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## ***West Africa Resilience Innovation Lab ResilientAfrica Network***

### ***Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design for Food Security and Diversified Livelihoods in the face of Rapid Urbanization (CRID4FAL)***

*For details and to apply, please visit [www.grants.ranlab.org](http://www.grants.ranlab.org)  
by 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016, 11:59pm GMT (local time in Ghana)*

#### **CRID4FAL Grants:**

In Phase 1, grants ranging from **US\$ 30,000 to US\$ 100,000** will be awarded to teams formed around projects from the CRID4FAL Co-creation Process. Winners of Phase 1 qualify to compete for Phase 2 grants ranging from **US\$ 100,000 to US\$ 200,000**.

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ResilientAfrica Network – West Africa Resilience Innovation Lab (**WA RILab**) is pleased to announce and invite applications for the Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design for Food Security and Diversified Livelihoods in the face of Rapid Urbanization (CRID4FAL) grants. This call is sourcing innovative ideas that will contribute to resilience building in areas affected by the effects of rapid urbanization within target communities of Northern, Upper East and Greater Accra Regions of Ghana or similarly affected communities, particularly in Mali and Senegal. The West Africa RILab (WA RILab) is hosted by the University for Development Studies, School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) and its Network Plus Partners include University of Education, Winneba, Ghana, University of Bamako (USTTB), Mali, and Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, Senegal.

#### **The Resilience Gap:**

The scale of migration in West Africa in recent years has increased tremendously mainly as a result of the ECOWAS Protocol on free movement of people, goods and services. This heightens the development challenges in the sub region. Rapid urbanization in West Africa has found expression in the outward expansion of the built-up area, converting prime agricultural land into residential and industrial uses. Coupled with the incidence of poor rainfall, this has adversely affected rain fed agriculture production across many communities, further leading to food shortages, hunger and under nutrition, and overall food insecurity. Furthermore, the ever-increasing population in urban centers has outstripped residential and social amenities, natural resources, and the capacity of sanitation and hygiene infrastructure.



### **CRID4FAL Approach:**

In sourcing for innovations, RAN is applying a Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design (CRID) approach that uses a highly collaborative intervention design process in which multi-disciplinary teams of experts, scholars and stakeholders are invited to develop system level interventions in a CRID Workshop. It is based on the thinking that innovative ideas can be co-created collaboratively by experienced stakeholders working with the target communities. The CRID approach is specifically designed to generate “platform-oriented solutions” i.e. solutions that result in a platform that can facilitate multiple development functions instead of a discrete project.

### **CRID4FAL Priority Areas:**

This call has three priority intervention pathways for resilience building around rapid urbanization and its associated shocks and stresses.

#### **Pathway 1: Transform Agricultural Practices and Markets**

In the face of rapid urbanization in West Africa, most the sub region’s people heavily depend on rain-fed agriculture and other natural resources directly affected by the vagaries of nature. Bush fallowing and other agriculture practices, which traditionally restored soil fertility and reduced the buildup of pests and diseases, are disappearing from the agricultural landscape. Overall, the soil resource is being degraded, with a consequent reduction in crop yield. Presently, the challenge of improving productivity without compromising soil sustainability is so large that farmers will need to combine gains from improved germplasm with complementary improvements in their management of soil fertility.

#### **Pathway 2: Improve Water, Sanitation, Hygiene & Health**

Access to water and sanitation is a fundamental human right and essential to life, health and dignity. WASH+H describes all issues that relate to the health and wellbeing of the people. It includes water, sanitation and hygienic behavior of the people. Waste management problems are well entrenched in the study areas (target communities) and have also adversely affected the health of community members. Provision of adequate sanitation services is equally important. Proper disposal of all waste, as well as, control of the carriers of communicable diseases, including mosquitoes, rats, mice, and flies, is crucial to mitigate health risks and preventing epidemics. But the optimum benefit from water and sanitation interventions can only be achieved if communities and individuals are made aware of the links between hygiene practices, poor sanitation, health, and disease.

#### **Pathway 3: Promote Livelihood Diversification & Financial Inclusion**

Two of the target communities are highly dependent on rain-fed subsistence agriculture that is vulnerable to adverse effects of rapid urbanization and climate variability. Alternative livelihood opportunities are limited and access to financial services remains a big challenge.



### **CRID4FAL Innovation Challenges:**

The WA RILab Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design (CRID) workshop analyzed the three priority intervention pathways and developed three innovation challenges.

- **Innovation Challenge 1: Transform Agricultural Practices and Markets**
- **Innovation Challenge 2: Improve Water, Sanitation, Hygiene & Health**
- **Innovation Challenge 3: Promote Livelihood Diversification & Financial Inclusion**

We invite initial original ideas in any of the 3 innovation challenge categories from intending co-creators.

### **Innovation Challenge 1: Transform Agricultural Practices & Markets**

In the face of rapid urbanization in West Africa, most of the sub region's population relies heavily on rain-fed agriculture and other natural resources directly affected by the vagaries of nature. The growing frequency and severity of extreme events such as droughts, floods, and heat waves, along with shifting rainfall patterns, threaten to overwhelm the natural resilience of West African communities, risking livelihoods and food security. Subsistence farming is the mainstay of communities that experience shocks and stressors arising from migration, drought and sometimes flooding. Overdependence on rain-fed agriculture, small farm sizes, low technology, inadequate start-up capital, and the non-existence of value addition tend to increase vulnerability to food insecurity as a result of poor knowledge about how to prepare nutritious local recipes. Thus, locally available rich foods are not optimized. Lack of direct access to buyers, poor smallholder cohesion, lack of inputs, and low price leverage all affect the farmer's income. The fallows, which traditionally restored soil fertility and reduced the buildup of pests and diseases, are disappearing from the agricultural landscape. The soil resource is being degraded, with a consequent reduction in crop yield. Presently the challenge of improving productivity without compromising sustainability is so large that farmers will need to combine gains from improved germplasm with complementary improvements in their management of soil fertility.

**The Innovation Challenge:** This platform seeks solutions that disrupt the status quo by substantially building agency of smallholder farmers to have more control over efficient agricultural production processes, marketing and consumption of local foods and soil fertility management. The platform has three innovative ideas/modules highlighted as follows:

#### *Innovative Idea 1: Use Appropriate Technology to Increase Agriculture Output*

Develop low cost environmentally friendly approaches to increase yield per acreage by employing indigenous knowledge, resources, technologies which encompass gender and ICT platforms to improve access to markets and to increase income. Particularly encouraged are proposals that provide innovative approaches to promoting Group-based access to markets; Gender-equitable benefit sharing mechanism; Use of established ICT market platforms; etc.

#### *Innovative Idea 2: Value addition to locally available foods*

Develop approaches for piloting, evaluating and scaling innovations that address key constraints related to alternative packages of assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) attempting to anticipate and take advantage of the growing markets for processed and perishable foods; Small-scale processing technology that is user friendly and adds value to indigenous locally produced crops, e.g., millet, fonio, groundnuts, etc.; Indigenous technologies for food preservation; etc.



### Innovative Idea 3: Improve Soil Fertility and Agricultural waste reuse

Develop models or approaches appropriate for integrated soil fertility management and maximizing the use of agricultural waste so as to improve the incomes of smallholder farmers.

## **Innovation Challenge 2: Improve Water, Sanitation and Hygiene & Health**

WASH is a major aspect of the health of the people in the target communities. The ever-increasing population, driven by high birth rates and in-migration, has outstripped residential and social amenities, water resources, and the capacity of sanitation and hygiene infrastructure. This has led to an overall deterioration in the quality of the environment. Over the years, significant investments by government in water, waste management, sanitation and hygiene have not translated into ensuring sustainable availability and access to sufficient water of good quality. Organizations working to promote WASH are challenged by deplorable attitudes, behaviours, and practices in the urban and peri-urban areas. Use of untreated wastewater for vegetable farming is widespread across the metropolis.

**Innovation Challenge:** We are seeking innovative solutions to develop models and approaches for improving behaviours and attitudes while creating innovative technologies to promoting WASH. These interventions would engage the community by leveraging existing traditional platforms for community engagement. Some innovative solutions may include:

### Innovative Idea 1: Household Water Management and Reuse

Develop models and approaches or technologies for promoting sustainable water supply that would reduce vulnerability to household water shortage and promote opportunities for multiple uses of water.

### Innovative Idea 2: Solid and Liquid Waste Management

Develop models and approaches or technologies for promoting sustainable solid and liquid waste management to reduce vulnerability of households to communicable diseases and in a manner that also builds bridges for agricultural production.

### Innovative Idea 3: Health Seeking Behaviour

Develop models and approaches for promoting and catalyzing health and improving health-seeking behaviour.

## **Innovation Challenge 3: Promote Livelihood Diversification & Financial Inclusion**

Entrepreneurship is important to the economic and social development of a community. Through innovation, entrepreneurs create new, competitive markets and businesses. This leads to job creation, which has a multiplying effect on the economy. Potential entrepreneurs in West African communities (particularly Ghana) are constrained by the lack of entrepreneurial skills and the limited access to finance/start-up capital. The Government of Ghana's (GoG) Microfinance and Small Loans Centre has a mission "to provide micro and small loans for start-ups and



small businesses with fast, easy and accessible microcredit and small loans to grow and expand their businesses as well as to enhance job and wealth creation”. But its services do not reach majority of those most in need. Other microcredit facilities also follow the line of traditional lending institutions by demanding collateral for borrowing. Existing entrepreneurship skills development programs are also few and not well focused. Upgrading skills can be a key channel to improve productivity and incomes in the informal economy and open opportunities to link with the formal economy.

**Innovation Challenge:** We are looking for innovations that can develop models and approaches or technologies for promoting life and entrepreneurship skills in target communities, Tamale, Navrongo and Ashaiman. With coordinated support, interventions on this platform can greatly benefit from existing financial services for business start-ups. Innovative ideas include:

*Innovative Idea 1: Life and entrepreneurship skills development*

Develop models and approaches or technologies for promoting life and entrepreneurship skills that would reduce vulnerability to food insecurity and promote opportunities for diversified livelihoods taking into account specific contexts in target communities.

*Innovative Idea 2: Alternative Livelihood Opportunities*

Develop models and approaches or technologies for supporting local business ideas to grow into viable alternative livelihood enterprises.

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**In conclusion, what you need to know ....**

- Innovations are not limited to technologies but could be approaches or models
  - An idea may not be new – the innovation could be in its social application
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