

The Isiolo County Adaptation Fund – progress and lessons learnt

By Victor Orindi, Coordinator of the Adaptation Consortium within the NDMA.

The Adaptation Consortium under the leadership of the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), Kenya, is implementing an innovative project to help county governments to access climate finance and mainstream climate change into planning for adaptation and climate resilient development. The Isiolo County Adaptation Fund (ICAF) was established in 2012 and is now in its 2nd year of operation. This article looks at how it works, the achievements of the first year and the broader lessons learnt.



Improved Harr Buyo Waterpan / Peter Cacah, Adaptation Consortium

Background to Isiolo CAF

The establishment of the UN's Green Climate Fund (GCF) offers the potential for local and national governments to access significant financial resources to support investments in adaptation and mitigation.⁸ The GCF will function in addition to pre-existing multilateral and bilateral climate funds and will come online in 2015. It aims to be running at full capacity by 2020, with resources of \$100bn per year, over half of which will be earmarked specifically for adaptation projects. In anticipation of this, the Adaptation Consortium, under the management of NDMA, is piloting a devolved adaptation fund in Isiolo County (currently £500,000 per year) that finances investments in public goods aimed at strengthening local climate adaptation and resilience.

The Adaptation Consortium is a core component of the DFID funded Strengthening Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change in Kenya Plus (StARCK+) programme. Initially piloted in Isiolo County, the approach is now being rolled out in the counties of Kitui, Makueni, Wajir and Garissa. Consortium members include: the National Drought Management Authority, Kenya Meteorological Services (KMS), the UK Met Office, Christian Aid, the Resource Advocacy Programme and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).⁹

How does the Isiolo CAF work?

Investments in public goods are prioritised by six representative Ward¹⁰ Adaptation Planning Committees (WAPCs): These WAPCs conduct participatory 'resilience assessments' to establish those factors that either strengthen or weaken the local economy and local livelihood systems. The resilience assessments are then used by the WAPCs to prioritise investments in public goods whose costs fall within the allocation of the Climate Adaptation Fund. Investments have to meet seven criteria that promote climate resilient growth and adaptive livelihoods:

- Must benefit many people;
- Must support the economy, livelihoods or important services on which many people depend;
- Must be relevant to building resilience to climate change;
- Must encourage harmony, build relations, understanding and trust;
- Must have been developed after consultation with all potential stakeholders;
- Must be viable, achievable and sustainable;
- Must be cost effective and give value for money.

The investments are submitted for review to the Isiolo County Adaptation Planning Committee (CAPC) made up of representatives from the ward committees, government and other stakeholders. Once approved, WAPCs then negotiate and sign contracts with service providers based on phased payments. Upon verifying the procurement documents and contracts, IIED releases phased payments to the contracted service providers.¹¹ During 2014/15, control over the ICAF will pass over fully to the county government as it is mainstreamed within the Isiolo County Integrated Development Plan and annual planning and budgeting process.

The process of decision-making enables local people, through their ward committees, to remain in control of their development and adaptation priorities in keeping with the principles and spirit of devolution. Critically, higher levels of government cannot veto, but only work to strengthen, ward-level proposals. Ward committees also manage the tendering process, which is often open to political and economic abuse, and are thereby able to ensure, and account for, the good use of their allocation of the Climate Adaptation Fund.

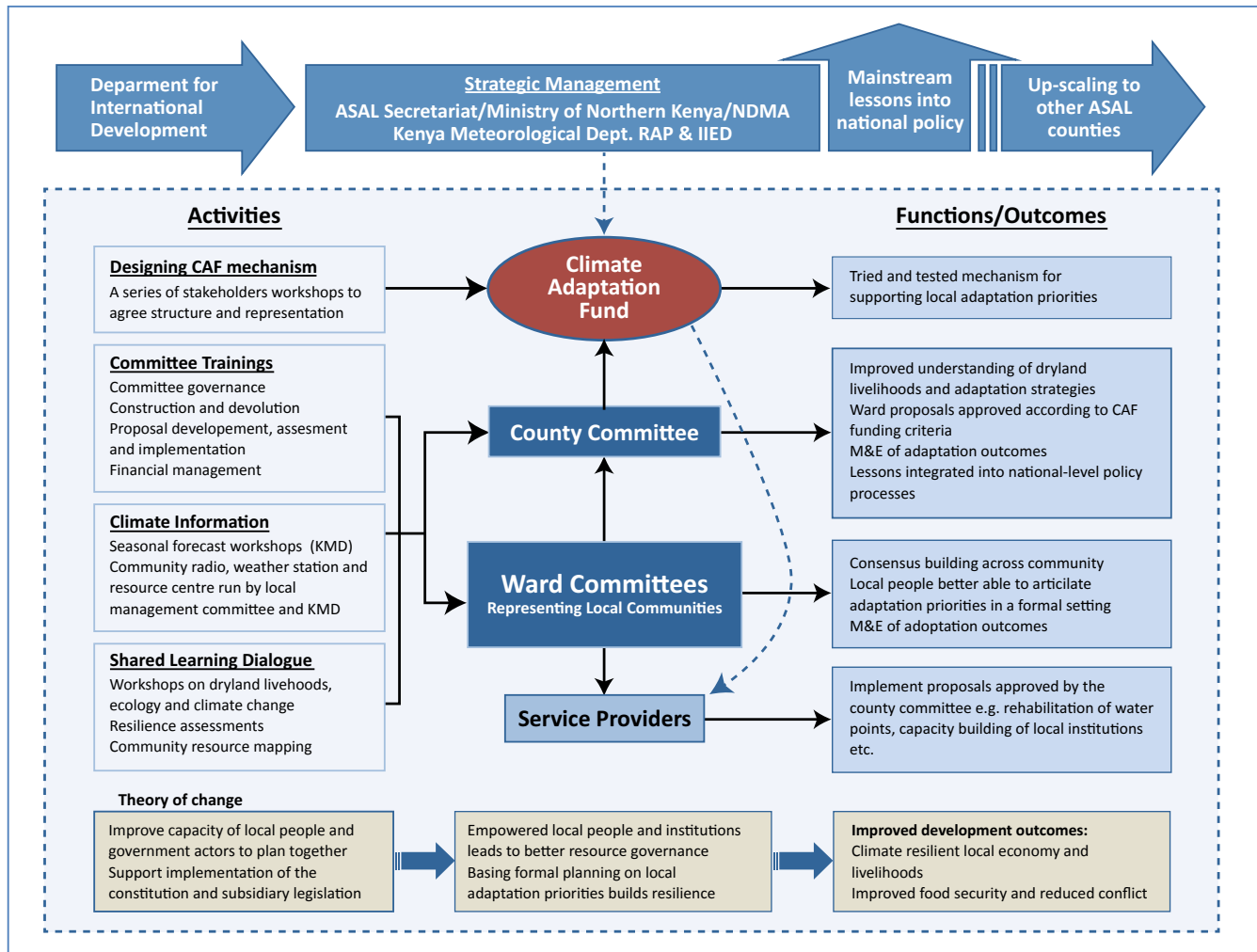
⁸ See: http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/financial_mechanism/green_climate_fund/items/5869.php

⁹ <http://adaconsortium.org/index.php/starck.html>

¹⁰ In Kenya a ward is an administrative division represented by a councillor. There are 1450 in total in Kenya.

¹¹ In the current pilot phase, IIED is accountable to DFID for the use of these funds and as such has final oversight to ensure due diligence.

Figure 1: Summary of the ICAF process



Since it was initiated in September 2012, the Isiolo County Adaptation Fund has completed the first cycle of investments in public goods and started the second cycle. The investments were in four broad areas that addressed the underlying causes of vulnerability to climate change while strengthening adaptation to future extreme events:

- Improved governance of the rangelands by funding meetings of the *dheedha*¹² customary range management institutions to review rules of access and control, including by pastoral groups who regularly visit

- Isiolo County, to be developed into county legislation.
- Development of water infrastructure, and the provision of training in water governance that supports multiple customary resource access rules and livestock mobility.
- Improved veterinary control through the rehabilitation of a decentralised livestock laboratory for disease surveillance and a countywide vaccination programme.
- Improved access to climate and other information by strengthening the technical capacity of the community radio to broadcast to the whole county.

¹² The Boran customary institution. The Boran are the major pastoralist group in the area.



Renovated Kinna Lab / Jane Kiiru, Adaptation Consortium



Samburu Women fetching water from tank / Peter Cacah, Adaptation Consortium

What has been the impact to date?

An analysis of costs, value for money and adaptation impacts from the Isiolo process illustrates some of the challenges in funding and monitoring impacts of devolved development planning and finance in the drylands, which are characterised by significant development deficits and highly variable and unpredictable climate conditions. The early evidence, however, supports an initial view that the Isiolo model is effective.

Although the exact number of beneficiaries is currently unknown, the DFID annual review in March 2014 estimated that 18,825 people are already benefiting from the ICAF investments. The M&E process estimated that the ICAF projects had engaged the services of 430 people in Isiolo, including the creation of 152 new jobs. The M&E process is now examining how to document beneficiaries in the context of mobility and the large populations of indirect beneficiaries.

Regarding the total costs of the investments, the first round saw the ICAF commit around £355,796 (approx. US\$ 575,000) for approved public good adaptation. The remaining first round funds of the ICAF have been rolled over to the second round.

The CAPC and NDMA monitoring, and subsequent testimonies, provide initial indications of the resilience impacts of ICAF investments. For example, at the CAPC meeting in March 2014, committee members from Kinna Ward reported that support to customary range management institutions (dheedha) was already having an impact, with rules protecting dry season grazing areas being better enforced (despite external political pressure) and

with an increase in inter-community resource management meetings outside of the ICAF process. Testimonies from members of the community state that they are now better prepared if the rains do not come.

Evidence also suggests that the ICAF is having an impact on county government and donors. Activities in March 2014 have seen increased technical input from county government technical officers in the second round, and an ICAF-funded community consultation process for both the County Integrated Development Plan—a key document for county planning administration—and the proposed County Livestock Strategy. Additionally, county government has provided in kind support for a veterinary lab and vaccination campaign, and the KMS is continuing to support climate information services through the provision and training of staff, and the deployment of climate observation equipment. Representatives in the Isiolo County Assembly have also advocated for the ICAF process. This, coupled with indications of further funding support from county and development partners demonstrates the broader potential impact of the ICAF process.

What broader lessons have been learnt?

The first phase of the ICAF process has been run as a pilot for local level adaptation planning and finance, and has yielded a wealth of knowledge and lessons on implementing such an approach. With regards to financial and project management and the general operation of the ICAF, several recommendations have flowed from the experience in the first round. These recommendations have been integrated into the revised procedure manual and are being implemented in the second round.

Testimony on dry season resilience from better grazing reserve management

“Dedha (Boran traditional resource management institutions) are mandated to regulate access to pasture and water in pastoral systems, yet the institutions continue to be weakened and undermined by formal system of governance. The support by the Isiolo Climate Adaptation Fund came ... to strengthen customary systems of planning, use and management of our natural resources. The natural resource management meetings we have undertaken not only awakened our customary system of managing grazing land and water into the wet, dry and drought reserves, but also capacitated the [Dedha] members to do proper planning to enable effective use and utilisation of resources. The planning process enabled the community to reclaim community drought reserves; this move rubbed many up the wrong way, including political leaders who wanted to maintain the status quo at the expense of the majority. Communities have now put in place systems to regulate entry and access of pastoralists into these seasonal grazing areas. Our pasture land is now well managed and we have drought fall back areas...”

Mzee Sar Goresa Dedha member Kinna, March 2014

The project has also served to highlight the common difficulties faced by communities in underdeveloped dryland areas, including:

- A lack of technical experts to support development activities. For example, in Isiolo there is one water officer supporting the design and supervision of several water projects;
- A generalised lack of understanding of the rationale of dryland economies and livelihood strategies amongst many government staff;
- A lack of service providers to implement work, thus making the procurement process difficult;
- A lack of general communication, transport and other infrastructure, thus reducing the efficiency and speed of project activities;
- A lack of general banking and accounting infrastructure and practice. For example, all transactions require supporting documents to be submitted and filed for auditing, but there is a general difficulty of getting receipts; and
- Weather and seasonal variability can interfere with project implementation and monitoring plans, thus making the process difficult to align with financial calendars.

The ICAF is seeking to address these challenges by highlighting these issues to government and development partners, and working to improve broader development plans such as the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP):

1. While this approach has a technical entry point to influence planning policy and practice in the drylands (i.e. climate change adaptation), it is fundamentally a political process in support of devolution, and requires careful management and continual support from existing government institutions and local communities.
2. Development partners and implementing organisations need to carefully plan and manage the process to ensure a balance where local communities have genuine control over donor and/or public funds, while ensuring good financial management in a context of high risk.
3. The final aim of this process is to mainstream the approach into county government. This requires development and implementing partners to continually reassess and reposition their role to build local ownership of the process and to always seek opportunities to integrate leadership and accountability with local institutions.

Almost all examples of progressive partnerships between local people, customary institutions and government is a 'relinquishing of control' by government in recognition of the expertise and knowledge of drylands communities in successfully managing highly variable climatic conditions.

Where to from here?

For the ICAF, the focus for 2014 is to consolidate the achievements of the first investment round, implement a successful second investment round and to move to full integration with Isiolo county government finance and planning processes. The continued success of the ICAF will also serve to inform the application of the approach in the four other Kenya ASAL counties (Wajir, Garissa, Kitui and Makueni) with support from the Adaptation Consortium. Given the differing contexts between counties, and that county government structures are generally more developed now than at the inception of the ICAF, the structure and process of the approach will likely vary across the four new counties, but the ICAF pilot provides a basis for the design of these approaches. The objective is to have the others fully operational in the four new dryland counties by the end of March 2015.

Further information

For an overview of the project and updates on new outputs and new publications visit <http://adaconsortium.org/index.php/ada-publications.html>

For further information on specific aspects of the ICAF process, refer to the following publications:

Participatory digital map-making in arid areas of Kenya and Tanzania: <http://pubs.iied.org/G03659.html>

Ensuring devolution supports adaptation and climate resilient growth in Kenya: <http://pubs.iied.org/17161IIED.html>

An interactive resource map for Isiolo showcasing data collected via the community resource mapping: <http://asal-resources.geodata.soton.ac.uk/#map=11/0.7168/38.4652&layers=\R>

A summary example of a resilience assessment from Merti Ward, Isiolo: <http://pubs.iied.org/G03465.html>

The ICAF Procedure Manual: <http://adaconsortium.org/index.php/ada-publications/ada-county-reports.html>

For an example of how the ICAF is informing the Green Climate Fund on devolved climate finance see the report Devolved Access Modalities from the European Capacity Building Initiative: <http://www.eurocapacity.org/downloads/DevolvedAccessfinal.pdf>

Tracking Adaptation and Measuring Development M&E Framework: <http://www.iied.org/tracking-adaptation-measuring-development>