

TRACKING REPORT FOR THE ARA TLS PROCESS

February 2023



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Cover image:

Credited to the Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) and Future Climate for Africa (FCFA).

Date: February 2023

Design:

Ink Design Publishing Solutions, Cape Town,
South Africa, www.inkdesign.co.za

Funders:

ARA funded by:



ARA Secretariat:

iiied International Institute
for Environment
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TRACKING REPORT FOR THE ARA TLS PROCESS

1 INTRODUCTION

Launched at COP26, the Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) is a global collaborative effort that seeks to mobilise increased investment and capacity for action-oriented research for effective adaptation to climate change. The Alliance wishes to engage effectively to deliver innovative, user-driven solutions for adaptation and resilience at all levels, from global to local. The ARA will deliver on its mission by conducting activities spanning three strategic functions. First, it will advocate globally for greater emphasis and investment in supporting action-oriented research that informs adaptation and resilience from local to global scales. Second, the ARA will provide a forum for better research-planning and cooperation, acting as a connector and an enabler for a variety of actors seeking to promote action-oriented research. Third, the ARA will create, operate and facilitate processes to deliver resources for action-oriented research in developing countries.

As such, cutting across these three functions of the ARA is a firm emphasis on operationalising the Adaptation Research for Impact Principles (box 1) and the outcomes of the ARA Theory of Change (box 2). Given that the ARA is an Alliance of 180+ organisations spread across 60+ countries, understanding how the work of this rich and diverse membership aligns with these Principles and outcomes is key. This is one credible way of determining whether the Alliance is achieving its objectives and working towards the goals that it has set for itself.

However, it is crucial to bear in mind that the ARA is an alliance predicated on voluntarism, i.e., members neither subscribe financially to the ARA nor are they provided any guaranteed funding in return for joining the ARA. The terms of membership are flexible and are oriented towards a non-compulsory commitment to the ARA's activities including learning and reflection. As such, a typical and rigid monitoring and evaluation approach that would gauge the progress that members are making towards key objectives would be misaligned with the nature of the ARA.

This is why the ARA, in consultation with its members, adopted the framing of 'tracking learning and sharing' as a light-touch approach for soliciting ARA member engagement in a sensemaking exercise to determine progress being made towards Principles and Outcomes. As part of this, the ARA Secretariat provided the tools, platforms and systems to enable members to track progress easily and effectively, without an unfeasible level of effort beyond what they were already investing in to monitor the progress of various initiatives being undertaken by their organisation.

Therefore, it is also critical to state upfront that the process described in the sections below is not focused on the achievement of specific targets, nor is it aimed at judging levels of performance by different ARA members. Instead, the sections that follow provide an opportunity to determine the degree to which the 'business as usual' activities of ARA members align with the Principles and the ARA Theory of Change (ToC) outcomes—and by extension, the mission of the Alliance. In this way, the findings provide a 'sense-check' of the degree to which the core tenets of the ARA resonate with its membership.

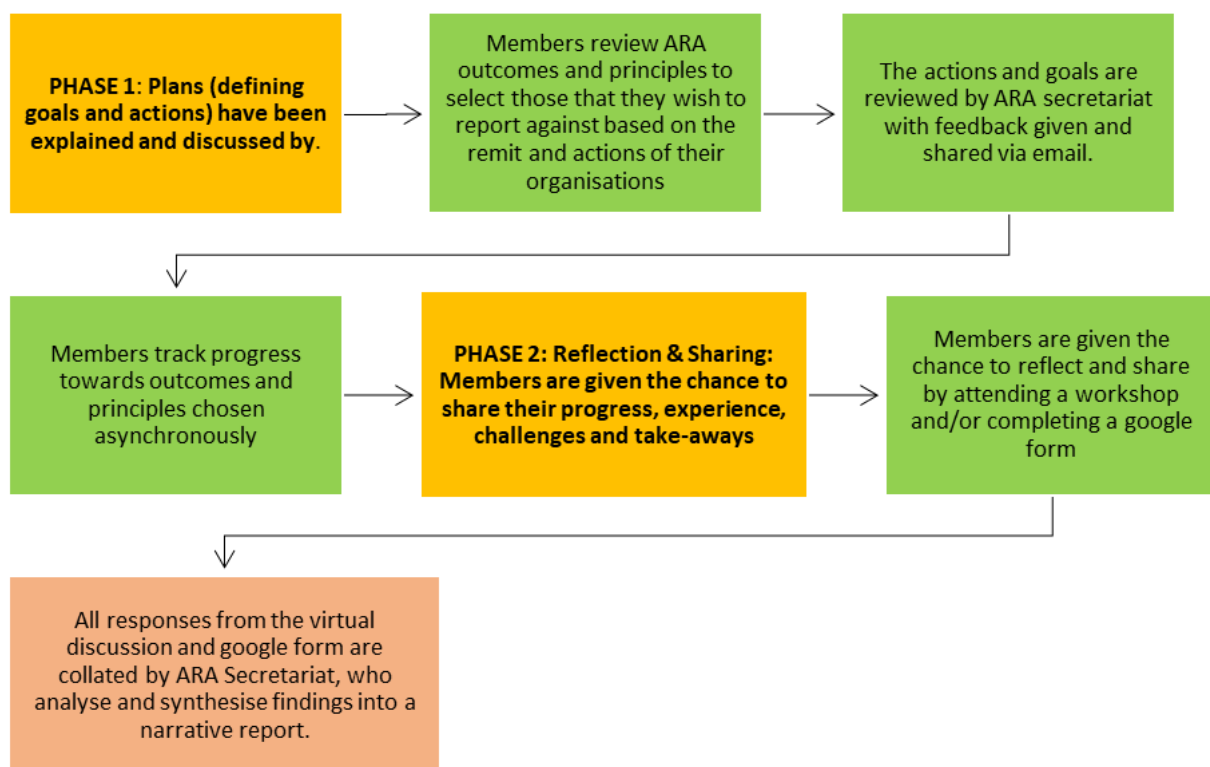
This report will explore how this process catalysed reflection and action for ARA members, nudging them to alter some ways of functioning. However, this is the first phase of the ARA's Tracking, Learning and Sharing (TLS) agenda that has been firmly focussed on 'baselining' existing levels of alignment. The next phase of activity should be oriented towards tracking how the ARA (as well as its Principles and outcomes) are influencing changes in the ways of functioning of member organisations.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 OVERVIEW

Throughout 2022, IIED (as part of the ARA Secretariat) guided the ARA members through a process to track how their activities aligned with ARA outcomes and Principles as part of the Alliance's Tracking, Learning and Sharing (TLS) initiative. All ARA members were invited to take part in the TLS process and participation was entirely voluntary. The process was split into two phases (or steps) with workshops held during the period of June 2022 to December 2022. In the first phase, ARA members came together to better understand the TLS tracking process, why it is important, and began deciding on how they would intend to contribute to the ARA's Theory of Change (ToC) outcomes and apply the action research for adaptation Principles by writing up "actions" and "goals" towards particular outcomes and Principles. In the second phase, members were given the opportunity to share their reflections, learning and progress through online discussions and a detailed questionnaire.

The below flowchart illustrates the process.



2.2 TLS TRACKING PROCESS IN MORE DETAIL

PHASE 1

The Design and Planning phase began in June 2022. During this phase, participants received a broad overview of the importance of the TLS and the activities planned under the “tracking” “learning” and “sharing” components, and were given the opportunity to begin considering which ToC outcomes and action research for adaptation Principles speak to the work of their organisation – allowing them to choose one or more outcomes they may aim to contribute to and/or one or more Principles they may aim to operationalise within their business-as-usual activities. Once participating organisations had chosen their outcome(s) and Principle(s), they were encouraged to define actions and goals for each.

- **Goal:** a goal is a change, linked to the Principle or outcome, that you want to see happen and that you can accomplish within the work that you and your organisation does.
- **Action:** once your goal is finalized, then you should try to define an action. An action is something that you or your organisation will do that can be seen as a mark of progress towards your goal.

In a TLS workshop held on 1 June 2022, participating organisations were given the space to review the Principles and outcomes, get clarity on the design and planning process, ask questions, go over examples, and maybe even jot down some ideas on an active jamboard.

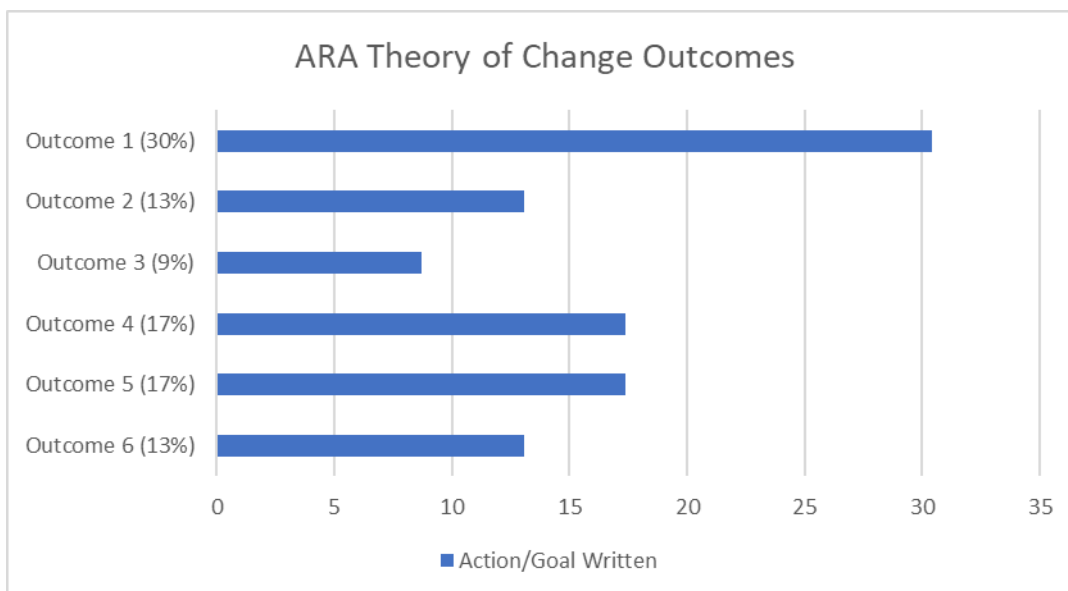
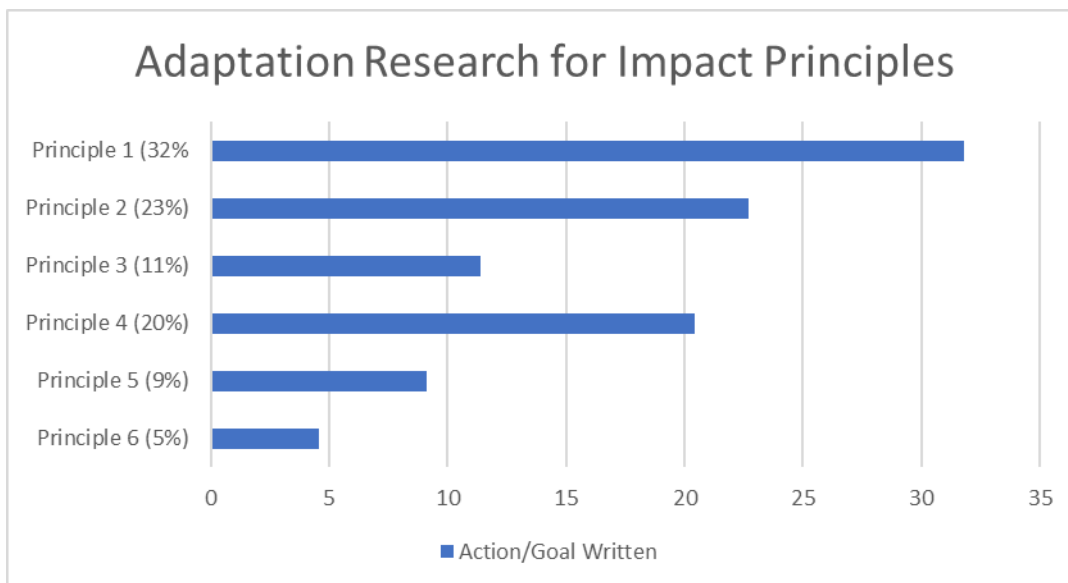
The team put the existing jamboard notes into a spreadsheet and shared this live document with participants to edit, amend and add to after the workshop. The team then reviewed the file and gave feedback and comments to participants on their goals and actions, participants were given the chance to review and amend their goal and action based on the feedback. Where possible the team pushed participants to ensure that their goals and actions related to the work that their organisation was doing and that their action was both tangible and detailed. Two examples are illustrated below.

Principle: Research is needs-driven, solutions-oriented and leads to a positive impact on the lives of those at risk from climate change		
Org.	Goal	Action
IDRC	Research for impact' established as one of the four key approaches within CLARE	Include research for impact as a selection criterion in calls to identify research projects, hire a team member responsible for this, and convene & support projects on this over time together with ARA

Principle: Research processes address structural inequities that lead to increased vulnerability and reduced adaptive capacity of those at risk.		
Org.	Goal	Action
UNU-EHS	Understanding the perspective of gender dynamics for extreme flooding, particularly for displaced and landless people	Sitting with women who have been displaced as well as relevant planning/ DRR policy makers and sharing stories. Using pathways approaches to visualise and map those stories, identifying points for intervention and trade-offs

A total of 31 organisations wrote 67 goals and actions against their selected Principles and outcomes. Some participants selected only one Principle or one outcome while others selected more than one. More actions and goals were written towards the Principles than the outcomes, with 44 and 23 respectively.

The distribution of Principles and outcomes that the participants responded to were as follows:



PHASE 2

In the Reflection and Sharing phase, members were invited to discuss and share their feedback and reflections on the Tracking process. Members were not expected to have made progress towards their actions or their goals and it was reiterated that this was just a chance for reflection, with guiding questions that were set out welcoming all levels of progress.

Due to the busy time period, members could share their reflections, learning and progress ‘in-person’ at a virtual workshop held on the 6th of October 2022 or by responding to an online survey. The survey asked questions around alignment, initiation, obstacles, challenges, and reflection. Members could also attend the workshop *and* respond to the survey.

3 FINDINGS

The findings below provide an overview of the manner in which the activities of respondents aligned with ARA goals and Principles.

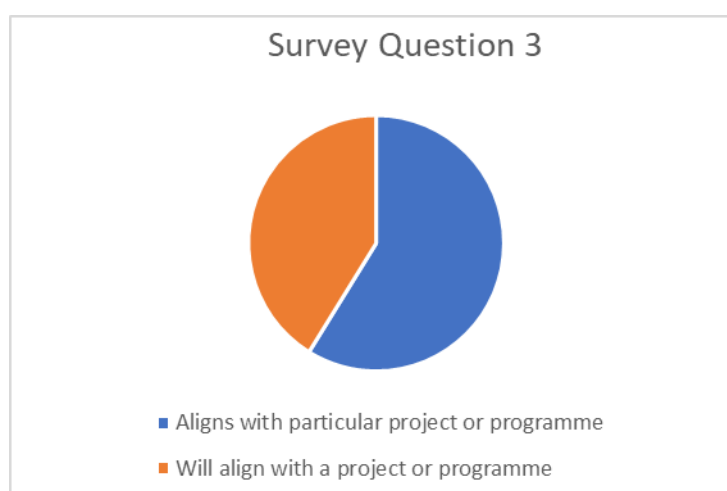
3.1 ALIGNMENT

IF YOU HAVE MADE PROGRESS: DID YOUR ACTION OR GOAL ALIGN WITH A PARTICULAR PROJECTS OR PROGRAMMES, IF SO WHICH ONES AND WHY? WAS IT EASIER TO ACHIEVE YOUR ACTION (AND MAYBE EVEN YOUR GOAL) THAN YOU FIRST ANTICIPATED, IF SO, HOW COME?

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET MADE PROGRESS: DO EXISTING OR UPCOMING PROJECTS OR PROGRAMMES, COME TO MIND WHEN CONSIDERING HOW TO PUSH FORWARD THIS ACTION? DO YOU BELIEVE IT WILL BE RELATIVELY EASY TO ACHIEVE YOUR ACTION (AND MAYBE EVEN YOUR GOAL), IF SO HOW COME?

The vast majority of respondents answered positively to this question. This means that the actions and goals were found to either align with specific projects or programmes that are existing/ongoing, or that they will have the opportunity to align with projects or programmes in the future. Approximately half of the respondents identified specific projects or programmes while the other half of the participants responded positively but did not identify specific projects or programmes, focusing more on organisational direction, planned activities or orientation. For example, PACSII, who wrote against Principle 5 (Research processes address structural inequities that lead to increased vulnerability and reduced adaptive capacity of those at risk) said:

- 1. We are beginning a partnership with a university architecture department. We've agreed that for our first set of engagements, our work our work will focus on integrating a climate action lens into the housing/ settlement building project that we are doing (for example, in the community preparation aspects which is the backbone of the participatory site mapping we conduct). This will provide an opportunity to pilot future site assessment tools that include a community-led vulnerability assessment component.*
- 2. We have another project centered on COVID-19 long-term recovery where we can dovetail the work on this, especially through capacity-building interventions with grassroots communities that can fill any knowledge/skill gap/misalignment*
- 3. One of our partners, an architecture org, will be implementing a project in 2023 on how urbanization results in differential climate-related vulnerabilities which target the same grassroots communities we work with; since the project aims to be co-produced, we can integrate the creation of a community-friendly vulnerability assessment tool into the project's activities.*



It is clear that some Principles and outcomes received more focus than others. This can be attributed to those Principles and outcomes aligning better with the work programmes of participating organisations. The Mahila Housing Trust noted that the ability to make progress on operationalising, for example, certain Principles, relied on whether the Principle could be incorporated into existing projects that aligned with the organisation's priorities.

This sentiment is echoed in the results of survey question 3 (see section 3.4), in which members were asked why they chose a particular Principle or outcome (see section 4) with the majority of members agreeing with the statement that they chose their Principle or outcome because it aligned with the work that their organisation is undertaking (see pie chart).

Given this, it is reasonable to assume that some ARA members, although having signed up to all six Principles and outcomes as part of their membership process, can in fact only operationalise/achieve a certain portion of these within a business-as-usual scenario. As IDRC mentioned, "it is fairly easy to agree to the outcomes and Principles in the abstract". Section 5 (reflection and analysis) discusses how the ARA might take this into consideration.

3.2 INITIATING ACTION

IF YOU HAVE MADE PROGRESS: WHAT ARE THE FIRST STEPS THAT YOU TOOK TO MAKE YOUR ACTION HAPPEN? HOW DID MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS YOUR GOAL OR ACTION FIT INTO BUSINESS-AS-USUAL FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET MADE PROGRESS: WHAT ARE THE FIRST STEPS THAT YOU BELIEVE NEED TO HAPPEN TO REALISE YOUR ACTION AND GOAL? HOW WILL ACHIEVING YOUR GOAL AND ACTION FIT INTO YOUR ORGANISATIONS BUSINESS-AS-USUAL WAY OF OPERATING?

Although ARA members responded to different ToC outcomes and Principles, synergies could be drawn between members' experiences and reflections on what needed particular attention when initiating action on the Principles and outcomes. These focus areas can be categorised as follows:

1. **Internal processes** – The majority of respondents spoke to the first steps involving internal processes. This referred to internal meetings and discussions oriented around (a) what achieving these actions/goals means for their organisation and how it can be approached (b) exploring new options and funding opportunities externally where this could be applied and (c) how the Principles or outcomes could be incorporated into existing projects.
2. **Partnerships** – Some respondents noted the importance of connecting with and networking with bilateral partners, like-minded institutions, and other ARA members to discuss opportunities. For example, one participant from DIIS wrote the following against Outcome 6 (strengthened collaboration across countries (South-South, South-North), disciplines and scales): *We have engaged close colleagues in existing bilateral partnerships to explore options for joint activities in relation to wider South-based/driven research networks. We think it has to develop organically and as a two-way process, so that seemed a good starting point*
3. **Stakeholder engagement** – A number of respondents spoke to the first steps orienting around engaging with local actors - specifically through consultative processes (for example focus groups and surveys) to better understand their needs and priorities. Some respondents noted the importance of then maintaining and building these relationships throughout the lifespan of the project. The focus on stakeholder engagement is understandable given the heavy emphasis by the Principles (and the outcomes) on consulting with, engaging with, and building the capacity of local actors and the end-users of adaptation projects.
4. **Early integration** – Some participants and respondents spoke to the realisation that achieving their goals or actions required them to make considerations early on in the project lifecycle—integrating, for example, the objectives of a particular Principle into the design phase of the project rather than at a later date such as implementation. This is particularly true of the Principles, which are not outcomes in and of themselves. One participant from the UNU-EHS, for example, looked to operationalise Principle 5 by better responding to and understanding the gender dynamics as part of a particular project they were undertaking on episodes of extreme flooding and displacement in Pakistan. The tracking process led them to reflect where and when within this specific project's life cycle, outcomes should have been considered and incorporated to ensure the Principle was operationalised.

3.3 OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES

IF YOU HAVE MADE PROGRESS: WHAT WERE THE OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING YOUR ACTION? IF YOU WERE ABLE TO OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES OR OBSTACLES, HOW DID YOU DO SO?

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET MADE PROGRESS: DO YOU FORESEE ANY OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES IN THE WAY OF YOU ACHIEVING YOUR ACTION, IF SO, WHAT ARE THEY? HOW DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO OVERCOME THESE OBSTACLES OR CHALLENGES?

Challenges for participating members took a variety of shapes and forms. While some obstacles and challenges were relevant to a particular project being undertaken, others were more generalised and were experienced by a number of participants. Challenges and obstacles were more often found to be related to resources and time, funder and donor restrictions, partnerships and internal advocacy and championing.

- 1. Resources and time** – This process has made it evident that operationalising the Principles and achieving the outcomes is not simply a matter of sensitising certain people or integrating related objectives into projects and programmes. Rather, the process requires finance, dedicated people, and adequate time. Given this, participating members emphasised real and ongoing challenges around resources and time. This includes the limited availability of resources and time both internally (within organisations themselves) and externally (within government, communities, end-users, local partners, or partner organisations). This alludes to real technical challenges that cannot be overcome just with awareness. In Principle 1, for example, research is “needs driven”. In Principle 2, research is “co-produced with users”. Operationalising these Principles thus requires engaging with end-users and undertaking collaborative processes, both of which can take a significant amount of time. As one respondent from GSMA put it, “...we were hoping to engage more with final end users of different technologies. This has proven more challenging due to cost and timelines”. Another participant noted that “in keeping to the Principles behind coproduction, our organisation tries work at the pace of the communities to ensure they can participate throughout the process, but external factors (stringent and tight project timelines) may make this difficult sometimes”. The prevalence of this challenge is not surprising. Structuring relational and collaborative processes that bring together a variety of stakeholders (spanning researchers, practitioners, and local communities) is complex and includes processes that take more time and money compared to more linear top-down processes. Investment is often needed for mapping key stakeholders, selecting, or devising tools and approaches for ensuring effective engagement, building trust through intermediaries or through the adoption of certain processes and in understanding local contexts and fostering deep partnerships. In some cases, teams both internally and externally are stretched thin, meaning that conflicting priorities can slow down timelines and pace. For example, one respondent from Co-water mentioned the difficulty in maintaining engagement from partners during busy periods such as COP27. Internally, limited staff can mean a lack of dedicated focal points and experts that are able to carry work forward. For example, outcomes 4 and 6 speak of capacity-building and strengthened collaboration respectively. Achieving these outcomes can call for dedicated teams and staff members that are able to focus on building and maintaining tools, relationships, and networks. Finally, political will can often be a crucial component in operationalising certain Principles or achieving certain outcomes, and many ARA members work with local and national governments (for example CPE, Action Aid Myanmar and MHT). These members spoke of challenges around sensitizing government agencies in favour of particular interventions, advocating the government to introduce policy changes, getting key government actors to accurately and actively push the climate change agenda, and getting the government to change their “language” or de-attach from particular processes and solutions. These processes take time and resources — they require building relationships, trust, and networks.
- 2. Funder and donor restrictions** – Funding and donor restrictions were brought up by a number of participants and respondents as challenges and obstacles in operationalising the Principles and achieving the outcomes. Respondents mentioned: (a) challenges with implementing bottom-up consultative processes due to the lack of long-term commitment from donors (b) the need to respond to competitive calls for funding in which research objectives and methodologies are pre-determined by the funder and (c) trying to work at the pace of the communities but also having to adhere to strict project timelines. It was also mentioned that calls for proposals tend to be inflexible and thus there is a need to reframe the problem and solution to fit the limited funding rather than the flexibility to fit the funding to the problem. It was also noted that although practitioner organisations may want to be “solutions-oriented” (Principle 1 and 3) and “co-producing” (Principle 2), they tend to be “solutions-driven” and thus “prescriptive” and that one of the reasons for this is the push from donors for solutions or their attachment to a particular type of solution.
- 3. Partnerships** – Many of the Principles and outcomes rely on forging partnerships. This can, for example, be

seen in outcomes and Principles that speak of co-production, capacity building, strengthening collaboration, profile building, and understanding the needs of end-users (more specifically, outcomes 1, 4 and 5, or Principles 2, 3 and 4). This could be with local communities, end-users, governments, or other organisations. While point 1 speaks to the challenges related to the time and resources required to build and maintain these relations, another challenge is around visibility and networking. More specifically, for some organisations, forging these partnerships might be hindered due to a lack of networking opportunities. For example, smaller practitioner organisations might find it difficult to forge partnerships with international institutions, implementing agencies, or large funders. As one participant put it, “[we] were less able to make progress on Principle 2, because for co-producing you need to have the right partners.”

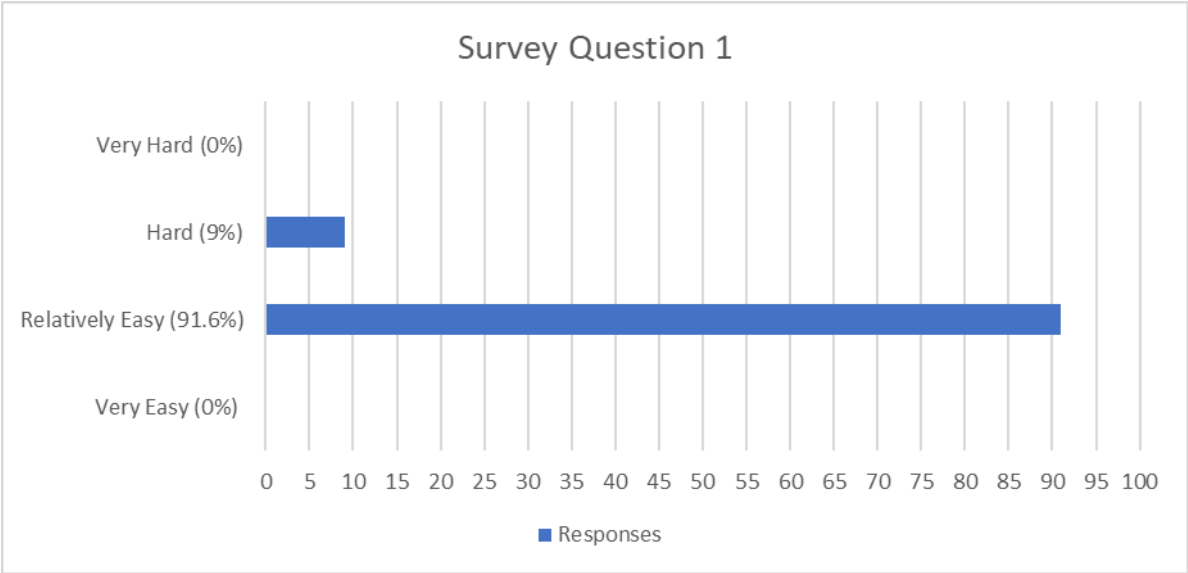
- 4. **Internal advocacy and championing** – A few participants and respondents mentioned challenges around the ‘lone champion’ issue. Although ARA members sign up as organisations, they are often represented by a particular individual in ARA processes and meetings. These individuals might face challenges such as a lack of leadership, coordination amongst teams, or convergent thinking regarding the operationalising of the Principles and achieving the outcomes. This can also make sense when operationalising the Principles and achieving the ToC outcomes necessitates challenging business-as-usual processes. Signing up to the Principles and outcomes in the abstract and attaching these to specific projects or programmes is easier than changing internal systems and processes which, as one participant put it, takes time, depends on the willingness of colleagues, and is influenced by the leveraging power any one individual may have.

3.4 SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Below are the responses from the survey questions. The Y axis speaks to the response options while the X axis gives the responses in percentage.

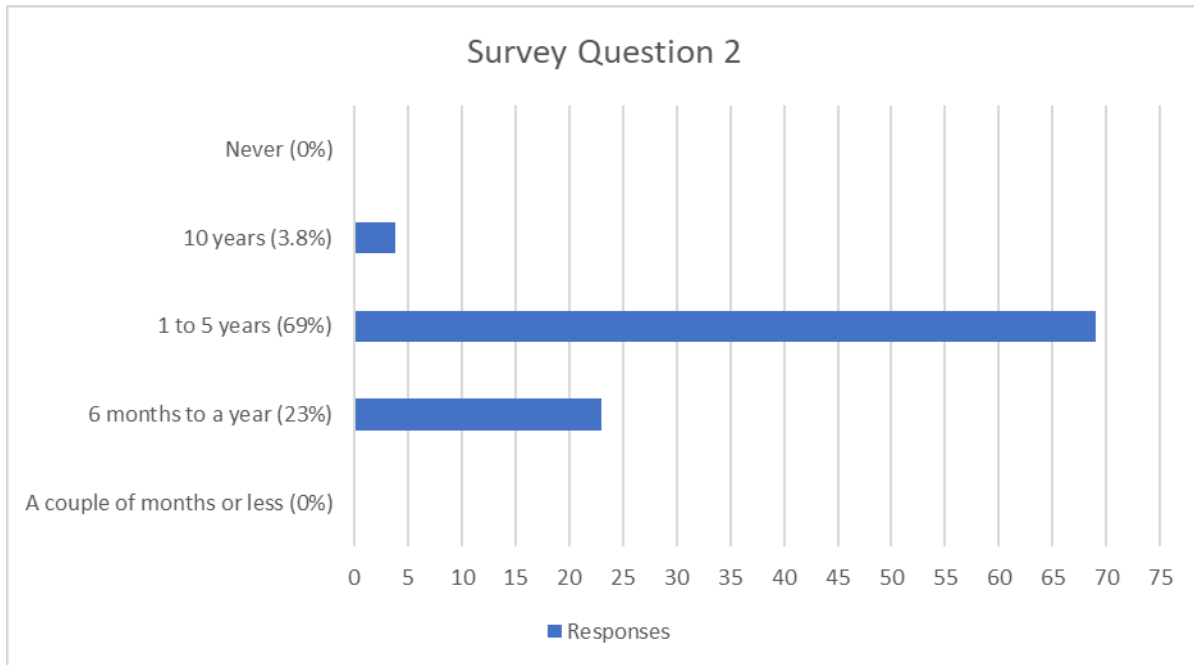
Question 1: Was it difficult for you to come up with an action or goal related to a principle or outcome?

(Please select 1 of the following: Very Easy, Relatively Easy, Hard, Very Hard, other).



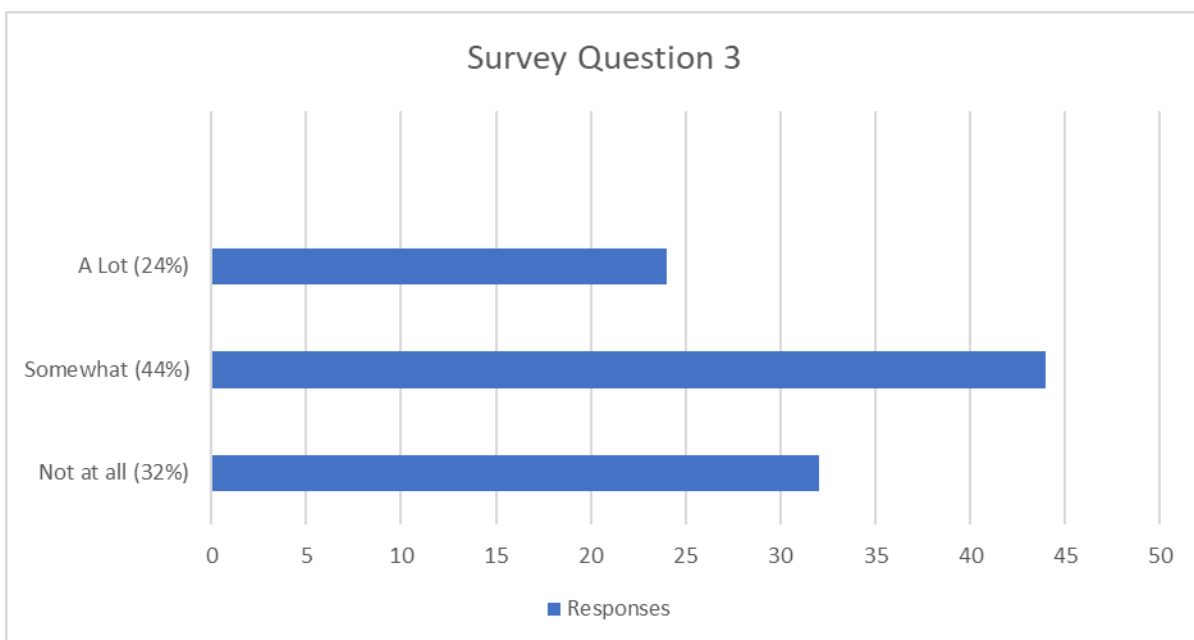
Question 2: How much time do you think you would need to see your goal(s) come to fruition?

(Please select 1 of the following: a couple of months or less, 6 months to a year, 1-5 years, 10 years, unfortunately never, other).



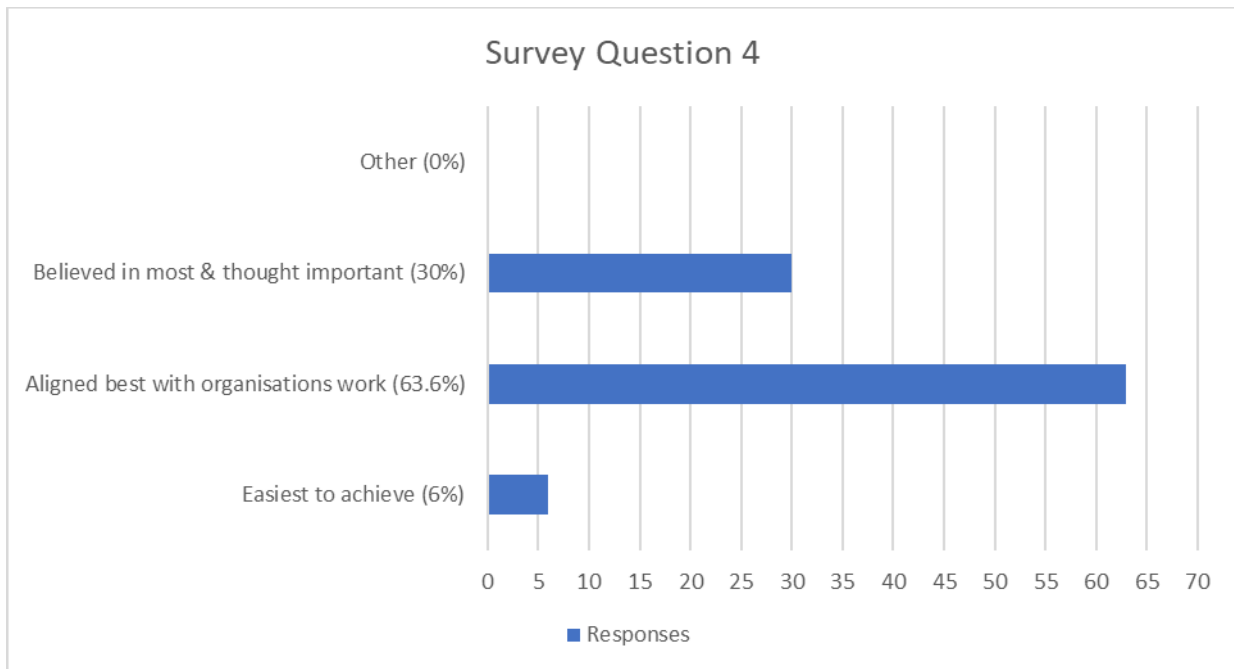
Question 3: Has this exercise made you think differently about the ARA's ToC outcomes or the adaptation research for impact Principles?

(Please select 1 of the following: not at all, somewhat, a lot, other)



Question 4: Why did you pick the Principle(s) or outcome(s) that you did?

(Please select all that apply: Because they were the easiest to achieve, because they aligned best with what my organisation does, because they were the ones I believed in the most or found the most important, other reason(s))



4 REFLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Although this process was entirely voluntary, a C number of participants engaged. Alongside the direct reflection from ARA members who took part in this process, the analysis of data collected permits the distillation of certain key insights and next steps.

Validity and resonance of the Principles and outcomes. All six action research for adaptation Principles and ARA ToC outcomes were subscribed to — meaning that all Principles and outcomes had at least one participating ARA member write an ‘action’ and ‘goal’ to it. This implies that, overall, the current set of Principles and outcomes resonates with ARA members. However, it is also clear that some outcomes and Principles clearly resonated a lot more with participating members than others (for example Principle 1 and outcome 1 are particularly popular).

Given that most respondents said they selected the outcomes and Principles based on their alignment with their organisation’s work, the ARA might want to dive a bit deeper into understanding why certain Principles or outcomes might be less popular – do certain attributes of the ARA membership demographic cause this differentiation? Are there particular challenges related to the less popular Principles and outcomes that are hindering engagement within business-as-usual processes?

This indicates that further work might be needed to either a) alter and improve the Principles and outcomes that resonate less; b) provide technical/hand-holding support to align with the less popular outcomes and Principles to a greater extent; c) an internal reflection process from the ARA secretariat on whether it is general acceptable in the long-term that members sign up to all Principles and ToC outcomes in theory, but are only able to operationalise and achieve a portion of these in practice.

Tracking as a form of capability development. Involvement in this process has acted as a form of capacity-building for the ARA members themselves. For one, it has given the participating ARA members the chance to think deeper about the Principles and outcomes. One participant, for example, noted that they were given a chance to reflect on what certain nuanced terms such as “empowerment” (see Principle 4) really entail in practice. Importantly, some participants commented that this process was useful because it put the Principles and outcomes at the forefront of their minds.

As one participant put it, “this put the Principles and outcomes on our radar, and this is impactful [because things get done], especially when you’re tracking against certain self-assigned parameters. This is because what gets monitored gets done”. As another participant put it, “[the] iterative process we took in this workstream really helped my organisation to reflect on and adjust--at multiple stages--our own approach to realising the action and goals we have committed to. It has also opened up discussions about unseen barriers that we did not initially consider when we identified the goal and action for this workstream”.

This process also gave participating members the chance to better understand and experience the interrelatedness of the Principles and outcomes, noting the importance of not viewing them in siloes. In the workshop, for example, participants actively discussed how the concept of “capacity-building” can transcend outcome 4 and Principle 5. For example, those who chose to operationalise Principle 2 (working to co-produce research) noted they were in fact also achieving the capacity-building components of Principle 4 and outcome 4.

This is because those involved in co-production are, in fact, being empowered and having their capacity built by taking part in the production of knowledge and being armed with new knowledge. In addition to the Tracking process giving members a chance to reflect on and actively consider the Principles and outcomes, it has also given the members the space and opportunity for networking.

As we saw above, creating, fostering and maintaining partnerships with a variety of actors is a critical first step but also a challenge/obstacle in operationalising a number of Principles and achieving a number of ToC outcomes. Several participating ARA members spoke to how this process (as well as their membership in the ARA) has given them access to “global networks” and an array of like-minded institutions that they have been given the chance to network with— forging potential new partnerships.

Finally, reflection on the importance of Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) as a part of this process was brought up by a few participants and respondents. More specifically, that this process made them recognise the key role that effective MEL can play to both understand the projects or programmes impact, but to also learn in the context of the process.

In fact, Resurgence commented that committing to Principle 1 garnered a re-think into how their projects were designed and the need for a more vigorous MEL component, spurring more resources being put towards this component.

Insights on improving and evolving the Principles and outcomes over time. The ARA has an array of different members. This process revealed that the ARA might consider more nuance as to what these Principles or outcomes look like for different members: practitioner organisations, funders, NGOs, etc.

This is because incentives are different. To move forward on the Principles, it is important to acknowledge diversity within members, understand what motivates them, and consider how this can be accommodated to ensure a truly equitable partnership in moving forward in implementing the Principles and achieving the outcomes.

This also means defining the nuance of 'who does what' to ensure adequate time and attention to these tasks. Specifically, under the ToC outcomes it can be useful to 'unpack' details such as the key stakeholders that need to be involved. One participating ARA member mentioned the need for sub-goals and secondary outcomes, which might be a way to add more nuance that speaks to different members.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

In conclusion, it is important to reflect on a few overarching insights from the process for the 'tracking' activity that has been described in the preceding sections.

First, ensuring that the process is light-touch and easy to navigate for ARA members entails a substantial investment of coordination, time and effort by the team that is spearheading the tracking activity. This time is spent on carefully designing workshops for people to engage, developing templates for people to complete, formulating notes and explanations for the templates developed, following up with members that opted to participate in the tracking activity but have been unable to provide input, and making sense of the data that is being collected. While it is possible to deploy online tools and platforms to reduce this effort, it is crucial to be cognisant of the fact that the 'richness' of this process lies in its 'relational' aspect, where members engage with each other and with the ARA secretariat to make sense of how they are operationalising the Principles and objectives. Therefore, face-to-face interaction in physical and virtual sessions is essential and will require a continued investment of time and resources.

Second, given the entirely voluntary nature of ARA membership as well as the engagement of ARA members in tracking, learning and sharing activities, it is important to determine and communicate the incentives for their engagement in tracking exercises. Even though organisations commit to contributing to sharing knowledge and insights by signing up to the membership of the ARA, this is not enough of a hook to generate a sense of excitement in tracking. Instead, it is crucial to communicate how 'tracking' contributes to the development of capabilities. The preceding sections have demonstrated that ARA members were able to consider new issues, reflect on how they could undertake activities more effectively and, crucially, begin to forge networks and alliances with other organisations grappling with the same problems. Going forward, surfacing these benefits of tracking will be key to ensuring that a robust cohort of ARA members self-select into future exercises aimed at gauging the degree to which ARA outcomes and Principles are being operationalised.

Third, closely linked to the preceding point is one on how there might be a need to provide financial incentives to certain kinds of organisations for contributing insights to any future such exercises. While there was a reasonably good balance of organisations from the global North and South in this phase of tracking, this cohort was slightly skewed towards Northern organisations. The assumed reason for this is that the organisations based in the global North have more resources that they can invest in exercises such as this aimed at reflection and learning. Unless there is a balance of organisations in future phases of tracking with a particular emphasis on the participation of local organisations operating in climate-vulnerable contexts of the global South, the insights emanating from these will communicate an incomplete picture of the impact of the ARA. Therefore, small amounts of funding to ARA members operating at the local level in the global South will go a long way in ensuring the robustness of any future tracking agenda.

Finally, it is important to be cognisant of the fact that this phase of tracking has provided a 'baseline' understanding of the degree to which and the ways in which ARA members are aligning with the Adaptation Research for Impact Principles and ARA outcomes. This, as underlined in the introduction, is a picture of 'business as usual'. To shift the state of play so that ARA members are doing more to operationalise the Principles and outcomes will require additional capacity-building support. This would ideally entail a peer-to-peer support component where ARA members that are more advanced on their journeys to embed certain Principles and outcomes would work with those members that have expressed a need for support on embedding these in their work. It would also feasibly entail a component where expert support is provided on mainstreaming certain Principles and outcomes within projects, programmes, policies, or protocols of member organisations.

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