

Introduction

Africa is one of the most exposed continents where the impacts of climate change will be most visible and have widespread consequences for the livelihoods of rural communities. To minimise the vulnerability of communities in east and southern Africa and to ensure sustainable and successful adaptation action two major issues need to be addressed:

Information flow: One of the key constraints facing efforts to address the impacts of climate change and promote required adaptation measures is the lack of information available in suitable mediums for the communities in east and southern Africa who are and will be affected. In particular information disseminating the perspectives and needs of communities is lacking.

Community support: Knowledge and information processes are currently top-down driven and often confined to a limited number of specialist institutions. There is a need for sustained bottom-up drive for information that can be shared across sectors to foster an overarching and inclusive understanding of the needs and perspectives at the most local levels.

ClimateConscious programme

Under the ClimateConscious programme ResourceAfrica UK (RAUK) has been active in Namibia, Tanzania and Kenya since the end of 2010. In each country the RAUK team worked with local partner organisations.

In Namibia RAUK worked with the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), in Tanzania with Ujaama Community Resource Team (UCRT) and Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF), and in Kenya with the Zeitz Foundation (ZF).

Photostories as part of a greater intervention

RAUK has been using innovative methods for communicating climate change to rural communities in southern and eastern Africa and for communities to communicate their vulnerabilities to the national and international levels. RAUK functions as an active facilitator of this two-way knowledge transfer.

By working with partner organisations RAUK is able to build on the strong bond the partner NGO has developed with the communities the partner NGO works with, thereby having **unique access** to the communities.

In each community RAUK engages a few community members to part-take in developing their own photostories. These are platforms for the community members to **express their livelihood experiences** as they wish and tell their story through pictures. Community members are trained in the use of digital cameras and given enough time to document their lives. On a second meeting the pictures they have taken are discussed and the RAUK team analyses the community's vulnerabilities that are linked to climate change through in-depth interviews around each picture. A timeline of **the region's climate and unusual weather events** are identified, future risks are realised and the communities response and adaptation strategies are assessed.

The photostories are written up and taken back to the community through the partner organisation ensuring that the community members feel **ownership** of their stories. These stories are also shared between countries and to an international audience through different climate change forums.

The photostories are used in discussions with RAUK's partner organisations to develop the theatre/film drama script for RAUK's **climate change communication interventions** in southern and eastern Africa. This ensures that the stories are relevant to the local context and the communities to which the performances are directed will easily be able to identify with the issues.

Context of work

The Caprivi region of **Namibia** boasts lush rivers and rich wildlife. Community managed conservation areas, conservancies, have been established with the help of the IRDNC in areas bordering the national parks. These conservancies own the rights to the wildlife and gain income from tourism and hunting activities. Conservancy rangers are employed by the communities to monitor the wildlife in the conservancies and hunting quotas are established through discussions with the government. Each conservancy has to define a constitution and has a managing committee. Community conservancies are often highlighted as the most progressive intervention aimed at empowering communities in conservation activities. Yet human-wildlife conflict remains a source of tension within the conservancies and a number of management challenges have been realised.

Northern **Tanzania** is known for its natural beauty and extensive wildlife protected areas including the Serengeti National Park, the Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area, and the Tarangire National Park. Wildlife migrates freely between the conservation areas and is often found on community land, especially during the rainy season. Communities realize few benefits from the wildlife, which is state-owned, yet pastoralists are known to live in harmony with the wild animals, often grazing their goats and cows side by side with zebras and wildebeests. Some community wildlife management areas have been established and there are a few examples of communities managing their land to maximize the benefits from wildlife tourism while also preserving their pastures for the dry seasons.

The Laikipia region of **Kenya** possesses high densities of free-roaming wildlife. They move between large privately owned game and cattle ranches and the community land surrounding these. Community owned land is sparse and often degraded due to high population density with limited access to natural resources on privately owned land. The communities in the region stem from different tribes of which many are pastoralists. Inter-tribal conflict has been quite dramatic in the last years with frequent cattle raiding. The region has also experienced one of the worst droughts in living memory, which left many communities experiencing year-on-year crop failures and livestock deaths around 2007 to 2009. Communities in the region are not benefiting financially from the wildlife and are instead experiencing human-wildlife conflict. In recent times some communities have developed innovative alternative income strategies, such as beehive keeping amongst the Dorobo as well as adaptation strategies, such as pasture conservation within the Sukutan community as a response to increasingly drier conditions.

