



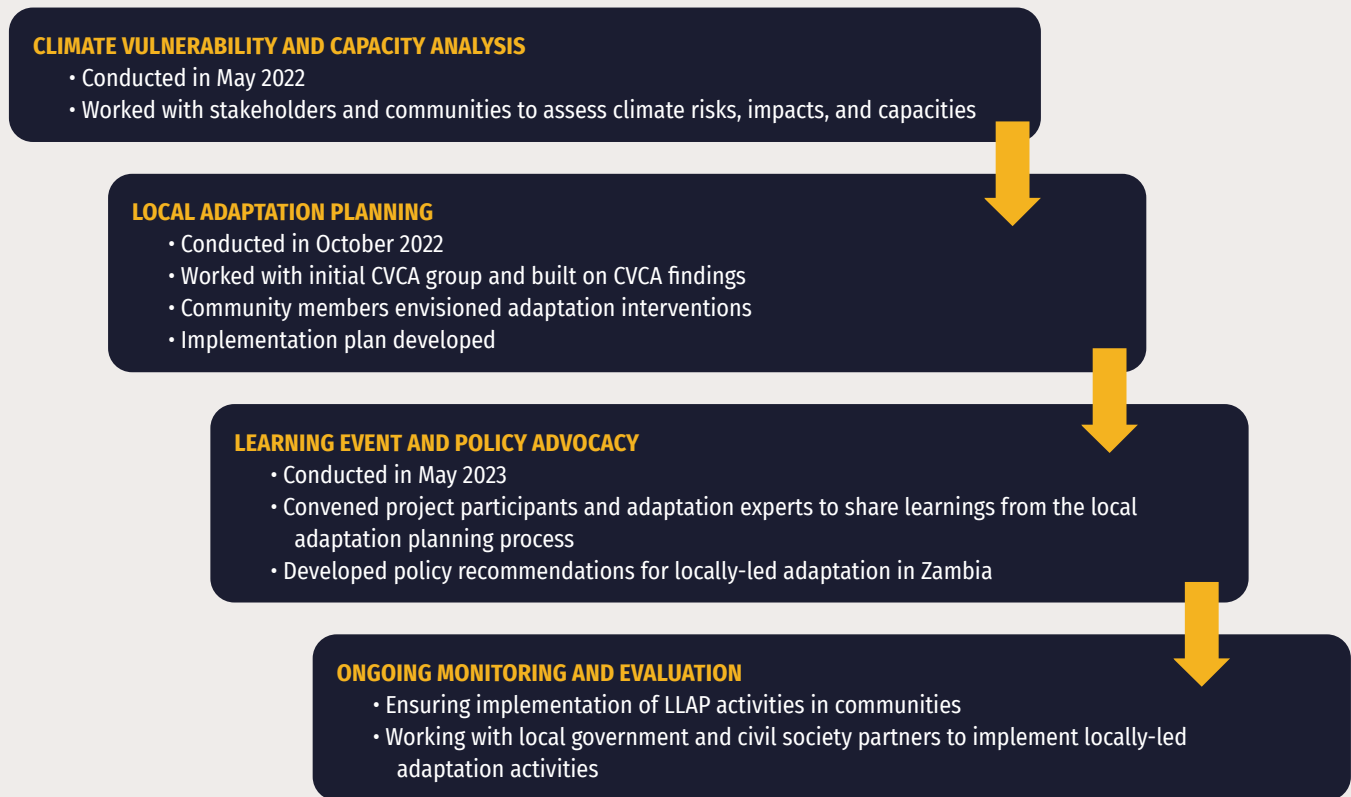
CARE Zambia

# Sequencing for Success: The Essentials of Locally-led Adaptation

## Lessons from CARE in Zambia’s Locally-led Adaptation Pilot

Locally-led adaptation planning is paramount in addressing the increasingly urgent challenges posed by climate change. Yet for adaptation planning to be effective, it is vital to plan for and sequence every step, from climate risk analysis to the development and implementation of local adaptation plans to policy advocacy and influencing. The information gleaned from climate risk analysis can be effectively used to guide the creation and implementation of local adaptation plans, while opportunities for learning events and policy advocacy ensure sustainability and scale. Between early 2022 – and early 2024, CARE conducted a Locally-led Adaptation Pilot (LLAP) in Southern Zambia, to implement the full cycle of adaptation planning from analysis to action with communities facing greater climate vulnerability due to increasing droughts, floods, and erratic rainfall patterns. This Brief describes this sequencing throughout the pilot, and provides key messages for how donors, policymakers, and adaptation practitioners can better design and support effective and equitable adaptation.

The diagram below illustrates the timeline, sequencing and steps involved in the LLAP:



## Key Messages

### Adaptation Finance & Budgeting

#### *Devolve climate finance through Locally-Led Adaptation*

By empowering local communities with financial resources and decision-making authority, Locally-led Adaptation ensures that adaptation interventions are contextually relevant and driven by local priorities. In the LLAP, a budget was set aside from the start to finance some community priorities that would come out during the development of the Local Adaptation Plans. By channeling funds directly to the grassroots level, LLA strengthens local capacity-building and fosters innovative solutions tailored to the specific needs of communities, thereby maximizing the impact of climate finance in building resilience to climate change. When the costs of longer-term community requests in the LAPs such as improved dams and health facilities were higher than the planned budget, CARE collaborated with local government partners to embed some of these activities in their plans and budgets. The project team also plans to connect the community with national sources of funding, such as Zambia's Constituency Development Fund, to finance community-selected projects.

#### *Budget for analysis, planning, implementation, and advocacy*

Certain steps in the process of adaptation planning can go underbudgeted or neglected, leading to climate risk analyses without any next steps for how to address climate risk, or adaptation plans without roadmaps for implementation. In the LLAP, every step was budgeted from the beginning, ensuring that adequate resources were set aside to ensure continuity between various activities. Despite this planning, the timeline proved to be restrictive and more time was needed for implementation. The project is thus instructive as we learned that it is crucial to give enough time for the preparation of climate risk analysis reports and adaptation plans, and for planning between each step.



## Participation and Ownership

### *Create opportunities for the meaningful participation of women and girls*

While the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and girls is well documented, it is important to have specific tools and strategies to ensure their voices and leadership drive adaptation planning. In the LLAP, gender and age-specific groups were maintained throughout the CVCA and LAP processes so that women felt they had safe spaces to share their concerns and aspirations, while plenary discussions were always held to ensure men and boys could also collaborate with and learn from women and girls. Experts in gender transformative approaches and organizations focused on gender equality and social inclusion were also invited to the learning event.

### *Include key multi-sector stakeholders and community members as facilitators to increase ownership*

Driving effective climate adaptation requires buy-in and commitment from an array of different actors in government, civil society, the private sector, and communities. The continuity of the steps in the LLAP provided multiple opportunities for key stakeholders to stay involved in the process. Local government officials, community members, and local NGOs were trained as facilitators for the Climate and Vulnerability Capacity Analysis and Local Adaptation Planning processes. Many members of this same group also participated in the learning event. As a result, their knowledge and skills in adaptation were continually strengthened and they stayed invested in the outcome of the program. Key stakeholders were also invited from a variety of sectors including water, food security, health, nutrition, and gender equality in order to ensure the varying dimensions of climate vulnerability were addressed.

## Research and Learning

### *Increase impact through learning and collaboration*

Even when adaptation planning proves to be effective, it is important to document the process and outcomes while creating opportunities to share learning with a variety of partners and advocate for policy change at multiple levels. Following the LLAP learning event, a core group of participants prepared a brief of policy recommendations to improve locally-led adaptation in Zambia, which was then delivered to Zambia's Ministry of Green Economy and Environment to inform the development of Zambia's

National Adaptation Plan. The learning event helped to build on and expand the impact of the LLAP by:

- Giving community members an opportunity to directly share their experiences from the LLAP
- Providing a forum to share findings from the LLAP with leading adaptation professionals both from Zambia and internationally
- Creating a space for co-learning and collaboration where partners were invited to share their own experiences in adaptation so that the event was participatory rather than CARE-focused
- Develop policy recommendations that have greater weight urgency due to the buy-in and collaboration from workshop participants

As a result of the learning event, the process and findings from the LLAP are informing national level policy while creating new opportunities for collaboration on adaptation in Zambia and in the region. Furthermore, learning and lessons will inform policy and practice discussions on locally led adaptation and adaptation finance at global levels – such as in the context of CBA18 in Tanzania and the UNFCCC.

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