Announcing the Resilience Innovation Acceleration Program (RIAP)

Innovation Exhibition at Makerere University Freedom Square
February 2017

Background

To effectively tap into the existing innovations in the innovation ecosystem, Makerere University School of Public Health - ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) is pleased to announce the Resilience Innovation Acceleration Program (RIAP) which will recognize and support promising and creative ideas from students and faculty at the Eastern Africa Resilience Innovation Lab (EA RILab) partner universities as well as the general community of innovation in East Africa. The best ideas will receive grants ranging from $7,500 – $15,000 to further develop and refine their ideas. By leveraging creativity of innovators and the power of competition to drive innovation, the RIAP approach provides a great platform for innovators across all disciplines to use their creativity, passion and knowledge to create and bring to scale solutions that will contribute to RAN's Resilience Innovation agenda. We shall support and catalyze promising technologies or approaches that will contribute to causing positive community change and strengthen resilience.

Who we are

The ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) is one of the seven global development labs that make up USAID's Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN). RAN is led by Makerere University working in partnership with Stanford University and Tulane University. The Network comprises 18 African universities spread over 14 countries. The core objective of RAN is to promote the development and scaling of sustainable, innovative solutions and approaches that can help strengthen the capacities of vulnerable African communities to mitigate, adapt to or recover from natural or man·made shocks and stresses, thereby strengthening their resilience. The Eastern Africa Resilience Innovation Lab (RILab) of RAN is located in Makerere University has a mandate to source innovative ideas in line with RAN's thematic focus from within the academic/general community and support their incubation and piloting.

The Resilience Innovation Challenge

How can the resilience of communities affected by the effects of climate change and chronic conflicts be strengthened through interventions that support and strengthen existing processes and institutions? RAN's Eastern Africa Resilience Innovation Lab is seeking to identify innovative solutions or approaches with the potential to demonstrably strengthen the resilience of communities affected primarily by 1) the effects of climate variability and 2) the effects of acute and chronic conflicts.

Objective of RIAP II

The general objective of the second round of RIAP is to identify and bring to scale high impact innovations that improve production, take more control of the agricultural value chain, and to diversify to profitable enterprises, in ways that are environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. The specific objectives of the call are:

1. To transform communities affected by climate change and chronic conflict through promotion of education, skills development and entrepreneurship so as to create a vibrant, optimistic and independent community
2. To transform rural agricultural processes so as to increase efficiency of production and post-harvest handling of produce, in ways that are green and sustainable.
3. To improve agricultural practices through increasing agricultural production, reducing post-harvest losses, as well as, the promotion of agricultural value addition.
4. To increase financial inclusion through newer, robust models and currencies for saving, access to credit, and risk transfer.
5. To improve on the existing governance systems through justice, civic engagement, transparency, and accountability in communities affected by chronic conflict.

Get Involved!

Do you have an innovative, demonstrable solution, or approach that has the potential to strengthen the resilience of individuals, families, or communities affected by the effects of climate variability and/or chronic conflict? Do you have an idea that innovatively addresses either the vulnerability factors or builds on the adaptive strategies? If so, please register to participate in the upcoming Innovations Exhibition taking place on **17th March 2017 at Makerere University Freedom Square from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**. If you are not sure whether your solution or approach fits well within the themes described, go ahead and register, and let us be the judge!

Requirements for Participation

This exhibition will provide an opportunity for students, faculty and local innovators (general community) to showcase their innovations, and for RAN to identify promising innovations that can be accelerated through RAN's Resilience Innovation Acceleration Program at the EA RILab. The exhibition is open to innovators who meet the following requirements/criteria:

- The call is open to **ANY** faculty member or student innovator or local Innovator; including recent graduates
- **ALL disciplines** are eligible to participate as RAN has adopted a multidisciplinary approach to problem solving.
- Innovations should clearly **demonstrate their potential to strengthen/build the resilience of communities** to natural and/or man-made stresses and shocks.
- Innovations can be in form of 'technologies' or 'approaches', and there should be a **demonstrable proof of concept** for the solution/approach.
- Innovations that build on **indigenous/traditional knowledge** are particularly interesting from RAN's perspective of building sustainable solutions with a high adoption potential in the local communities.

Registration Procedure

All innovators are required to register online, by filling out an electronic form available at the RAN website: *www.ranlab.org* or at this link: *http://grants.ranlab.org/.* **Application closes on March 14, 2017.**

For any inquiries, please contact us at:

ResilientAfrica Network (RAN); Plot 30, Upper Terrace Kololo

Phone: 256-414 343 597

Email: info@ranlab.org or earilab@ranlab.org

Benefits to the winning teams

Inclusion into RAN's Resilience Innovation Acceleration Program, where teams will receive:

- Technical support and guidance*

- Mentorship and Business Coaching

- Linkages to innovators and mentors within the HESN

- Linkages to local, regional, and international expertise and contacts

- Some financial support to further develop and pilot the solution or approach towards scaling

Technical support includes close guidance from our research team. Our expert research team is currently conducting quantitative and qualitative studies on climate variability, chronic conflict and resilience in Eastern Africa. The findings and results from these studies will closely support innovation development, implementation, and ultimately evaluate innovation impact and success.

Thematic Focus for this Challenge

The RIAP II Call seeks to support individuals with ideas from "**all Disciplines**" and all training institutions in sub-Saharan Africa to develop and refine their ideas or approaches, as well as, supporting those that already have simple prototypes to refine these further. The areas of Innovation for purposes of this call are described here below;

1. Agriculture

In sub-Saharan African communities, Agriculture supports the survival and well-being of up to 80 Percent of the population. Currently communities experience recurrent shocks arising from climate variability and climate change with high dependence on subsistence agriculture. The yields are meagre and non-diversified, value addition to produce is low, agricultural markets are skewed by irregularities in prices. The result is low income, persistent poverty and no growth. We need to disrupt the status quo, and build the agency of rural farmers. We are looking for low cost, environmentally friendly approaches and technologies to improve agricultural practices, increase agricultural yields of both crop and animal husbandry. We are seeking for novel ideas or approaches that will address the following;

i.   Improving land acquisition and utilization including land consolidation for smallholder farmers

ii. Access to markets, branding and bulking of agricultural produce for better price negotiation

iii. Food sovereignty and security to ensure that food in communities is accessible and

healthy for everyone, increased yields to ensure enough produce for homes and markets

   iv.   Use of low cost technologies and ICTs for agriculture as well as access to mechanization

2. Water

The rising demand of growing populations for water puts increasing pressure on land use, water resources and the ecosystem. Such pressures are aggravated by the impact of climate change which is likely to further modify the availability and suitability of these resources, as well as, affect agricultural productivity and livelihoods. We are seeking solutions that will disrupt the inability to manage water resources, wastewater, including water reuse and rainwater harvesting for homes, institutions, and pastoralist communities. We are looking for solutions that will address any of the following;

   i.   Improved access to water
   ii.   Water filtering and purification (e.g house hold water treatment)
   iii. Proper water resource development, improvement, maintenance and management
   iv.   Water bulking and storage for use in dry seasons
   v.   Water handling to improve portability
   vi.   Harnessing technologies (e.g sensors) and use of ICTs for water management
   vii. Energy to drive water generation and rationalization

3. Entrepreneurship

There are challenges of human capital coupled with lack of education and skills and the inability of people to gain employment in skilled or better paying jobs which resulting in high unemployment, over-reliance on social grants and other social safety-nets. Communities are constrained by the lack of entrepreneurial skills and limited access to finance/start-up capital. We are seeking innovative products or services exploiting opportunities and businesses in which communities can actively engage. Models of approaches or technologies for promoting livelihood and entrepreneurial skills in communities could address any of the following;

   i.   Changing attitudes of communities to embrace entrepreneurial activities and businesses
   ii.   New ways of engaging youth and women
   iii. Promoting optimism and positive outlook on life to pursue business ventures
   iv.   Re – use of existing materials and recycling materials or waste materials into new products to prevent waste and create business opportunities
   v.   Creative business models to help communities thrive financially
   vi.   Ways of involving youth in profitable business on the web
   vii. Innovative legal services for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

4. Livelihood Diversification

Communities are highly dependent on restricted types of subsistence farming, especially livestock production, rendering them vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change and climate variability. Adaptation is constrained by limited livelihood options and limited financial inclusion and engagement. We are seeking ideas that will substantially empower communities by diversifying their livelihoods using simple but highly profitable farm and non-farm businesses. Solutions could address any of the following;

   i.   Improving standards of living and peoples welfare through engaging in diverse income generation activities

ii.   Creating opportunities for better financial inclusion through savings and access to credit

iii.   Models for launching profitable businesses that would reduce vulnerability to food insecurity and promote opportunities for increased household incomes

iv.   Attractive businesses with low investment, low risks and high returns

v.   Proposing new ways of breaking dependence on one source of livelihood

5. **Health:**

Communities in sub-Saharan Africa confront the most dramatic health challenges and disasters due to rapid urbanization, climate change manifesting as floods, drought and chronic displacements, and chronic diseases especially HIV/AIDS. We are seeking innovations that will alleviate health concerns among low-resource communities. Innovations may address any of the following;

i.   New solutions to control and prevent disease outbreaks and epidemics

ii.   Easy to use accurate primary care level diagnostics and sensors for common infectious diseases

iii.   Improved emergency healthcare (e.g Obstetrics care, neonatal care and other emergencies)

iv.   Innovative approaches on disease prevention

v.   Innovative approaches on sanitation and hygiene

vi.   Low cost optimized toilet solutions for flood prone/high water table areas

6. **Gender Based Violence**

Gender based violence causes physical trauma and long lasting mental health problems and can be financially devastating as trauma may negatively affect productivity of the affected persons. It can lead to social stigmatization; it may be the cause of retaliations and sometimes death. These are only a few consequences of violence that victims have to deal with every day. Gender based violence remains comparatively invisible and underestimated. Because of cultural constraints and the strong feelings of shame and fear engendered by violence, most victims do not dare come forward to seek help. This only adds to the devastating effects on the survivors, their families, and communities. Constraints and obstacles notwithstanding, immediate and appropriate action must be taken on the basis of systematic and thorough assessments to respond to the multifaceted needs of victims of gender based violence. We are seeking for innovative approaches and ideas to address any of the following;

i.   On the spot GBV reporting mechanisms

ii.   Innovative approaches for the mitigation of drug abuse and alcoholism

iii.   Mindsets and cultural beliefs (e.g women who believe myths that marital affection should be expressed in forms of violence)

iv.   Innovative follow-up and support mechanisms for victims of gender based violence

v.   Innovative sensitization channels, empowerment, and implementation of policies

vi.   Innovative legal approaches to address GBV and violence against women and girls

7. **Financial Inclusion**

Individuals living in communities that are faced with chronic conflict are disproportionately trapped into chronic poverty. Some of these communities have an abundance of minerals and other natural resources which also serve as the source and catalysts for chronic conflicts in the EA RILab region. As such, some of the citizens do rely on humanitarian aid/assistance, whereas, others depend on one or a narrow range of livelihood options

such as subsistence farming. This dependency on aid and limited choice of livelihood results in limited incomes and consequently chronic poverty. Low financial inclusion, coupled with a pervasive culture of not saving for investment, further drives most communities into deeper levels of poverty. Many communities also depend on subsistence farming with little or no diversification of livelihoods. We are interested in technologies and approaches that create and foster a culture that reduces consumerism and improves savings and access to credit. We are also targeting ideas that provide alternative sources of livelihoods for the target communities. Examples of proposals include (but are not limited to) the following:

    i.   Models that simplify saving in commercial and/or rural banks for rural farmers
    ii.   Novel technologies, approaches, or platforms to facilitate saving among smallholder farmers
    iii.   Models, approaches, or technologies that channel savings directly to predetermined low risk investments
    iv.   New and disruptive forms of currency that can be channeled into savings
    v.   Innovative models and approaches for risk mitigation through risk transfer that are accessible by rural communities
    vi.   Innovative credit products/services for smallholder farmers (Credit 'circles' for the future)
    vii.   Disruptive mechanisms for overcoming traditional barriers to accessing credit in rural communities
    viii. New and disruptive forms of currency that can be channeled into credit payments
    ix.   Innovative solutions for overcoming non-compliance to credit repayments to ensure continuity of village micro-credit facilities while maintaining farmer confidence
    x.   Financial literacy programming for underserved communities
    xi.   Programs to support SMEs to access or manage capital

8. Psychosocial

Psychological issues have become prominent and require a robust holistic & sustainable response at the family, community, and within society at large. Psychosocial issues need to be looked at beyond the clinical perspective to include a focus on change of mindsets. There should be mindset change from reliance on government (for support) to embracing socio-economic opportunities through community engagement in productive ventures. This may subsequently increase productivity and consequently lead to reduced crime and suicidal cases. This will enhance self-reliance, psychological wellbeing, food sovereignty, and increased resilience. For instance, in northern Uganda, the region has experienced a slow economic recovery after a long standing 20-year chronic conflict resulting in encampment, high dependency syndrome, non-viable coping strategies such as alcohol brewing for income, and low levels of community engagement in productive ventures. There are high levels of crime and suicidal cases. Similarly, the high influx of Congolese refugees into the camps of Kigeme and Gihembe in Rwanda creates a high tension on the existing social services such as healthcare, access to water and good sanitation, food security and nutrition, education, and housing. There are also cases of sexual and GBV, low agriculture production, and issues related to child protection. Examples of proposals include (but are not limited to) the following;

i. Novel technologies, approaches, or platforms that harness social activities to improve psychosocial wellbeing. For instance, how might we leverage music, dance, and drama and other forms of multimedia or sports to improve communities from the negative psychosocial effects resulting from armed conflicts?

ii. Approaches to regulate alcohol (especially local brew) production and consumption

iii. Platforms that offer life skills (entrepreneurship networking information)

iv. Early diagnostics investment in modern medicine, and regulation of traditional medicine and folk practices.

9. Governance

Most of the current judicial systems are faced with a huge concern of transparency. The current land tenures are not favorable to the local community whose main source of livelihoods is subsistence farming. The chronic conflict in northern Uganda has led to massive displacements of people into camps. On return, there were no clear boundaries of the land leaving behind a generation of young people who had no idea of the boundaries. This created many land disputes as people were claiming the same piece of land. In DRC, although the communities are faced by chronic conflict which has a linkage to minerals, the major source of livelihoods is agriculture. Other causes of land conflicts include lack of documentation as the true land owners and poor land tenure systems among other. There is an urgent need to influence the land policy reforms. Innovative ideas may focus on building the community's capacity to engage their leaders and civil servants on pertinent issues through advocacy and/or dialogue in community and leaders. Examples of proposals include (but are not limited to) the following;

i. Platforms that engage the local and central governments tailored to promote government accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to the needs of the local communities.

ii. Innovative art projects that meaningfully engage with issues of advocacy, justice, and community-building. The ideas may use an array of multimedia- visual/conceptual art, photography, videography, music, dance, theatre/performance art, creative writing, or other forms keeping the context of the target communities in mind.

iii. Technologies or platforms for settling disputes (such as land wrangles, e.t.c) among individuals or communities in a manner that promotes community cohesion.

iv. New communication channels that bring to the table the voice of the minority

v. How do we propose new frameworks for citizen participation when it comes to discussing issues that concern policy? Citizenship participation in the policy process ('Bottom-up approach') is crucial

Grant amounts

A total of up to 5 grants will be awarded under this call (Anticipated award range: US$7,500-15,000)

NOTE: RAN reserves the right to change the projected award amounts, or the number of anticipated awards, at any time. The release of this call does not obligate the RAN to make any awards. RAN may also apply additional geographic, thematic, gender, and other considerations as additional evaluation criteria.

Judging applications and selection of finalists
(a) Eligibility Screening: Level 1 judging
Once the application period closes, all applications will undergo an initial screening for eligibility to participate at the exhibition. In order to be eligible for the exhibition, an idea should have been developed to at least a plausible concept or simple prototype that is ready for development into a refined testable prototype or concept. Thus, the innovators to be shortlisted for exhibition must verify availability of a prototype (either rough or refined) to be showcased at the exhibition. The shortlisted teams will be contacted and invited to the exhibition.

(b) Exhibition: Level 2 judging
This will involve a first/initial panel of judges who will go across the exhibition stalls, independently listening to the pitches and scoring the innovations using a set criterion (see Annex 1a: Evaluation Criteria). At the end of the exhibition, the panel will evaluate and name the top 10 exhibitors/innovations. These 10 innovations/teams will thereafter be invited to make a final pitch which will be conducted at RAN offices.

(c) Final Pitching at RAN: Level 3 judging
In this final round of judging, the ten shortlisted innovations will be pitched to a second panel of judges who will select the final list of innovations to be supported under RIAP II (see Annex 1b: Evaluation Criteria).

At both level 2 and 3 judging, the Judging Panel will be responsible for evaluating applications for alignment with RAN's theory of change with respect to strengthening resilience to shocks and stresses arising out of climate change and chronic conflict. The Judging Panel will be comprised of highly qualified and impartial judges with expertise in line with RAN's areas of innovation for this call (i.e. agriculture, water, entrepreneurship, livelihood diversification, health, gender based violence, financial inclusion, psychosocial health and governance) , resilience building, development programming, business modeling, and user-centered design approaches.

The Judging Panel will also be drawn from various sectors including academia, civil society organizations, the private sector, public sector, development partners and USAID/Uganda Mission representatives. RAN and USAID retain the sole and absolute discretion to declare the finalists and award all grants in this call. Any such decision may not be challenged by any entrant. All members of the Judging Panel will sign Non-Disclosure Agreements and Conflict of Interest Forms, as well as statements acknowledging that they make no personal claim to the intellectual property developed by Teams or relevant partners.

Implementation schedule

Milestone	Dates
Call open for applications	1st to 14th March 2017
Shortlisting exhibitors	15th March 2017
Exhibition	17th March 2017
Pitching at RAN	22th March 2017
Award	April 2017

Annex 1: Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria/scoring guides will be used to evaluate applications at level 2 and 3 of judging.

   (a) Scoring Guide for level 2 judging-Exhibition day

Team Name:

ASSESSING THE IDEA	Score (1-15)	Comments
Needs / Problem statement: Clear articulation of the problem/need that project seeks to address. Does the exhibitor(s) clearly communicate a deep understanding of the problem including the known causes of this problem? Do they build a strong case of the magnitude of the problem that supports why their project is needed? This could include research	__out of 10	
Innovativeness and Creative of the idea/solution: How different is this project and how will it ignite change?; what would the change look like in five years' time?; and how does the solution work, its intended impact and competitive	__ out of 15	
Methods of Implementation: How do you envision your project achieving success? What type of support or resources does your idea need to become a reality? If you expect to encounter implementation challenges, articulate how you will address those challenges. How will you monitor or measure the impact or success of your project in the first months of implementation?	__ out of 15	
Budget: How much funds will you need to leapfrog to the next stage and how will you utilize these funds? Has this project been able to leverage funds, how much (and funding source/s) and what was it used for?	__ out of 5	
Team Composition: How many members are directly involved in the development of this idea/solution and what is their expertise/role?	__ out of 5	
Total Score	__ **out of 50**	

(b) Scoring Guide for level 3 judging-RAN pitch day

Team Name:

ASSESSING THE IDEA	Score (1-40)	Comments
Alignment to RAN's theory of change for strengthening Resilience: Does the proposed solution address the desired resilience outcomes/dimensions? Does it	__ out of 20	
Technical feasibility and Scaling potential: Is the proposed solution innovative? Does it have the potential to disrupt/transform current practices and approaches? Does it constitute a paradigm shift?	__ out of 40	
People (user) aspects including Viability and applicability to local communities: Is the solution user-friendly? Is it easily adoptable? Is it acceptable given the socio-cultural dynamics? Is it viable for local communities? Can it be replicated in similar contexts?	__ out of 20	
Team Assessment: Diversity of disciplinary or professional training and skills on the team; Experience working together as a team; Passion and commitment to their idea; Entrepreneurial skills and	__ out of 10	
Environmental Sensitivity: Are proposed approaches and technologies (where appropriate) green and pro-natural resource conservation?	__ out of 10	
Total Score	__out of 100	

Annex 2: Background information/Resilience Challenge

CLIMATE VARIABILITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON RESILIENCE
Climate variability stems from a complex confluence of both natural and human induced factors. Research shows that eastern Africa will be particularly hard hit by climate variability. Uncertain rainfall patterns characterized by sharp increases and decreases will be seen in many areas. Human actions and climate change have played a key role in worsening the problem. The topographic features in specific areas combine with these factors resulting in greater susceptibility to drought, floods, and landslides throughout the EA region. These events are increasing in frequency and are to a reasonable extent predictable. **Examples of the immediate effects**: reduced agricultural outputs, damage to infrastructure, unsafe water, and increases in disease causing parasites. **Possible secondary effects**: changes in rainfall patterns can have diverse impacts on crop yields, thereby worsening the already precarious state of food   security in the region. This will have potentially damaging effects on the family, the communities, the countries, and the economic status of the East African Community. Infectious diseases such as malaria, cholera, meningitis, plague, and dysentery are also seen widely, and are closely linked with the climate cycle. With an increase in these diseases, limited public health resources become strained, and as sick people lose money on treatment, households' productivity, livelihoods, and financial securities are impacted.

CHRONIC CONFLICT AND ITS EFFECTS ON

Over the years, Uganda has faced several conflicts notable of which is the two decades war in Northern Uganda particularly affecting the Acholi and Lango regions. Primarily we see the effects of chronic conflicts as child abuse, loss of life, displacement, and a breakdown of the rule of law. Yet, there are secondary effects that are likewise important including: loss of socioeconomic and livelihoods resilience, a breakdown in social cultural networks and value systems, an increase in sexual and gender based violence, an increase in psychological disorders including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), suicide and despair, poverty, food insecurity, and breakdown of infrastructure. Health effects such as increase in prevalence of HIV/AIDS, deadly epidemics, mortality due to preventable diseases, and a decline of health systems are also noted. A break down in other social services and an increase in land disputes also characterize the post conflict period. Many of these effects have persisted beyond the conflict and the pace of recovery has remained slow since the end of the war in 2004. These communities are often

RAN'S DEFINITION OF RESILIENCE

Resilience is the capacity of people and systems to mitigate, adapt to, recover and learn from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces vulnerability and increases well-being.

VULNERABILITY FACTORS	ADAPTIVE
What causes the communities to be increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and conflict? The most vulnerable groups are women, children, and poor households. This vulnerability is caused by various factors such as settling in high-risk zones (on steep slopes and in wetlands) coupled with poor methods of production. High population growth is also driving widespread deforestation and environmental degradation. Low economic diversification, low risk transfer, inefficient energy sources, poor early warning systems, unstructured markets, and low access to credit are also key causes of vulnerability. Social factors include negative socio-cultural beliefs and practices, high fertility rates, low levels of education, low social cohesion, and occasional breakdown in the rule of law, as well as, insufficient mechanisms for community led conflict resolution. Governance factors include corruption, lack of leadership and border porosity. The fact that the same communities get hit with these events year in and year out with the same magnitude of consequences, underscores the lack of resilience.	How do communities respond and adapt to changes in their environment? Communities have inherent capacity. Some community responses to climate variability have included traditional early warning systems, evacuation, and traditional mechanisms for food storage, crop diversification, settlement planning and management of the wetlands. Adaptations to conflict have included communities getting together to repulse the insurgents (e.g. in Teso), increasing social connectedness, bounce back production, and peer groups. Enhancement of these local adaptation mechanisms is key to resilience. Communities therefore have a vast untapped potential to provide innovative solutions to resilience challenges.

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