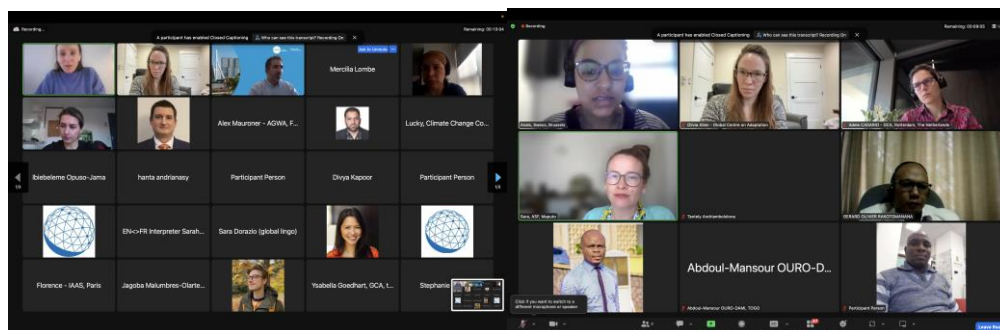


# Global Knowledge Exchange on Urban Climate Risk Assessment

By the Water Adaptation Community of the Global Center on Adaptation

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## About the Event

GCA's Climate Adaptation Accelerator (CAA) team and Water Adaptation Community (WAC) hosted an online Global Knowledge Exchange on Urban Climate Risk Assessment to share insights and peer learning to advance our collective knowledge and practices for urban climate risk assessment as a global community of practitioners. This event was held in partnership with the Resilient Cities Network which promoted the event and enlisted a breakout room moderator.

Speakers were from organizations involved in GCA's Rapid Climate Risk Assessments in Antananarivo and other consultants and experts working in partnership with GCA.

The key objectives of the event were:

- Enhance insights, through peer learning, into the benefits, challenges, and opportunities of Rapid Climate Risk Assessments.
- Strengthen knowledge of conducting climate risk assessments in cities where data is often scarce and there is a large informal sector.
- Increase awareness and knowledge of climate adaptation challenges and ambitions in five African cities.
- Increase insight on how cities are utilizing risk assessments to drive implementation of climate adaptation solutions locally.

After introducing climate risk assessments, and specifically GCA's Rapid Climate Risk Assessment process. The participants broke into three groups in breakout rooms for specific presentations and group discussions, a bilingual room on *"What is next after risk assessment? Implementing solutions in African cities"*. The other options were an English and a French room both discussing *"Assessing risk in informal areas, learnings from the field"*

[See the visual schedule, speaker bios, recording, presentation and resources here.](#)

## Outcomes

There were 102 participants at the ZOOM event (which was not broadcasted on social media). There were participants from Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Netherlands, Haiti, South Korea, Togo and India. There were six speakers, all from African cities (native locals or internationals living and working in African cities).

## Discussion Outcomes - Assessing informal settlements

### Messages and Insights for Policy Makers

1. Adaptation is needed now; flooding is a major and reoccurring issues for housing security in informal settlements in African cities. It is happening in Antananarivo and Maputo, among others.
2. Promote urbanization in places that are safe and that make sense in the context of the city's urban development ambitions. Avoid building in areas with high risks for climate hazards.
3. Improve the quality of infrastructures and of the built environment in existing informal settlements.
4. Including people who live in informal settlements in our procedures and planning is essential to better manage and continue to prepare for climate migration of rural people to urban areas.

5. Community engagement/collaboration processes also need to happen among the “government community” to link different levels. For example, it is important to define climate response strategies and better urban and physical planning. Often urban development is out of the control of the municipality in African cities, and the different authorities do not have the capacity to be highly organized. There is a need to define a master plan to coordinate all actors.
6. Interference in planning by different stakeholders or authorities, if occurring, creates great challenges. Finding common goals for better urban conditions can guide complicated partnerships as a bottom-line approach.

#### Emerging Insights for Practitioners

1. Micro-scale of intervention can be done on a neighborhood scale to make informal settlement neighborhoods more climate resilience (such as broadening streets, planting banana trees, digging holes and filling them with rocks as infiltration points, avoiding cement and working with earth to ensure infiltration over the complete surface of the road. These can be hands on for the community and low cost. These efforts were seen to improve other goals like gender equality and city-settlement relations.
2. It's important to talk to and train local inhabitants for ownership of developments, so they can keep maintaining and extending these infrastructures.
3. Stakeholder engagement processes should be well thought out, structured and organized to also benefit the community. Although a legal obligation, the engagement can be well done or much less well done. For example: Often people do not have time to participate in a formal way and it is much easier to go where people are and talk to people in an informal way.
4. Addressing political or other authority's interferences, this challenge requires balancing the situation. When working in challenging political partnerships, deciding if the benefits of a project outweigh the challenges of the partnership. Voicing what would be good decisions and ensuring the proper decision is known broadly across the community, can help address this challenge.
5. Working with the government, it's common for the partner organization to bring most of the project funding. Basic goals can be a good way to bring people together in times of disagreement.
6. Working with local NGOs, who have local experience and established connections with residents of informal settlements is very practical and supports local leadership. Community based organizations have a background that helps to approach the community. They work locally to implement projects and specific technical training for the community in collaboration with organizations from elsewhere.
7. Find hot spots with rapid climate risk assessments and focus on details from those outputs later.

#### Knowledge gaps discussed, for potential pilot projects/ or research opportunities

1. Large cities are having difficulty managing the influx of climate migration from the rural areas – tools, discussion, research and peer learning on this topic could be further explored.
2. Integrating local training and empowerment with adaptation efforts. For example we need to ensure the community has the capacity to participate in every step of the

process and we do e.g. community training on data collection, GPS, filling in questionnaires and how to use mark pin sheets and marking every household in the area. They gain expertise. We created a program where we took the community through processes where they attend a class and we discuss the issue of how you can mobilize and conduct a meeting, then they do it practically, doing it in practice, coming back to class and sharing experiences. Ask for areas they need improvement, and we train them that. We have seen great improvement in presentation, confidence and leadership. We also have peer-to-peer learning, where one group goes to another to share their learning, which is also a good tool. This is a great approach for building local capacity.

3. For the risk assessment processes, we need to show it is precise and what the limitations are.
4. Integrating community oriented open data portals or tools into risk assessment, as well as storytelling could be further explored as tools for improved community engagement.
5. Understanding the community is important and what we are asking from them. A technical person is not the right person to do that. We need a middle person for technical assessment.

## Discussion Outcomes - Implementation of assessment recommendations

### Messages and Insights for Policy Makers

1. Integrating CRAs with GHG work creates a more holistic climate management project including both mitigation and adaptation.
2. It is important to see the connections and nexuses of other community issues and climate change. For example: flooding affecting housing, especially in informal poor areas, also farming and therefore food security. Longer dry periods are also happening causing water quantity issues. This plus environmental contaminations affect drinking water quality and creates health implications.
3. Giving occupants documentation/title of their land plot addressing housing security and leads to more ownership of the plots, conducting education on building permits/licenses can also be done with this initiative.

### Emerging Insights for Practitioners

1. Data sources are a challenge but the movement to open data is helping
2. Social focused researchers', departments and organizations, have a good understanding about community dynamics, knowledge that can be used and applied in the climate adaptation implementation process
3. Issues of multi-level governing bodies political interest, stopping local policies and programs at the municipal level
4. Widening dirt roads creating more permeable surfaces helps to manage flooding, and at the same time creates more space for children in settlements to play, it also makes it easier for emergency services to access the communities and settlements had more space to have community and family events.

## Participant Survey Results

When asked what they liked most about the event, common answers included:

- The topic of discussion, engagement and opportunity to exchange experiences;
- That practical and diverse real-life experiences were shared;
- The open dialogue concept/ the layout and organization of the event.