



rpa Research to Policy for Adaptation

A growing number of research projects are investigating climate change adaptation options across Africa. However, the engagement of researchers in policy processes at local and national levels remains limited. As a result, evidence from research often fails to strengthen adaptation policies.



RPA is a project which is being implemented by researchers investigating climate change adaptation options as part of the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) programme.

The project aims to increase the use of research processes and findings in the formulation of adaptation policies in Africa. To achieve this, RPA is helping to build researchers' capacity to understand and influence policy processes around adaptation.

Project details

Dates: Starting in March 2009, finishing in August 2010

Location: Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania

Partners: Institute of Development Studies (IDS), KIPPRA, Chancellor College at the the University of Malawi and TanzaKesho Consult (TKC).

Funders: RPA is funded through the Department for International Development (DFID) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) as part of its wider research and capacity development programme Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA).



Nganyi community elders in Kenya show researchers one of the local shrines used as an observatory



RPA Activities:

- Investigating the actors and dynamics that shape policy processes in relation to 8 adaptation research projects through case studies
- Developing methods and tools to help researchers adopt a strategic approach to engaging their research with adaptation policy-making
- Developing an analytical framework that represents and responds to the realities of policy influence in different contexts and strengthens the capacity of research to affect policy change
- Mentoring researchers beyond the project and fostering more practical research on adaptation policy processes in Africa

Examples of RPA Case studies

In western **Kenya** a CCAA project is trying to help poor and vulnerable communities to adapt to climate change, using both modern climate science and the indigenous knowledge developed by local communities themselves. This integration would enhance the resilience of vulnerable groups to the negative impacts of climate change. RPA is helping to maximise the impact of the research project by investigating:

- who are the actors in climate prediction and adaptation?
- what are their interests and existing discourses?
- how could researchers ensure their findings shape a supporting comprehensive policy framework?

In **Malawi** farmers had until recently mainly planted maize but are now diversifying their crops. A CCAA research project is supporting this change as maize crops are very vulnerable to droughts and flash floods, which are now on the increase due to climate change. However, it is not certain whether farmers are opting to diversify their crops as response to climate change or to other factors.

RPA is helping to determine:

- to which extent would lessons from such an adaptation strategy filter through to policy discussions at the district level
- whether and how researchers could feed local lessons into national level policy processes to integrate this knowledge into adaptation policies

In **Tanzania**, a CCAA project is looking at how weather information from meteorological agencies could be effectively generated, packaged and disseminated to farming communities. An RPA case study will look at how to ensure that the generation, packaging and dissemination of weather information is adopted more widely in order to improve risk management, reduce vulnerability and improve agricultural productivity. To do so, it will:

- identify major actors in the agricultural and meteorological sectors and study their roles and positions on climate adaptation
- map key entry points for researchers to deliver their messages
- help to develop an engagement strategy for CCAA researchers

For further information email climatechange@ids.ac.uk or visit www.policyadapt.org