

Assignment Three Discussion

Online Learning: OL 343 Adapting to Climate Change: The Community Focus.

Center for Sustainable Development

<https://csd-i.org/ol-343-the-community-focus/>

Assignment Three. How can we get local knowledge from our community?

The best CBA projects combine local knowledge with scientific knowledge. CBA responds to pressing local adaptation needs, draws upon local knowledge, fosters community driven innovation, and supplements community capacity with knowledge and material resources.

Community-based adaptation to climate change is a community led process, based on a community's priorities, needs, knowledge, and capacities, which should empower people to plan for and cope with the impacts of climate change. It must draw on the knowledge and priorities of local people, build on their capacities, and empower them to make changes themselves.

IIED: PLA Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change

CBA takes a variety of forms, from 'mainstreamed' (integrated into existing or planned development projects) to 'direct' (developing local projects aimed at addressing discrete adaptation needs). Despite variations of form, all CBA recognizes the need for context specific adaptation projects that identify local vulnerabilities, draw upon local knowledge and capacity, improve local adaptive capacity, and directly involve local stakeholders.

UNDP Gender, Climate Change and Community-Based Adaptation: A Guidebook for Designing and Implementing Gender-Sensitive Community-Based Adaptation Programmes and Projects

It's important to ensure that the proposed adaptation initiative is anchored with an ongoing baseline development effort.

At a very fundamental level, stakeholder involvement is critical for strengthening ownership and ensuring relevance to local priority needs.

Early engagement of relative stakeholders is critical to any adaptation initiative to ensure commitment and ownership of the process, i.e., buy in. This is especially true at the community level, where many autonomous adaptation measures are already taking place, and where a wealth of traditional knowledge provides a basis for the design of adaptation from measures.

The key premise is that local populations are capable of making their own appraisals, plans, and needs analysis.

UNDP Designing Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives - Toolkit for Practitioners

The goal of community-based adaptation projects is to increase the climate resilience of communities by enhancing their capacity to cope with less predictable rainfall patterns, more frequent droughts, stronger heat waves, different diseases, and weather hazards of unprecedented intensity.

To reduce the vulnerability of livelihoods to climate change risks, community-based development projects must:

- Begin with a thorough understanding of local livelihoods, so protecting assets vulnerable to current and future climate risks can be a core project activity.
- Help communities develop an understanding of the main climate risks and how they impact on livelihoods through a learning by doing approach.
- Emphasize active participation of community members in all stages of the project (design, implementation, monitoring).
- Encourage the strong participation of women, recognizing their role as community resource managers, also acknowledging their specific vulnerability to climate risks.
- Invest in long-term resilience building efforts, which also meet immediate development needs

IDS Tearfund: Adapting to Climate Change

These quotes are showing us that community-based adaptation to climate change combines local knowledge and scientific knowledge in a way that will empower community members to be able to assess their vulnerabilities and capacities and take charge in a bottom-up campaign of adapting to climate change. Their project then will be sustainable because in essence it is their project -- they have ownership of it.

So this week we're going to plan the delivery of a workshop for next week which will help in exchanging knowledge with the community that we serve. We will learn from them many things that they already know about coping in their livelihoods and coping with a changing climate -- and this knowledge will give us an opening to share with them scientific verification of what they've shared with us, and science based strategies that can be supportive of their local strategies in adapting to climate change.

We will use the handbook from the organization CARE called Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis which gives us a good introduction to key concepts behind community-based adaptation and in the back of the handbook provides us with a five section workshop designed to help us better understand community hazards, what the community does in the different seasons, a history of possible change in the village, the areas where they're most vulnerable, and an illustration of support mechanisms that may be available to them.

During our learning process, they will also be able to see in visual terms where their vulnerabilities lie, and what their capacities are for adapting.

Armed with this information, we will be able to combine it with a more scientific information that we learned over the last two assignments and begin the process of refining our project.

I look forward to seeing your work this week -- please move on to assignment 3.

Sincerely,

Tim Magee

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