



CBA¹⁴

Local solutions inspiring
global action

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CBA14 talking points

The CBA14 online conference took place from the 21st–25th September 2020. Over 500 participants from a global range of institutions took part in organising, facilitating and contributing to over 30 workshop sessions, as well as online discussions and sharing of ideas. The conference was organised across five themes — each theme focusing on a leading question:

1. Climate finance: how can public and private sector finance be accountably and transparently mobilised to scale up climate action, while remaining inclusive?
2. Youth inclusion: how can we transform our institutions so that they can take advantage of young people's participation in delivering local-level adaptation?
3. Nature-based solutions: how can nature-based solutions be made to work for people, nature and climate?
4. Adaptation technology: how can technology be used to scale-up community-based adaptation, and be integrated in national policy and finance to improve national climate action?
5. Responsive policy: how can social movements inform policy that is ambitious enough to meet the Paris Agreement targets and improve climate adaptation for communities?

The key messages from the discussions were collected each day and are documented below. To find more information about the talking points, follow the links.

Business unusual

Business unusual describes a set of principles for improving the way development contributors, NGOs and governments deliver climate change solutions. Across the sessions at CBA14, key principles emerged about how resilience building should be carried out:

- **Seek holistic, integrative approaches** that recognise that resilience is 'multi-dimensional'. Vulnerable people are often managing many different hazards at the same time. Threats from climate hazards, biodiversity loss and pandemics are often interlinked and, without holistic management, make each other worse — undermining long-term resilience.
- **Learning about what works needs to be shared 'horizontally', where local actors or government ministries can learn from each other, as well as 'vertically',** where learning from the local level informs national or international decision makers. There is a need for actors who can be intermediaries or facilitators, convening different groups together to share innovation, learning and challenges in an equitable way.
- **Donors and funders need to think long term** to build local institutions so they can function more independently and get to the scale needed to benefit many people. Local actors are central as they can bring decades of knowledge and care to complex, context-specific issues.
- **Lean into discomfort.** The development community, particularly funders, need a higher appetite for risk and the ability to learn from failure and build back better. Similarly, recognising the role that informality can play in locally relevant resilient solutions.



Climate finance

The climate finance theme explores how to address the ‘missing middle’ — the lack of national or local institutions that can mobilise climate finance at scale, in an accountable way, transparently and inclusively.

- **Longer term investment** is needed from funders that builds institutions and capacities for delivering at scale beyond the usual timeframes planned by bilateral donors and many philanthropic funders. Donors must begin to see success beyond concrete results and outputs and recognise that learning, and learning from failure, is a criterion of success. More flexible funding arrangements are essential to operationalise this. Development partners must be less risk averse to contribute to greater innovation.

See session: [Putting Money Where It Matters](#)

- Those working to scale up climate finance need to take a **more deliberate approach to shaping incentives for different actors** — including donors — along the chain of climate finance delivery. Incentives need to create the legitimacy needed for local institutions to respond to genuine local priorities.

See session: [Finding the Finance – How Can Technologies Help Us Mobilise Funds for Adaptation and or Increase the Role of the Private Sector](#)

- **Collaborative structures with local actors** are necessary so that financial mechanisms can be better coordinated. Information flow to local people and institutions, coupled with capacity building, creates better financial mechanisms that work better for people experiencing climate impacts.

See session: [How Can the Multilateral Climate Funds and the Multilateral Development Banks Fill In the Missing Middle?](#)

- **Public-private partnerships can help to link government, practitioners, NGOs or civil society organisations** in developing sustainable delivery financial mechanisms, as can using government subsidies to create positive feedback loops in specific sectors. Public finance can de-risk private investment and support pre-investment in technical assistance.

See session: [Delivery Mechanisms for Achieving Scale](#)

Youth inclusion

- **Policymakers must seek to include young people at all stages of project or policy development.** This is especially true at international events, where the youth participants are usually the same people each year. Inclusion needs to get beyond tokenism and towards enabling meaningful and active participation in policy processes. Young people are not represented enough at high levels or with enough diversity.

See session: [Overcoming Barriers to Youth Participation in Delivering Adaptation](#)

- **Young people are not just volunteers.** They need models that compensate them for their contribution to climate action or to advocacy or policy consultation processes. Youth participation and engagement needs to be mainstreamed into decision-making processes.

Investing in producers directly

Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) is a multi-partnership initiative with FAO, IIED, IUCN and AgriCord. It has a collaborative structure with local actors funded by Sweden, Germany, Finland and the Netherlands.

The Union of Farmer and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi works directly by purchasing all the agricultural products from the farm and taking them to the market. Each producing family requires US\$40 per week and this mechanism pays this amount to the producers upfront to enable them to invest.

Acumen Fund has been working with the Green Climate Fund to invest in start-up businesses that align with the GCF’s objectives, innovation structures and environmental safeguards. Acumen focuses on long-term investment for 7–10 years and an entry amount of US\$1–3 million.

See session: [Overcoming Barriers to Youth Participation in Delivering Adaptation](#)

- **Young people need to be supported to be leaders** more effectively by connecting them to the latest research and evidence so that they can be at the centre of shaping adaptation policies and innovation. Scientific evidence on adaptation is good for policy development, but researchers need to look past producing data and communicate it in ways that young people can access and understand.

See session: [The Generation Gap - How Can We Ensure Adaptation and Development That Respects the Radically Different Priorities of New Generations](#)

- **Preparing leaders of tomorrow is a long-haul investment.** The current global challenges will test all the innovation and dynamism of our youth. Young people are the majority in informal settlements in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Universities have a central role to play in building skills and knowledge for the leaders of tomorrow.

See session: [Preparing the Next Generation of Youth Leaders to Accelerate Climate Adaptation in Cities](#)

Nature-based solutions

- **Integrated approaches to adaptation, including nature-based solutions (NbS), address key interlinked societal challenges** including climate change and biodiversity loss, and build holistic resilience to future and unanticipated global challenges, like COVID-19.

See session: [Community-Led Nature Based Solutions for Adaptation: Lessons for Building Back Better From COVID-19; Building Multidimensional Resilience to Scale-Up NbS: The Power of Community-Based Organisations](#)

- **Indigenous people, women and local communities are already championing NbS** and hold valuable traditional knowledge, building on their decades of experiences of implementing them. This traditional knowledge needs to be linked with science and supported by enabling policies and funder investment.

See session: [Nature Based Solutions: Helping Vulnerable Communities in Africa to Build Their Resilience to Climate Change](#)

- **It's key to work through locally based collective organisations** who can drive forward NbS and it's important to support and build their capacity. Local collective organisations aggregate multiple small-scale local activities, adopt integrated solutions and can be effective channels for finance to flow to local levels to scale up NbS for adaptation in the long term. They also strengthen social cohesion and contribute to collective responses to multiple risks, particularly among vulnerable and marginalised communities. These local institutions may look different across contexts — it is important to work with existing local structures for collective organisation.

See session: [Building Sustainable Community Based Adaptation: What Community Forestry Can Tell Us?](#)

- **There are clear interlinkages between NbS and other types of community-based adaptation.** For example: for NbS to be effective, it is not enough to just know how to work with nature (technically), but also to ensure financial viability, include youth/women, to advocate for enabling/responsive policy, to create access to technology, and to build capacity and raise public awareness. On the other hand, for other adaptation activities to be effective, they must ensure healthy and thriving ecosystems that underpin long-term resilience.

See session: [Nature Based Solutions: Helping Vulnerable Communities in Africa to Build Their Resilience to Climate Change](#)

Adaptation technology

- **For adaptation technologies to scale up, communication platforms are necessary** so knowledge can go vertically to government and vice versa — data can and should be placed in the hands of local people, and horizontally within and between communities.

See session: [*From Pilot to Policy — How Can ‘Adaptation Technologies’ Be Used to Make Climate Policies and Plans More Effective?*](#)

- **It is still necessary to build the evidence base for adaptation technology to get to scale.** This includes making the financial case for both smallholders and investors and carrying out market analysis. However, the socio-economic case and the ‘human stories’ of change are equally important.

See session: [*How Can Community-Led Nature-Based Technologies Help Local Communities Adapt to Climate Change?*](#); [*From Pilot to Policy — How Can ‘Adaptation Technologies’ Be Used to Make Climate Policies and Plans More Effective?*](#)

- **Those promoting adaptation technologies must take human-centred approaches** — co-creating technologies with the users to ensure they are effective and reflect their context and needs. Adaptation technologies have gender implications. Women need to be involved in learning how technologies enable community-based adaptation, and they should have a central role in making new plans and policy using adaptation technologies.

See session: [*From Pilot to Policy — How Can ‘Adaptation Technologies’ Be Used to Make Climate Policies and Plans More Effective?*](#)

- **Governments need to get incentives right to create enabling environments for investment** in and uptake of adaptation technologies by communities. For example, for solar powered irrigation, providing smart subsidies for local enterprises to deliver the hardware as well as technical services and guidance to build capacity of communities and local enterprises to use it. Public funds can use smart subsidies and tax incentives to drive adaptation-positive activity. Public-private partnerships can also be effective if they include communities, especially women and young people, from the outset to avoid marginalisation of the most vulnerable.

See session: [*Finding the Finance — How Can Technologies Help Us Mobilise Funds for Adaptation and or Increase the Role of the Private Sector?*](#)

- **Local governments have a role** to play in bridging local knowledge into national policymaking.

See session: [*How Can Community-Led Nature-Based Technologies Help Local Communities Adapt to Climate Change?*](#)

- **Young people can be drivers of new technology and knowledge brokers.** This is especially the case in the context of COVID-19, which has created new opportunities for digital solutions such as online marketing and the engagement of young people in agriculture and rural economies. To achieve this, young people need to be supported to go on a learning journey — to discover and create adaptation technologies that also enable new enterprises.

See session: [*How Can Adaptation Technologies Enable Young People to Thrive in Rural Areas?*](#)

Responsive policy

- **Grassroots communities need greater access to decision-making spaces.** Women in particular face a double burden: from the impacts of climate change and ingrained structural inequalities and cultural norms. They are constantly multitasking to devise solutions to a range climate risks while implementing solutions that build community resilience. They must have a seat at the table as partners in decision making and have the resources to be able to do so if change is to happen at scale.

See session: [*Listening to Grassroots Voices — Voices From the Ground*](#)

- **There are significant gaps between the policymaking process such as National Adaptation Plans**, which often involve implementing agencies with little connection to or knowledge of the complexity at local level. Government actors are often not aware of different types of vulnerability and priorities locally. Governments must establish formalised structures that create space for grassroots communities to engage, negotiate and influence local, sub-national and national adaptation planning and policy processes.

See session: [*Grounding Policy — How Are Communities and Local Participatory Processes Informing Adaptation Policy and Planning in Practice?*](#)

- **Grassroots alliances and networks have greater power due to their numbers.** Alliances and networks of women's groups build influence and gain trust from local authorities by demonstrating their knowledge in practice, contributing their time, labour and resources. These factors help to create more empowering long-term structures. 'Apex' organisations that represent and network many local organisations can be very effective in influencing decisions through representation at higher levels, building on collective action. Communities can be organised and empowered agents of change — able to function beyond government and donor project cycles — if they are supported to do so.

See session: [*Listening to Grassroots Voices — Voices From the Ground*](#)

- **Agency and dignity must be at the core of policy action to address vulnerability.** Communities must be able to claim and retain the assets that underpin their identities as the basis of resilience to multiple threats. For example, land is a critical asset and the ability to access, use and control it influences community capacities to withstand multiple climate shocks and stresses.

See session: [*Impacting Policies — Perspectives, Trends, Challenges and Success Factors*](#)

- **Communities are not homogenous.** Local elites, local businesses and power holders have different agendas. Technology can harm or exclude some groups creating more marginalisation.

See session: [*Bringing Community Voices in Water and Climate Policy Discourse*](#)

- **Multilateral organisations have an important role to play in advancing grassroots-led action.** Using their 'convening power' to open doors for grassroots leaders when designing projects and engaging grassroots organisations as consultants, knowledge holders and partners — documenting their own practices and integrating their learning (tacit knowledge) into design of programs.