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# RESILIENTAFRICA NETWORK (RAN) ACHIEVEMENTS



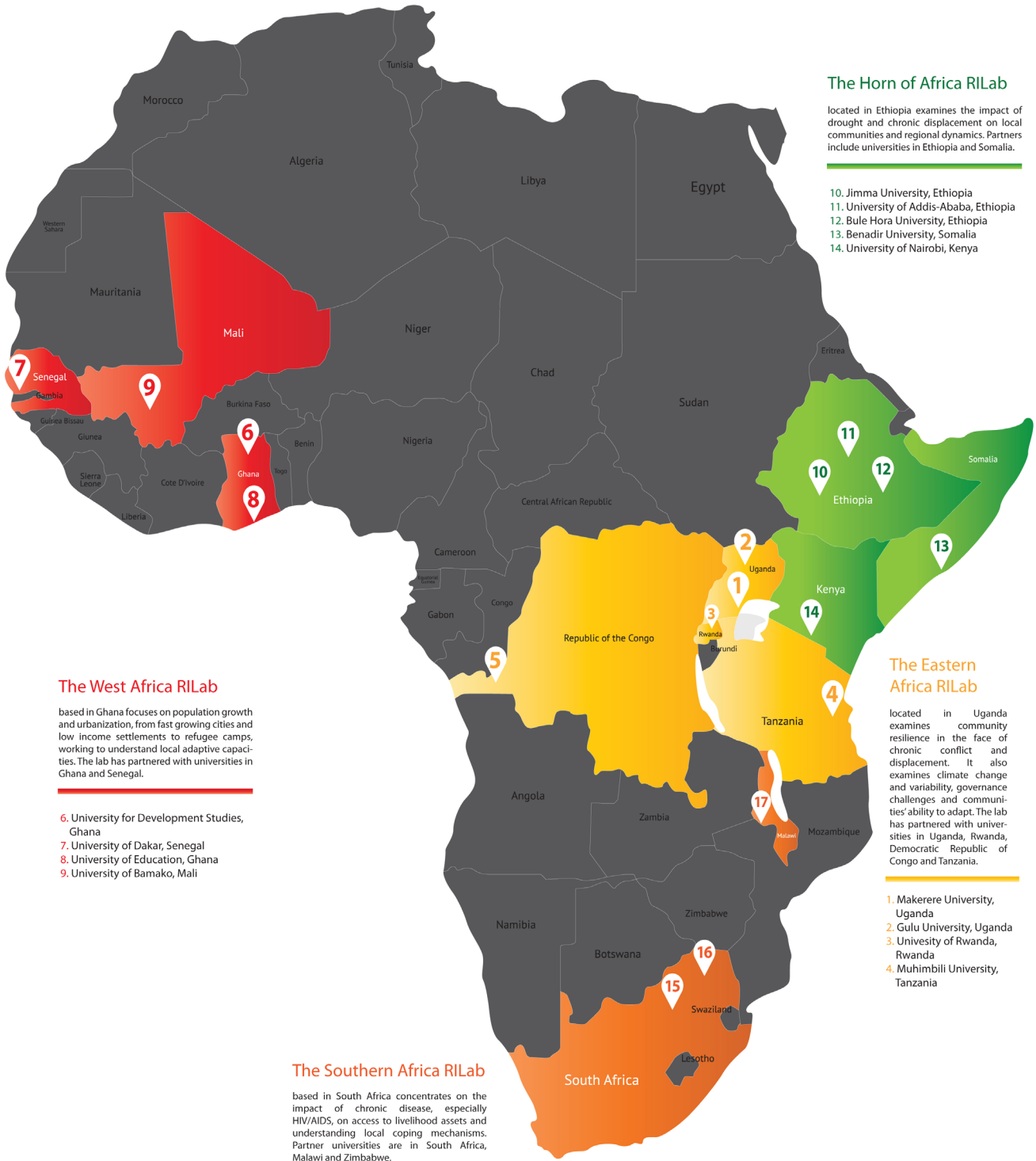
Tape cutting by Dr. Tiora.V.Jones, Division Chief - Higher Education Solutions Network U.S. Global Development Lab, USAID witnessed by The Ag. Deputy U.S Mission Director, Ms. Jo Lesser Oltheten (far left), Prof. Mondo Kagonyera, Chancellor Makerere University, Prof. Nelson Ssewankambo, Principal Makerere University College of Health Sciences, Prof. John Dumba -Ssentamu, Vice Chancellor Makerere University and Prof. William Bazeyo, Dean Makerere University School of Public Health and RAN Chief of Party/Lab Director.

Resilient Africa Network (RAN), as part of USAID’s Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN), has engaged stakeholders in 26 communities across Africa and set up a vibrant network of 18 African Universities in 13 countries over the past four years. This network constitutes 4 regional Resilience Innovation Labs (RILabs). The RILabs serve as platforms for data creation, analysis and dissemination. They also support creative problem solving, are resource centers for ideation, incubation and

support for innovations that strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities.

RAN’s efforts are in partnership with Tulane University’s Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (DRLA), Stanford University, and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). RAN’s network of RILabs provides resources of over 100,000 scholars to access support throughout the innovation process.

# RAN PARTNER UNIVERSITIES



## The Horn of Africa RILab

located in Ethiopia examines the impact of drought and chronic displacement on local communities and regional dynamics. Partners include universities in Ethiopia and Somalia.

10. Jimma University, Ethiopia
11. University of Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia
12. Bule Hora University, Ethiopia
13. Benadir University, Somalia
14. University of Nairobi, Kenya

## The West Africa RILab

based in Ghana focuses on population growth and urbanization, from fast growing cities and low income settlements to refugee camps, working to understand local adaptive capacities. The lab has partnered with universities in Ghana and Senegal.

6. University for Development Studies, Ghana
7. University of Dakar, Senegal
8. University of Education, Ghana
9. University of Bamako, Mali

## The Eastern Africa RILab

located in Uganda examines community resilience in the face of chronic conflict and displacement. It also examines climate change and variability, governance challenges and communities' ability to adapt. The lab has partnered with universities in Uganda, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania.

1. Makerere University, Uganda
2. Gulu University, Uganda
3. University of Rwanda, Rwanda
4. Muhimbili University, Tanzania

## The Southern Africa RILab

based in South Africa concentrates on the impact of chronic disease, especially HIV/AIDS, on access to livelihood assets and understanding local coping mechanisms. Partner universities are in South Africa, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

15. University of Pretoria, South Africa
16. University of Limpopo, South Africa
17. Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi

Resilience Thematic priorities of focus for the RILabs were identified and validated through context and secondary analysis of vulnerability and resilience data with the selection of Partner Universities with strong core academic units related to each thematic focus of their region.



# SUMMARY OF STATISTICS OF THE LABS' IMPACT AS AT SEPTEMBER, 2016

**504,654**  
beneficiaries, community members, students and faculty interacted with during Needfinding and innovation piloting exercises; reached through various innovation activities.

**45**  
communities across RAN engaged in quantitative and Needsfinding exercises.

**987**  
students and faculty trained in the Human Centered Design (HCD) approach as part of capacity development for the innovation pipeline.

**47**  
district government officials trained in the Certificate Resilience Disaster Course with support from UNDP.

**634**  
Modular Knowledge and Information Transaction Systems (MKITS) developed.

**83**  
tools to guide resilience & innovation activities developed.

**19**  
students pitched their innovative ideas at the Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) events in the US with each event having over 300 participants. During both the 2013 and 2014 Technical Convening (TechCon 2013 and 2014), students from RAN emerged best topping other HESN Universities.

**8,274**  
multidisciplinary students reached through the RAN outreach program such as the Ignite Series, Bootcamps, Peer to Peer Sessions, Innovation Garages, Design Clinics, Movie Night Series, Internships, Pitches, Students' Grants, Innovation Jams, Technovation Challenge and RAN4Gals, among others.

**240**  
students participated in HESN Challenges, some winning: Big Ideas, HESN Photo contest, Student grants etc.

**10,333**  
Multidisciplinary students and 750 faculty reached.

**185**  
events held to engage private sector, government, research scholars, young scholars, development partners, NGOs, students, faculty and the community.

**1,680**  
academic faculty members engaged in developing innovative solutions, as judges, mentors and coaches during hackathons, competitions and workshops to contribute to RAN's resilience strategy.

**30**  
Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) signed and 120 other partnerships leveraged across RAN.

**20**  
inter-disciplinary prototyping sessions on global challenges (e.g. Response to the Ebola Challenge, Zika Virus Challenge and calls for proposals among others) held and results translated and submitted to grant challenges.

**1,207,860**  
visitors to the RAN knowledge sharing platforms including the RAN Website, Twitter page-@AfricaResilient, Facebook-Resilient Africa Network, YouTube- and LinkedIn Pages- ResilientAfrica Network.

**5**  
policy briefs developed from Deliberative Polling (DP) community consultations.

**5**  
manuscripts written, undergoing peer review in preparation for publication.

**15**  
abstracts submitted to conferences.





RAN Innovators Engaging potential community end users on the Pedal Tap Innovation 'an affordable hands free foot operated handwashing system'.



RAN Team engaging the Bushenyi District communities just after the landslides of 2016.

## THE RESILIENCE ARM

### ■ An evidenced-based approach

The RAN Resilience Framework developed with support from Tulane University has continued to guide community consultations to inform the innovation process. The RAN framework involves a four-step process: (1) analyzing the context, (2) understanding, measuring and prioritizing resilience dimensions, (3) developing relevant interventions and (4) evaluating their effectiveness in increasing resilience. These methodological steps are not independent of one another, but rather by using them RAN iterates on its methods to strengthen the evidence base and reduce biases to better ground-truth resilience understanding and help set RAN's priorities.

As a feedback generating measure for the Resilience Framework, RAN conducted four RI Lab-based workshops, *Resilience Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (RAME)* to discuss the contents of its resilience framework with internal and external audiences including experts and faculty members at partner universities.

### ■ Multiple Methods to Resilience Research

RAN's multiple methods approach to resilience research help researchers tell multiple sides of a story. For example; the qualitative methods capture community voices and thus highlight unique phenomena while the quantitative methods illustrate prevalence, allowing researchers to test hypotheses and build regional resilience indexes for use by the larger development/ humanitarian community.

RAN's research philosophy begins by designing tools to effectively generate data and locally relevant evidence to support future resilience solutions. Thus, to strengthen communities' resilience and ultimately improve wellbeing, it is important to first understand contextual factors, resilience dimensions, and adaptive strategies in the target communities. Only then can interventions be designed that build on existing capabilities within communities to strengthen their resilience.



Deliberative Polling (DP) in Mt. Elgon Region, Eastern Uganda.

## DELIBERATIVE POLLING (DP) A NOVEL APPROACH TO COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

RAN spearheaded the first use of Deliberative Polling in Africa. DP is an innovative approach for democratic consultation with communities and was successfully conducted in the Mt. Elgon region in Uganda (Bududa and Butalejja, July, 2014 ) and in the Tamale area of Ghana (November – January 2015). A future DP is planned for September-October in Dakar, Senegal. DP is a research technique used to assess a community's opinion before and after consideration and discussion of an issue in depth. The methodology relies on a scientifically rigorous

representative sample of stakeholders being chosen to engage in a transparent debate so that everyone can consider the pros and cons of competing policy options. Three Deliberative Polls involving 700 randomly selected community members in deep policy dialogues on climate risks and rapid urbanization were conducted. The results from these consultations continue to be disseminated in different forms highlighting the challenges communities grapple with, their coping mechanisms and the solutions they propose.



Uganda's State Minister of Health, Hon Chris Baryomunsi officially launching the 1st Annual State of African Resilience Report in Kampala, Uganda.

## THE 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL STATE OF AFRICAN RESILIENCE REPORT UNDERSTANDING THE DIMENSIONS OF VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

As working with Communities is at the heart of RAN, community consultations in 16 communities across 9 countries, covering 6 themes were conducted. These consultations culminated into RAN's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual State of African Resilience Report published in March 2015 [www.ranlab.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/State-of-African-Resilience-Report.pdf](http://www.ranlab.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/State-of-African-Resilience-Report.pdf). RAN's 1<sup>st</sup> annual State of African Resilience report offers a background on the evolution and objectives of the RAN. It also describes the new methodological tools that the network brings

to measuring and improving community resilience and offers a preliminary look at what the RILabs are learning in the diverse communities in which RAN works. Additionally, the report highlights a range of new players and new approaches to the challenge of understanding and building resilience among vulnerable populations. Subsequent State of African Resilience reports will profile the labs' findings on vulnerability and resilience, while highlighting interventions and innovations developed by RI Lab collaborative teams.

## LINKING RESILIENCE TO INNOVATION

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

1. **Crowdsourcing:** RAN crowd-sources innovations with the highest potential to impact resilience. Selected innovators are invited to compete at events or exhibitions and receive mentoring/ assistance through the Resilience Innovation Acceleration Program (RIAP).
2. **Prioritizing community needs:** Through themed Resilience Innovation Challenges (RIC), RAN funds new ideas and innovations that address the unique needs of local communities.
3. **Co-creation:** Through a process called Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design (CRID), RAN convenes experts and guides them through a co-creation process to design projects that address multiple system-level problems.

7 requests for applications have been shared out including the Resilience Innovation challenge 4 Adverse Climate Effects (RIC4ACE), Resilience Innovation Challenge 4 Food Security and Improved Income Generation (RIC4FIG), Youth Spark Innovation Grant Call (YSiG), Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design 4 Recurrent Effects of Drought (CRID4RED), Resilience Innovation Challenge for Conflict (RIC4CONF), Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design for Recurrent Effects of Chronic Internal Displacement (CRID4CID) and Collaborative Resilience Innovation Design for Food Security and Diversified Livelihoods in the Face of Rapid Urbanization (CRID4FAL). Details accessed on [www.grants.ranlab.org](http://www.grants.ranlab.org).

The RAN Innovation Portfolio currently encompasses 68 innovative projects [www.ranlab.org/innovations](http://www.ranlab.org/innovations) which are being incubated in the RILabs and receiving support, mentorship, guidance, and capacity building. In addition to USAID funding, the RAN innovator mentorship program is partly being supported by Rockefeller's Bridgespan project.

RILabs have worked with an additional 53 other projects by providing technical assistance, capacity building, mentorship and connections to external funding sources through the Monthly RAN Innovation Garages, Ignite series events, Social Innovation Grade sessions, pitch Tuesdays, and other training and support events.

#### ■ Innovation Incubation Spaces acquired

All four RILabs have acquired fully operational physical spaces within their respective universities for innovation incubation activities that serve as wider support around innovation at each university.

The four Resilience Innovation Labs serve and continue to grow as RAN's centers for tapping into the wide and vibrant resource of students, faculty and the community for ideation, development and testing of innovations. RAN has also continued to participate in several external, multidisciplinary stakeholder events related to social capital to further support innovations.



RAN4Gals - Motivating more girls to participate in innovation.

### RAN4Gals: An Initiative to attract more females to Innovate

Under the RAN4Gals program women and girls are engaged in activities including capacity building in courses like Design Thinking, Needfinding, Mentorship, Business Modeling and pitching. The participants also receive technical support and guidance to push their ideas or projects forward. This support is offered through; Bar Camps, Ignite Innovator Series, Movie Nights and Coding Sessions, among others. In this Program, RAN has partnered with the Technovation Challenge, which supports women and girls in order to help them develop mobile applications and pitch them at national and international competitions. This program attracted a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) journalist who profiled some of the young women and their innovations.

## ENGAGEMENT, LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Engagement is a key ingredient of RAN's successful innovations pipeline. RAN has continued to engage with development partners both in the region and globally emphasizing its multi-disciplinary collaborative approach. Public and private sector stakeholders continue to be engaged from within and outside Africa through meetings (on-line and face-to-face), events, workshops, and social gatherings in the four RILabs. New and continued contacts are continuously populated in a living database of stakeholders in order to ease access to resources across the entire ResilientAfrica Network. In addition, RAN compiled and has continued to update an open-access inventory of innovation hubs which are useful to innovators and stakeholders who are generally interested in the innovation support landscape in Africa. It is through such engagements that RAN has been able to effectively publicize its activities, Grant calls, identify mentors, student ambassadors, faculty focal persons, judges and advisory board members for its many activities and to work more deeply with partners. Such collaborations promote the culture of building on the existing efforts in strengthening resilience to avoid resource wastage and duplication which is fundamental to RAN. Individual Innovators have also leveraged additional funds to support their specific innovations including investment and recognition from global companies, Venture Capitalists and African national governments that totalled to approximately \$ 379, 700 for health and agricultural innovations.

The Resilience Innovation Labs (RILabs) have engaged over 100 external stakeholders' categories including various organizations, academia, government agencies, Private Sector, among others.

RAN has utilized the connections to other universities in the Higher Education Solutions Network to undergo new projects, find new connections for students and faculty, build skills, and share research and data. These partnerships and collaborations have included work with MIT, the College of William and Mary, UC Berekely, and Texas A&M.

### RAN has leveraged internal and external Partnerships and resources including the following;

RAN has successfully partnered with additional USAID operating units and in USAID challenges (Fighting Ebola Challenge) as well as governmental organizations (UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, ICRC, Uganda Communications Commission-UCC and National Information Technology Authority (NITA-U), private philanthropic organizations (Rockefeller Foundation) and NGOs (Technovation Challenge, the Consortium for enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development Limited (CURAD), HiiL Innovating Justice, ENventure and NUCAFE) among others.



Prof. William Bazeyo, Dean Makerere University School of Public Health and RAN Chief of Party Engaging Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, Uganda's Prime Minister on Innovation and more.

The USAID Frontlines Piece highlighting the Network's efforts to positively transform target communities and some of the Innovative projects under incubation in the ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) Innovation Lab.



<https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/frontlines/resilience-2015/resilientafrica-network-aims-live-its-name>

## KNOWLEDGE SHARING

### ■ Modular Knowledge and Information Transaction Systems (MKITS)

As part of its strategy, RAN is using Modular Knowledge and Information Transaction Systems (MKITS) for knowledge creation and dissemination. MKITS capture the spectrum of possible knowledge and educational resources developed by the RILabs to build the capacity of innovators and target communities. These range from short instructional videos or presentations designed to offer targeted 'Just in Time' capacity building, traditional courses that offer broader training/knowledge, to community focused materials. As many materials are ultra-short instructional videos, the

RILabs use them to develop high-value learning objects in real-time, using minimal resources. MKITS are presented as a menu of learning objects on an accessible platform where learners can choose materials to meet their learning goals. Mentors can also refer mentees to a particular resource (or a batch of them). Likewise, a batch of resources can be packaged into one course (e.g. short videos on human-centred design, divergence and convergence and rapid prototyping could be packaged into a design thinking module) to support deeper learning.

### ■ RAN Tools

RAN has developed unique tools which can be referenced or re-used by other developmental partners and scholars. These tools include; the Innovation Impact Assessment Tools, Tools to source for Innovation developed in partnership with Stanford University. Community Capacity Building (CCB) tool, Mentoring tools (Hand book/ Guide, Consent form, evaluation form & database), tools for organizing a Human Centered Design (HCD) workshop, Business Modeling tools (pitching guidelines, business model canvas, and general business training notes), the Outreach Guide, Innovation Strategy, Communications Strategy, Engagement Strategy and Community Engagement Strategy, among others.

**More information about the RAN tools** is accessible at [www.ranlab.org](http://www.ranlab.org) Regular updates are shared in the RAN Bulletins accessed at <http://www.ranlab.org/2015-bulletin> and <http://www.ranlab.org/2016-bulletins>.

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