted in local languages, taking participants through a step-by-step process that enables different groups to identify and articulate their concerns, understand how gender roles affect the communities' resilience and develop an action plan.

KEY LESSONS LEARNT & INNOVATIONS

- Donors must support community-based organisations who are already engaged in long-term dialogues with communities about gender transformative change, helping to integrate climate considerations into those conversations
- Funders and governments must ensure that extra funds are available for participatory gender-transformative processes that enable men, women

Every voice counts in a changing climate

How an inclusive planning tool can support equal, resilient livelihoods

Men, women and young people often have differing livelihoods because of cultural norms and traditional rules, and as a result they have different priorities for responding to climate change. The same rules often exclude them from community decision making and their distinctive priorities are missed. Achieving greater climate resilience for communities will depend on their perspectives being included and acted on.

Develop and test the tool

The **Stronger Voices** participatory learning tool is a two or three-day dialogue workshop, providing space for community representatives to articulate how to build equal, resilient livelihoods. In 2019, researchers tested the tool in five communities, using techniques including gender analysis and theories of change to understand to what extent resources are distributed fairly or unfairly, and how different people seek improved resilience.

The tool is simple, affordable and adaptable to each context. Pastoralist communities in Northern Tanzania have strongly entrenched gender roles. While men will travel great distances for long periods with livestock to maximise productivity, women — who have little control over household assets — are left unable to make critical decisions, undermining the community's resilience. During the workshops, women explained these challenges and in particular how water projects are planned and managed prevents them from investing in adaptation measures that could benefit everyone. They showed why government planners must include domestic access

points as well as livestock troughs, and how enabling women to access water without long queues would allow them to start businesses and generate income.

In Zanzibar the tool was trialled with three cooperatives that had previously benefited from investment in honey, seaweed and lime fruit production. Across all three groups, the young women were most often left out of decision making and had least control of resources. But the tool enabled them to share innovative ideas to overcome challenges. For example, young women pointed out that moving seaweed farming to deeper water (less affected by temperature change) excluded them because they cannot swim. Together, the cooperative identified solutions to such challenges, including investing in new skills and training for young girls so they could participate equally.

The process also highlighted misunderstandings around institutional decision making. Men thought women avoided regular meetings due to lack of interest but women explained how they needed advance warning of meetings to rearrange their care duties.

Testing the tool demonstrated potential for wider use and provided valuable lessons.

Embed the approach

Careful use of clear selection criteria in choosing participants avoids local biases and elite capture.

In contexts where climate and gender knowledge of both communities and government is low, practicality and affordability must supersede academic

and young people to clearly articulate their priorities

- Improving the governance of local resources and infrastructure can have a significant impact on both gender outcomes and resilience. Positive change can be triggered relatively inexpensively, using dialogue workshops and facilitation training.

PARTNERS' VIEW

“We have really left the girls behind. We need to reach out our hand to support them better.”

Shaurimoja Cooperative Society Chairperson, talking about young women beekeepers in Zanzibar

“Working closely with community is important to help them realize their potential and giving out the best in bringing change to the whole community. Everyone should be involved to ensure no one is left behind.”

Angela Kagashe, Monduli Women's Forum



Seaweed harvesting, Tanzania.

Credit: imke.sta via Flickr, CC BY-SA 2.0

purity; for example, avoiding complex theoretical frameworks. Instead, researchers have favoured a more practical, applied approach using the sustainable development pillars of ‘equity, ecology and economy’ to shape resilience options.

Collaboration between recognised actors such as IIED and local community organisations enabled creation of ‘non-traditional’ safe spaces where women and young people could address unequal cultural norms. The ensuing dialogues have challenged assumptions of those with power in the community, while reducing risk of repercussions.

Another strength of this tool is its ability to facilitate problem solving by the community itself, particularly women and young people, which results in solutions that are appropriate and likely to endure. It is also critical to engage men in the process, so they too are part of identifying and contributing to solutions. The challenge then is to support the community to act on their priorities through robust monitoring of solutions identified.

Work with challenges and opportunities

To use and learn from the tool at the local level, important skills are needed. The tool successfully identifies priorities, but stronger local capacity is needed to benefit fully from its participatory methods — good facilitators and note-takers are vital. It is costly in time and money for local actors. Funders must support local participatory tools to capture the priorities of men, women, girls and boys, or risk programmes that sustain the concerns of the powerful and leave the vulnerable further behind.

An unexpected insight from working with the tool has been that recognising the existential threat of climate change can be an entry point to explore generational change — by engaging male

community leaders in thinking about how gender transformation can build more secure and resilient livelihoods.

Improve local governance

Finally, in both Zanzibar and Tanzania, the governance of local resources or institutions kept emerging as a key contributor to resilience. Processes that decide how people are informed about meetings, or how water is allocated, are relatively cheap to change but have significant impacts on the rights and inclusion of marginalised groups.

Next steps

Drawing on these lessons, the project will:

- Build a stronger network of youth and women leaders who can use evidence generated by the tool in their advocacy
- Support government, community institutions and cooperatives to develop the skills to keep using the tool and demonstrate its effectiveness in shaping local investment
- Integrate the tool into future programmes for delivering climate finance, sharing it with interested districts in Tanzania and other countries seeking to enable gender-transformative local adaptation. The tool will be presented at the next Community-based Adaptation conference.



Knowledge Products

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) promotes sustainable development, linking local priorities to global challenges. We support some of the world's most vulnerable people to strengthen their voice in decision making.

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