



# WORKSTREAM OVERVIEW DOCUMENT

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## ADAPTATION RESEARCH ALLIANCE: EVIDENCE REVIEW & ANALYSIS

### 1) Introduction

The Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) is a global collaborative effort to catalyse increased investment and capacity for action-orientated research that supports effective adaptation to climate change – primarily in developing countries – at the scale and urgency demanded by science. The ARA aims to promote evidence-based solutions that best serve those most vulnerable to climate change. This requires an agile ecosystem of action research, with alignment among all influential actors in this nexus: action funders, research funders, policy-makers, beneficiaries on the frontlines of climate change, researchers and intermediaries.

The initial consultative phase which counted heavily upon the three ARA working groups (WG 1: Governance, WG 2: Resource Mobilization, WG 3:



Catalysing action research for high impact adaptation and resilience



Action Research), 6 key activity areas have emerged for the next phase of ARA development (box 1).

The following concept note outlines the approach for achieving the Key Activity Area (See box 1) in actualising the vision of the ARA in the run up to COP 26 and beyond. This document serves to provide a direction and insight as to the shape of this workstream, which we invite you to join and co-develop in close collaboration with the ARA Secretariat.

#### Box 1: ARA Key Activity Areas

1. Principles & membership campaigns
2. Tracking, sharing & learning
3. Evidence reviews – and analytical backstopping
4. Consultative processes for identifying research needs & opportunities
5. Co-creation space for network formation, coalition building

## 2) Overview & Objective(s)

### 2.1 What is the long-term vision for this Workstream?

The Evidence Review & Analysis Workstream is envisioned as a long-term core ARA activity area. Core activities planned for this work area include analytical back-stopping, assembling, reviewing and synthesising evidence to flesh out the broader vision of the ARA and more generally to support evidence-based adaptation actions. This will help support and inform what the ARA is advocating for, such as **establishing and validating the Principles for Action Research** (AR).

The activities that will be undertaken now (see section 1.2) in the lead up to COP 26, will help set us up for the longer-term agenda. For example, through

building on the initial iconic examples collection and analysis (Evidence Reviews 1 and 2), the ARA will **establish a knowledge portal for AR**, that will engage adaptation funders, actors and scholars. The continuous gathering of evidence will help in validating additional hypotheses, of relevance to the ARA community, and our work. The knowledge portal would showcase the examples of action research as they build-up and associated analysis and synthesis, drawing on linkages with member organisations.

## 2.2 What are the immediate next steps?

The Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) is undertaking a suite of evidence reviews in order to unearth the mechanisms in policy, funding and practice that lead to best practice for AR in the climate adaptation sector and to advocate for Action Research (AR) for adaptation.

Action research for adaptation and resilience occurs along a continuum to include initiatives, platforms, society-led projects and long-term, science-based programmes. Analysis across this spectrum of AR will shed light on which approaches and mechanisms for collaboration and knowledge co-production (research-to-practice and practice-to-policy) are most effective. With the aim of reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience at different scales, improving funding models and mechanisms that become embedded in the adaptation policies of nation states, the following 4 evidence reviews will collectively help advocate for an increased role and funding for AR in the adaptation and resilience arena.

1. **Iconic examples of Action Research, with strong elements of societal collaboration.** This review will identify and synthesise existing examples of radically collaborative AR, with a strong presence of civil society actors, and analyse the mechanism of collaboration within AR. It will provide a starting point for ER2 and include examples that contributed towards the ARA's session on Radical Collaboration at the CBA15 and Asia-Pacific Climate Week. This review will be completed by the Secretariat.
2. **Action Research initiatives in the adaptation & resilience sector.** AR initiatives include long-term projects run by CSOs as well as time-bound projects or programmes funded by action and research donors. They can also be longer-term platforms, but they need to have been self-identified as AR initiatives or fit within the selection criteria of AR projects, as well as include examples of radical collaboration. This review will build upon the contributions of the Working Group III of the ARA, and seek further contributions from the wider ARA network.

It will be completed by the ARA Secretariat, with consultation from interested ARA members.

3. **Policies for increasing investment in Action Research.** This evidence review will result in a policy brief and concept note that will be submitted at V20, outlining an argument for why nations at risk of climate shocks should invest 1% of their national GDP into Action Research. It will be undertaken in collaboration with ARA member, ICCCAD.
4. **Funding models and mechanisms for Action Research.** This evidence review will result in a working paper on funding models & mechanisms for AR. Analyses will evaluate the successes and challenges experienced for each model, from the funders' and recipients' perspectives. It will be undertaken in collaboration with ARA Steering Board member, UKRI.

The collaborative way in which the evidence reviews will be conducted, will strengthen relationships between actors, across the ARA membership. The learning and insights generated from the evidence reviews will be incorporated into the Consultative Processes underway, as well as the Co-Creation Workstream. The reviews will provide a strong case for the benefits of AR, strengthen opportunities for establishing relations with collaborating institutions, utilise the knowledge products to inform policy and/or practice, and guide future funding streams.

Previous studies that explore the role of various approaches to bridging the science-action divide<sup>1</sup>, (such as those which have informed part of the CLARE scoping studies) affirm the need to further and better evaluate the effectiveness of international development programmes for adaptation, in achieving societal impact. Such studies traverse various AR approaches, at different stages of engagement, with diverse stated aims. These evidence reviews will enhance the reach of previous studies by drawing on additional sectors, that intersect with the climate challenge, to produce innovative solutions (health, water, food) and reduce the vulnerability of the most affected populations.

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<sup>1</sup> Harvey et al (2021): Mobilizing climate information for decision-making in Africa: Contrasting user-centred and knowledge-centred approaches; LTS (2020): Enabling Climate Science Use to Better Support Resilience and Adaptation Practice

## a) Contribution to achieving outcomes in the ARA Theory of Change

The evidence reviews will highlight the different organisations, funders and researchers that have adopted AR within their project(s), with the definition of Action Research being drawn from the ARA principles. The evidence reviews will help identify enabling funding environments for AR, as well as impact in relation to collaborative methods of climate adaptation among vulnerable communities. Together, and along with a strategy for dissemination and consultation, they will raise the profile of the need and importance of AR in adaptation research and inform future national policy contexts and funding design for AR.

*This workstream will contribute towards 6 of the 6 ARA outcomes*

Outcome	Workstream contribution
1. Increased funding in developing countries for action-oriented research on adaptation and resilience	Evidence Review 3 will advocate for countries most vulnerable to climate change to allocate 1% of their GDP towards climate adaptation research, to enable locally lead, sustainable, and societally impactful research to promote their transition from vulnerable, to resilient, to prosperous nations.
2. Strengthened collaboration	The evidence reviews, through their design, would require engagements across different actors, across the ARA membership, and therefore strengthen collaboration during their production, and later, in their uptake, across different ARA activities. Thus, all 4 Evidence Reviews will contribute to improved and better-informed collaboration.
3. Capacity built at individual and institutional levels	Evidence Reviews 1 and 2 will feed into the outcome of building capacity at the individual and institutional level, through identifying collaborative practices and behaviours by multiple stakeholders that lead to evidence-informed societal impact. Likewise, evidence

	<p>review 4, will provide a deep dive into the specific funding mechanisms which enable long term sustainable solutions to be found. Together, this information will be made accessible to the public, as well as to those involved in the consultative processes and co-creation research spaces to build capacity at the individual and the institutional level.</p>
<p>4. Enhanced impact of research investments through better coordination, prioritisation and uptake</p>	<p>Evidence Review 4, will contribute towards the outcome of enhanced impact of research investments through better coordination, prioritisation and uptake. This outcome will be contributed towards, via an analysis of funding models utilised for action research programmes, with suggestions as to which funding models support the most meaningful and impactful AR initiatives to flourish.</p>
<p>5. Increased profile for action-oriented research for climate adaptation</p>	<p>Evidence Reviews 1 and 2, are designed to increase the profile for action-oriented research for climate adaptation, through providing examples of successful AR initiatives and their impacts and ensuring a wide consultation of the ARA network to ensure their relevance and raise their profile. Whilst Evidence Review 1 will provide a rough mapping of the landscape of 'iconic examples' of action research, Evidence Review 2 will increase the number of examples included further still, and explore these examples in more depth, identifying the mechanisms and processes that lead to successful AR initiatives. A strong dissemination plan for all Reviews will enable an increase in the profile of action-oriented research through awareness raising of existing, iconic projects.</p>
<p>6. A global multistakeholder coalition co-</p>	<p>The evidence reviews will be conducted in partnership with ICCCAD and UKRI NERC, as well as engage the wider ARA membership at</p>

developed by stakeholders	various points, to input into the evidence review direction and analyses.
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### 3) Activities

#### 3.1 Evidence Review 1: Iconic Examples of Radical Collaboration

This evidence review will include a range of long-term collaborative, society-led or community-based examples, as well as time-bound projects of climate adaptation and related sectors. The primary aim of this review is to source iconic examples of action research, such as which have been presented at conferences such as CBA-15 and Asia-Pacific Climate week. This review will include information on mechanisms that create an enabling environment for action research to be carried out successfully. The net will be cast wide to gather examples of adaptation funded by action funders such as The Zurich Flood Alliance, Plan International, Practical Action, and more, and these examples will feed into the second evidence review which will explore these programmes in more depth.

The definition of action research will be taken from the ARA concept note and principles; however, this review will cover the range of action research 'behaviours' and methods. Ideally, this review will identify:

- What is the landscape of iconic examples of radical collaboration exist in climate adaptation?
- What do we mean by 'iconic examples' of radical collaboration, what stakeholders are involved and how do they collaborate?

#### **Timeline: 2021**

3 months: July - August 2021

#### 3.2 Evidence Review 2: Action Research Initiatives: learning from successes, challenges and collaborative practices

This evidence review will build on the internal 'iconic example' evidence review and explore the available literature (academic and grey) to identify additional projects and programmes in the adaptation and resilience sector. The intention is to create an inventory of action-orientated research efforts, that can be published and shared with the wider ARA community, and

beyond, that will promote and enable transformative change in the research - action landscape.

The team will explore programmatic and institutional reasons for identifying as AR, in addition to clearly outlining the criteria for inclusion of AR programmes. Where evidence is not available online for the impact of such initiatives, virtual and or telephonic interviews will be conducted. Successes and challenges for achieving real world impact will be analysed. The scale of decision making, as well as stakeholders and methods of collaboration will be assessed, along-side the information on the amount, duration and source of funding available to enable such collaborations.

International programming as well as national projects will be included, within the landscape of AR programmes to review what already exists, funded by whom, in what sectors and where. As a result of the research synthesis, this evidence review will highlight what vehicles (projects, programmes and platforms) exist, and what new trends are emerging in the adaptation research space (and its overlaps with food, water and health sectors), in order to move away from traditional research paradigms.

The longer-term aim of this review is to assess whether definitive, systematic analysis can be generated by interrogating the inventory. These include high-level conclusions based upon meta-analysis, such as the observation of the principles in action, in order to gain support for the principles being campaigned for, such as transdisciplinarity, co-production and user-centred approaches, through high-impact AR. AR examples could also help illustrate or demonstrate how some of the principles may be put into practice (such as research for societal impact or gender and social inclusion).

### **Questions to be considered in this review:**

- How is AR for adaptation different from business-as-usual approaches?
- Which approaches are more or less successful for different actors?
- How is success measured? What type of indicators are used to measure impact?
- What kind of intermediate outcomes have AR approaches generated in climate adaptation and related sectors and at which scales?
- Are there commonalities between approaches that have led to impact with specific actors? If so, what are these practices, and what evidence is there for measuring their effectiveness across scales and sectors?
- What are the demonstrated benefits of AR for impact on the ground?
- What are the long-term approaches and initiatives that have been successful in fostering real world impact?

## **Timeline: 2021**

4 months: August - November 2021 (high-level output for COP26)

### **3.3 Evidence review 3: Policies for increasing investment in action research**

This evidence review will result in a policy brief, created by ICCCAD in collaboration with the ARA Secretariat, on the need for climate vulnerable countries to invest 1% of their national GDP towards AR. Following the policy brief, there may be an opportunity to use the information for a more in-depth review after achieving this objective.

The policy brief will include a summary of data on research funding provided by countries which are part of V20, an intergovernmental finance summit lead by economies systemically at risk to the global climate crisis. V20 is currently made up of 48 member states, and the finance ministers which make up its membership, meet regularly to identify and confirm key economic priorities of nations in relation to climate change. The precedent of V20 is that the world's most vulnerable countries are not 'waiting' to be invested in, but are actively making their countries more resilient themselves as well. Ensuring investments are from within nations themselves, is also a key tenet of activating the paradigm shift that is needed within research, to ensure that locally-led, evidence-informed AR is made possible.

The finance ministers of the V20 have indicated they are willing to receive a concept note, outlining this argument that V20 nations should invest 1% of their GDP into AR to enable national decision making that is more climate friendly. As a result, both the concept note and the policy brief will ideally promote national policy which supports investment for research, which will be followed with support from relevant institutions and movements as to how to operationalise this, and ensure that research builds capacity within communities and enables long term shifts in behaviours and practice.

#### **Questions to be considered in this review;**

- What percentage of national GDP's are V20 nations investing in research?
- Why should V20 nations invest 1% of their GDP in research?

## **Timeline: 2021**

2 months: Prepare draft 0 by mid-August, for completion in September 2021.

### **3.4 Evidence review 4: Funding models and mechanisms for action research**

This evidence review aims to highlight the impact and change which AR can have in transforming research, vulnerable communities and organizational structures. It also aims to focus on how we can better design various funding models to better support action research projects. As well as drawing on examples of funding models which are specifically geared towards funding action research, this review will explore the pros and cons of alternative funding models, which contain mechanisms that can be elongated and applied to action research. Whilst the focus of this review will be on successful funding mechanisms, examples of funding models which are not suitable due to time constraints etc. will also be included. Finally, the review will contain recommendations for a multiple model approach depending on the experience of the researchers being funded, as well as recommendations for funding models depending on whether the call is bilateral, or multi-lateral.

The key methods, models and systems which have been identified in the evidence review will be used to engage funders and organisations on which funding models can best support them to implement a successful action research initiative or project. This engagement will commence via an initial workshop to retrieve inputs into the insights which have been garnered in the evidence review. As a result, this review will provide organizations, researchers, funders and communities with examples such as the different funding models which can be adopted, systems in selecting research topics and efficient consulting methods with different stakeholders, to name a few.

- Which funding models would best support the investment in Action Research?
- Which funding models are best suited to the various programme models?
- Which consulting/collaborative methods can be best employed with various stakeholders to support the implementation of successful action research?
- What type of funding models can be adopted to ensure the impact of Action Research?

## **Timeline: 2021**

3 months: August - October 2021

### **4) Key Milestones**

- June 30th - ToRs completed
- August 1<sup>st</sup> – Finalisation of internal ER1
- August 15<sup>th</sup> - Evidence review 2, 3 and 4 execution
- October 30<sup>th</sup> - Evidence review finalisation
- November 1<sup>st</sup> - Evidence review circulation and dissemination

### **5) Resource Requirements**

To achieve the outputs and outcomes of this workstream, resources across the following categories will be required:

- Logistical support: In terms of supporting the set-up of consultative spaces for input into the evidence reviews.
- Network support: Support will be needed from ARA network and members to identify and connect the task force with significant and important organisations, programmes, funders and policy models that should not be missed out from the evidence reviews.
- Communications support: Resources to properly publicise and share the findings from the evidence reviews once they have been completed.
- Reviewing support: Support will be required for interested ARA partners to review evidence reviews within a tight timeframe, to ensure critical information and questions have been answered through the reviews.

### **6) Engagement Opportunities**

The ARA will engage with various organisations through discussions and meetings. Organisations, including funders, grassroots and research organisations will be identified and approached in discussions to offer input into the content of the evidence reviews. The task force roles and responsibilities identify how the ARA envision particular stakeholder groups might get involved.

#### **a) Task Force Role & Responsibilities**

The ARA Secretariat will be responsible for the creation and finalisation of evidence review 1 and 2, and will collaborate with ICCCAD and NERC to complete evidence reviews 3 and 4. The ARA Secretariat members responsible for the coordination and completion of the evidence reviews will be Sumetee Pahwa Gajjar, Ndoni Mccunu, Sydney Church and Julio Araujo.

Those interested in being part of the evidence review workstream will be invited to provide input into the evidence reviews at multiple points, including via a call out for iconic examples of Action Research and at the Adaptation Futures event on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Following the finalisation of the initial prototypes of the evidence reviews, they will be shared widely within the ARA network, and their development will include further workshops and engagement from the wider ARA network.

## b) Thematic Lead

Sumetee Pahwa Gajjar

## 7) Proposed Timeline

Task	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov COP 26
Execution	X	X	X	X	
Draft presentation for feedback			X	X	
Completion and presentation			X (ER 1; ER 3 for V20)	X ER's at Adaptation Futures	
Dissemination				X	X (All ERs)