U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

HIGHER EDUCATION SOLUTIONS **NETWORK**

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

RESILIENTAFRICA NETWORK

@AfricaResilient

facebook.com/ResilientAfricaNetwork

Connecting to Accelerate Global Development

The Goal

To strengthen the resilience of communities in Africa to recurrent shocks and stresses such as climate change, urbanization, food insecurity, drought, and HIV/AIDS. By working in partnership with key stakeholders in affected communities, the ResilientAfrica Network identifies targeted interventions and adaptations that aim to strengthen communities faced with adversity.

The Challenge

How do we measure resilience, or a community's ability to adapt and respond to recurrent shocks and stresses? How can we learn from successful community responses, build on community strengths, and help to build resilience through sustainable interventions? How do we connect local innovators to communities to accelerate the impact of development?

The Innovative Approach

The ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) is a partnership of 20 African universities and 16 countries led by Makerere University in Uganda. RAN is based on the belief that faculty, students, researchers, and development experts, working together with the involvement of local communities, can define the dimensions of resilience, analyze and quantify resilience in communities, and use this data to co-create interventions that strengthen specific dimensions of resilience. Evaluating the impact of these interventions will help inform policy, programs, and resource allocation.

RAN has engaged 18 communities across Africa in participatory assessments to identify their needs and the dimensions of their resilience. In 2015, RAN and its core partners released the first annual *State of African Resilience* report, identifying key dimensions of resilience within unique regional contexts. RAN's framework also outlines key entry points and promising approaches for building resilience within target communities, highlighting where development professionals can hope to achieve the most positive impact.

A RAN innovator works with a fellow student innovator during the HESN TechCon 2015 Innovation Marketplace.

With its core partners, Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy, Stanford University, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies,

RAN is equipping 18 communities and local stakeholders with tools and resources to more effectively respond to and recover from complex challenges by finding or catalyzing successful local solutions and sharing them with other vulnerable communities.

RAN casts a wide net for good ideas through three main approaches:

Crowd-sourcing innovation - Through the Resilience Innovation Acceleration Program, RAN crowd-sources the most promising innovations with the potential to impact resilience. Selected innovators are invited to compete at events, and receive mentoring and assistance through the acceleration program.

Prioritizing community needs - Through Open Resilience Innovation Challenges, RAN finds new ideas and innovations to address unique community needs. Challenges are defined within intervention pathways that have been identified through an Intervention Strategy Process that draws on resilience data.

Co-creation - Through Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design, RAN convenes teams of experts and guides them through a co-creation process to design projects that address multiple system-level problems. Organizations then compete to host and test these projects.

Regional Labs: RAN is fostering collaboration throughout sub-Saharan Africa by establishing Resilience Innovation Labs (RILabs) at universities in four regions, each concentrating on topics of regional importance.

The Eastern Africa RILab at Makerere University examines communities' resilience in response to climate change and chronic conflict in Uganda, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The lab incubates a variety of innovators and innovations -- including a malaria diagnosis app, a community radio powered by a mobile phone, mass-breeding of earthworms for chicken feed, a low-cost, solar-powered, irrigation pump, and and natural pest and weed control through inter-cropping to increase agricultural yield.
Partners: Gulu University, Uganda; National University of Rwanda; University of Kinshasa, DRC.

The Horn of Africa RILab at Jimma University in Ethiopia concentrates on strengthening resilience to the effects of recurrent drought and chronic displacement. The lab continuously funds projects examining the recurrent effects of drought, and works closely with innovators designing solutions. One team is currently developing a technique for rainwater harvesting and purification.
Partners: University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Benadir University, Somalia.

The Southern Africa RILab at the University of Pretoria in South Africa concentrates on the impact of chronic diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS, issues of access to livelihood assets, and understanding local adaptive strategies in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. The lab funds projects on food security and improved income generation.
Partners: University of Limpopo, South Africa; Zimbabwe Africa University; Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi.

The West Africa RILab at the University for Development Studies in Ghana focuses on strengthening the resilience of communities responding to rapid urbanization, food insecurity, and population growth in Ghana, Senegal, and Mali.
Partners: University of Bamako, Mali; University of Education, Ghana; University of Dakar, Senegal.

Work with the Higher Education Solutions Network

To explore HESN buy-ins or opportunities for collaboration, please email: hesn@usaid.gov
To learn more about HESN on the web, visit: http://www.usaid.gov/hesn or sign up for our newsletter, the HESN Connector, at http://bit.ly/1vYLWrC.