



CATALYST

Research Gaps, Networks, and Fostering Capacity Development East & West Africa (EWA) Region



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Overview

Underlying barriers – examples:

- conflicts and other human-induced crises
- (global) economic crisis
- poverty, poor healthcare, language and education problems, etc.
- rapid urbanisation, esp. through informal settlements
- efforts can never be continuous in space and time

Kinds of gaps identified and respective recommendations (from the TT):

- institutional arrangements
- knowledge generation
- knowledge sharing and information/communication barriers
- (measures, resources, and technical capacities – cross-cutting)

Selected networks and issues for discussion:

- What have we learnt? What was surprising in EWA?

Institutional arrangements

- **Lack of authorities and / or units (country offices) with a mandate for urban planning, DRR, or CCA**
→ **create urban planning and/or DRR** units also at lower levels with sufficient authority and provide funding for it
- **Lack of frameworks, laws, and / or plans, or they are outdated**
→ support their **creation and updating** while ensuring inclusiveness and funding
- **Low enforcement of laws and insufficient implementation of plans**
→ promote **political commitment**, high degrees of **ownership** and **participation** of more relevant actors in all phases of the DRM cycle and at all levels (not only in assessments, but also in decision making, implementation and evaluation)
- **Lack of (permanent) skilled staff and / or institutional memory**
→ provide **incentives** to stay / return, improve documentation and on-the-job training, spread tasks on several shoulders
- **Lack of synergy / coordination between the many laudable initiatives**
→ improve coordination and avoid unnecessary / unintended duplication of efforts
→ **map organisations, networks, and projects** in a region and across the continent

Knowledge generation – assessing, measuring, monitoring, evaluating, storing, and research

- **Lack of accurate, comparable, and appropriately scaled data on losses & risks**
→ *promote regional & country-wide **knowledge platforms and centres of excellence**, e.g. an African disaster information centre, acknowledge research coming from Africa itself*
- **Incomplete coverage of data over time and space, inaccessible datasets**
→ *improve basic **electric and communication infrastructure** for web-based and mobile data collection, improve documentation and storage and provide funding for it*
- **Many “messy” approaches for risk assessments, confusing use of terms**
→ *provide clear **definitions** and guidelines for specific issues (urban disaster preparedness plans, DRR/CCA-sensitive land-use planning, safe shelters, etc.), ensure that **assessment results feed into decisions and policies***
- **Lack of local and baseline climate data as well as climate models**
→ *build reliable **observation networks**, ensure skilled staff and functioning equipment*
- **Missing & difficult monitoring (continuous) & evaluation (periodic) of measures**
→ *establish **holistic frameworks** (esp. for urban settlements) and funding for it*
→ *provide **evidence** that (early) actions make a difference, **role model** organisations / tools*

Knowledge sharing – risk communication, awareness raising, early warning, training, and education

- **Communication barriers, information does not reach local communities**
 - ***tailor guidelines and tools*** down to the local level and to different user groups, involving the latter
 - ***inform other actors*** about new projects, frameworks, capacities and limits
- **Lack of a concept that understands and integrates local knowledge**
 - *engage with communities also “in between disasters”*
- **Training (contents) needed**
 - training ***trainers, teachers, and professionals*** (e.g. future risk managers, journalists) in short-term courses and in higher education programmes
 - prepare ***curricula for primary and secondary schools***
 - include guidance on investigating the ***effectiveness / efficiency*** and ***social acceptance*** of measures (evidence of risk and impact reduction) & success of capacity development

What have we learnt?

What was surprising and specific for EWA?

- institutions (laws, organisations, government departments, etc.) exist, but **fragmented responsibilities / approaches** for urban planning, DRR, and CCA
- development actors are often ahead of governments in terms of DRR and CCA, but sometimes it is a **business on its own**, different actors take on multiple and similar **roles**
- networks and initiatives are numerous – **not more networks**, but more their mapping & coordination needed (but redundancy may create more complete coverage & resilience)
- knowledge is there, but **knowledge access, storage and sharing** is not easy
- we analysed a **“selection of a selection”** – what selected stakeholders provided and what was easily available on the internet (mostly in English, French, Spanish)
→ often innovative activities at the grass roots!
- provide funding for **long-term** interventions and for **monitoring & evaluation**, trace whether all the knowledge shared is actually used
- more **transparency** who chooses where to intervene, when, why, and how
- What is a **“best practice”**?
→ **ex ante**: embedded in institutional frameworks, compliance with international agreements & standards, inclusiveness, long-term aspects, ownership, transparency
→ **ex post**: impact, acceptance
- engage in DRR through urban planning, in CCA through DRR – **demystify capacity dev.!**