

Stories worth telling

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HARARE

AUTHORS

RUDO MAMOMBE

CHIPO PLAXEDES MUBAYA

MURISA MZIME

ALICE MCCLURE



BUILDING RELATIONS AND RECEPTIVITY IN HARARE

The FRACTAL project introduced new approaches to understanding issues and solutions in Harare. These approaches strengthened relationships among stakeholders and decision makers, and increased receptivity to issues of climate variability and change, especially how this receptivity might intersect with development. The project partly helped initiate an ongoing conversation around receptivity issues between various city stakeholders and researchers. Prior to FRACTAL, few (if any) city-focused climate knowledge projects had been implemented, implying that this conversation had not yet started. Stakeholders reflected on broader decision-making processes through FRACTAL (e.g. development decisions). They have reported useful conversations between decision makers and academia and are now more willing to work with one another to co-define issues and solutions.

THE CHANGE STORY

Stakeholders from various backgrounds have come together in Harare to unpack decision-making processes, characterise these processes and consider how they might better approach climate variability and change. For example, during the IF project, city stakeholders discussed the reactionary nature of decisions in Harare, and how this undermines forward-looking planning.

Similar to other southern African cities, climate change and variability issues in Harare are generally overshadowed by pressing development challenges. Carefully planned and facilitated engagements, such as those that have occurred through FRACTAL, allow a space for critical reflection and holistic interrogation of issues including academic, policy and practitioner knowledge.

The team has been encouraged to witness the setting up of a climate desk and City Environmental Management Unit in Harare City Council during the course of the FRACTAL project.

“Collaborative research in the city of Harare as well as the ER approach has been a new and ‘effective’ way of working together with stakeholders in the water and energy sectors. These approaches were highly recommended and have been a valid lesson learnt that can be taken up for future projects building up on the trust and relationships that have been built.”

Rudo Mamombe, FRACTAL ER



RELATED IMPACT STORIES (IS) | FRACTAL city learning lab approach (IS1); Embedded researcher approach (IS5); The importance of relationships & networks (through transdisciplinary co-production (IS6); Developing receptivity through transdisciplinary co-production (IS7).

The Future Resilience for African Cities and Lands (FRACTAL) project aims to address the challenge of providing accessible, timely, applicable and defensible climate information that is needed by decision-makers operating at the city-region scale in southern Africa. FRACTAL impact stories have been collaboratively developed by various research teams. They highlight key methods, engagements and research findings from the FRACTAL project.

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UNPACKING THIS STORY

It is important to bring many different groups together to talk about systemic problems (such as climate change and variability) and potential solutions. Although these conversations are rooted in climate issues, the design of FRACTAL engagements (such as learning labs) and the systemic,

cross-cutting nature of the issues discussed, provided democratic spaces in which many different voices could be heard. The dedicated team of experienced and early career researchers from Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT), together with project partners from the Harare City Council and the

Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) noticed a beneficial change early on. They proactively accessed additional funding to sustain the conversation, building momentum around issues of climate change in the city, as well as supporting more inclusive governance.



Researchers and city stakeholders meet in Harare

LEARNINGS

Several lessons were learned during FRACTAL engagements in Harare.

It is challenging to deal with cross-cutting problems. However, engagements related to climate change and climate variability issues have the potential to contribute to more effective, inclusive

governance, if they are designed and implemented correctly, thanks to the holistic nature of the solutions.

Stakeholders are willing to engage if a platform for genuine engagement is provided. Building trust and relationships takes time and honest engagement. The embedded

researcher model worked well in Harare as a way to bridge the gap between researchers and city stakeholders. It also allowed for a continuity of engagement.



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