



## **SysTem for Analysis, Research and Training**

### **Introduction**

START is the global change SysTem for Analysis, Research and Training, a non-governmental research organization. We assist developing countries in building the expertise and knowledge needed to explore the drivers of and solutions to global and regional environmental change. Our goal is to reduce vulnerability through informed decision-making.

Climate change, land and ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss are all drivers of global environmental change. Developing regions are not only particularly vulnerable to adverse impacts of these changes, but have very limited access to scientific and technical knowledge to assist in formulating solutions. This is the gap START seeks to fill.

### **Building capacity for research in developing countries**

- Identifying opportunities for developing countries to participate in regional and international climate change research, including funding opportunities
- Results of regional research programmes activities and collaboration with developing countries: success stories of improved research capacity

#### ***The African Climate Change Fellowship Program (ACCFP)***

Through Round 1 of the African Climate Change Fellowship Program, which was completed in 2010, START and its partners (University of Dar es Salaam and the African Academy of Sciences) matched 44 Post-Doctoral, Doctoral, Teaching and Policy Fellows, representing 42 institutions across Africa, with 18 Host Institutions in Africa to implement research projects that enhanced their capabilities for advancing and applying knowledge for climate change adaptation. START is collaborating with the Institute of Resource Assessment at the University of Dar Es Salaam to implement Phase II of the ACCFP, which includes two round of Fellowship awards (both to begin in 2011) and integrative seminars that add value to the Fellowship experience. The Fellows, together with their Home and Host Institutions of the ACCFP, form the foundation of a growing Pan-African network on adaptation to climate change.

#### ***Global environmental change (GEC) research grants***

Global environmental change (GEC) research grants awarded to early- to mid-career scientists from Africa and the Asia Pacific region have significantly enhanced understanding of global change impacts and adaptation across a range of sectors and geographical scales including food security and agriculture, forestry, land-use, water resources and urbanization. The GEC grants have also provided new opportunities for long-term collaborative research partnerships and networks, strengthened outreach to policy and practitioner communities and have contributed new knowledge highly relevant to human well-being.

Through the Africa GEC grants program, START will in 2011 make 18 grants to African scientists to work on interdisciplinary and cross-institutional research collaborations on global environmental change, agriculture and food security. Work in over 40 research institutions across 17 countries in Africa will be supported through this year's grants. The program is funded by the US National Science Foundation with co-support, for the Africa component, from the Climate and Development Knowledge Network and with additional support from the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security initiative of the Earth Science System Partnership and the CGIAR.

## **Communicating climate change science**

- Communicating research results - examples of good practices and overcoming challenges
- Ways to enhance effectiveness of policy-science dialogues, including the SBSTA research dialogue

### ***City-level dialogues:***

START's *Cities at Risk* (CAR) program for coastal megacities in Asia, which began in 2009, brings together scientists, urban planners and other key decision-makers to examine climate related risks, potential vulnerabilities, current coping strategies and potential adaptation responses across Asian coastal megacities. The *Cities at Risk II* conference held in Taipei, Taiwan in April 2011 resulted in the initiation of city-level adaptation / disaster risk reduction stakeholder dialogue programs in Jakarta, Indonesia and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to begin later in 2011. Two additional cities will be added in 2011-2012. As part of this effort, city-level training workshop(s) for practitioners and a regional workshop to bring together all stakeholders will be convened to explore key insights and lessons learned from the cities and their implications for climate change adaptation in urban areas across Asia and elsewhere in the developing world.

### ***National dialogues:***

In 2010 START, in partnership with the WMO, UNEP, IPCC, University of Dar es Salaam, University of Ghana and the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, convened national-level science-policy dialogues in nine countries across West Africa, East Africa and South Asia to enable better integration of climate change issues in development planning. The dialogues, which brought together IPCC scientists, national scientists, parliamentarians, government ministry and agency representatives, NGOs and civil society representatives, and the national media, examined climate change risks in the context of agriculture and food security, human health, water, ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation, urbanization, and energy.

### ***Regional dialogues:***

A regional dialogue on climate change, agriculture and food security for semi-arid West Africa was convened by START and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa in 2010 in Niamey, Niger. The dialogue examined climate change risks to pastoral and agro-pastoral systems in the West African Sahel, opportunities for adaptation, and policies and measures needed to support adaptation planning. START together with the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research will convene a regional science-policy dialogue on integrated disaster risk reduction with a focus on Asian cities and megadeltas in late 2011.

An important outcome of these multi-stakeholder dialogues has been the identification of potential policy responses to support adaptation, the need for better enforcement of existing policies and regulations that govern environmental protection, disaster response, and food security, and the need for targeted programs to build capacity in the areas of climate services, integrated research and assessment, and climate change communication.

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