



INACCT

Resilience

*Designing Inclusive African
Coastal City Resilience*

Methodological toolkit of the Capacity Strengthening Responsive Fund Cross Border Exchange project:

Applying and adapting INACCT and REPRESA's approach





CROSS-BORDER LEARNING FOR RESILIENCE: AN INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGICAL TOOLKIT

Approaching resilience research in an innovative, multi-modal, and accessible way has been central to collecting meaningfully co-developed insights to inform actionable strategies that prioritise gender-responsiveness and broader social inclusion. Many of these methodologies, as well as the principles underpinning them, are outlined in the Innovative, inclusive and gender responsive engagement methodologies document. Under the CS Fund specifically, the following methodologies, implemented during learning exchanges in Durban and Beira, have proven highly effective for surfacing local expertise, and bridging the gap between place-based 'informal' knowledge systems and 'formal' institutional planning.

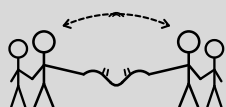
They are premised on **three learning modalities**:

INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING



The instructional modality encompasses structured, facilitated learning in which knowledge and skills are deliberately transmitted to participants ahead of or during engagement activities. Under the CS Responsive Fund, instructional learning was used selectively and strategically — not as the primary mode of knowledge transfer, but as a necessary foundation that equipped community delegates with the frameworks, language, and practical tools they needed to participate fully in experiential and relational processes. This modality is most effective when it directly preceded experiential activity – for example, when a session on evacuation planning immediately preceded a simulation exercise, participants were better equipped to observe, question, and contribute meaningfully.

RELATIONAL LEARNING



Peer-to-peer networking fosters cross-border collaboration between Durban and Beira. It builds capacity by creating a supportive network where participants share local knowledge, such as beliefs about weather-indicator animals, across cultural boundaries. This type of horizontal exchange sustains long-term resilience by building trust and solidarity, ensuring collaboration is sustained beyond the formal project lifecycle.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



This approach uses action learning and site visits to apply knowledge in real-world contexts. It builds practical capacity by allowing participants to navigate flood zones and test early warning toolkits. Experiential learning processes encourage increased local ownership as residents see how abstract concepts translate into tangible, community-managed resilience actions. A core component of the experiential learning process was community-led site visits. Residents acted as expert guides, leading delegates from the visiting city as well as local municipal officials through settlements to witness flood-risk contexts and local innovations. This methodology builds leadership and facilitation skills while grounding both delegates and municipal officials in the lived reality of flooding in informal settlements. Its impact is profound, as it allows officials to see challenges through the community's eyes, fostering institutional insight and acknowledgement for local expertise.

These learning modalities are engaged through various innovative methodological processes, with some spanning multiple modalities. All methodologies are designed to maximise capacity strengthening of both knowledge and skills for learning exchange participants:

INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING

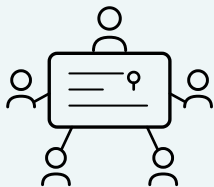
Facilitation skills training



This involves training for community members on how to host and lead exchange sessions using interactive methodologies such as playdough modelling and participatory mapping. The aim is to position delegates not as visitors or passive learning but as active co-facilitators, shifting power dynamics, building confidence for community members as co-researchers and encouraging deeper engagement.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



Learning Laboratories (“Labs”)

These participatory sessions bring together residents, municipal officials, and researchers from local universities to validate research and co-develop outputs such as INACCT's Risk and Resilience Profiles. By leveraging activities such as interactive mapping, Learning Labs facilitate the incorporation of local realities into resilience strategies, bridging the gap between grassroots knowledge and formal municipal planning. Such events also build community capacity to analyse technical data and formulate actionable recommendations for resilience interventions.



Participatory mapping

Participatory risk mapping is a community-centred exercise which supports local residents to identify, visualise, and explore risks (such as hazards, vulnerabilities, and resources) in their environment by collaboratively creating maps based on local knowledge. This exercise strengthens community resilience through improved understanding of climate risks, informs local planning, and enhances trust and knowledge integration between community members and external stakeholders.



Plasticine (playdough) modelling

This tactile, arts-based method allows participants to physically simulate flood scenarios and response plans. Since this method does not require very technical expertise, it is more accessible and inclusive of diverse stakeholders – including informal settlement residents. This facilitates local capacity building for flood management and the impact is a shared, visible understanding of vulnerability, allowing participants to co-design response plans that consider every household's needs. Importantly, community members from Durban led a plasticine modelling exercise during the learning exchange in Beira, as part of a Learning Lab engagement, which fostered critical leadership skills.



PhotoVoice

Participants use photography to document their own experiences with climate risk and community resilience. This builds agency by allowing residents to frame their own narratives around experiences of flooding. The impact is an evocative evidence base that communicates the reality of flooding to policymakers and researchers, ensuring historically marginalised voices remain central to the resilience-building process.



EWS simulations/ stress tests

Rather than presenting early warning systems as finished technical products for communities to receive and implement, this methodology placed community members, local committee representatives, and institutional actors together in a shared scenarios which actively tests how warning chains perform under pressure and where they break down. The methodology surfaces issues that formal planning documents tend to obscure (e.g. unclear institutional mandates) and generates recommendations that are co-owned by all participants.



Diary reflections

Delegates record personal observations and reflections throughout the exchange. Diary entries were structured according to three prompting themes: 1. "I like" (positive aspects of the experience) 2. "I wonder" (questions or reflections that remain) 3. "I wish" (what could have been done differently). Serving as a valuable MEL tool, this exercise helps to consolidate and critically reflect on new knowledge, generating a rich qualitative dataset capturing nuanced insights (e.g. differences in volunteering cultures) which are used to refine project strategies and improve future capacity-strengthening initiatives.



RELATIONAL LEARNING



Peer-to-peer exchanges

This form of engagement, entailing direct and structured learning between community members across cities, positions delegates as primary knowledge holders. It facilitates the process of sharing lived experiences and learning from similar structural challenges in an unfamiliar context, thereby validating existing knowledge and offering new practical solutions.



Open science workshop

This extends relational learning into the academic space, positioning community members as co-researchers and co-reviewers of resilience initiatives and knowledge products. A workshop may even begin with a structured discussion on knowledge authority and power dynamics in research to explicitly acknowledge the tendency to privilege university-generated knowledge over the lived expertise of those most affected by climate hazards.



Pre- and post-exchange focus groups

Pre- and post-exchange focus groups act as critical scaffolding around cross-border exchange events, ensuring that learning is collectively owned rather than held only by the individuals who travelled. Pre-exchange discussions ensure that travelling delegates carried a collective mandate rather than individual perspectives. Post-exchange reflection sessions create a structured space for delegates to share what they had seen, learned, and intend to implement in their own neighbourhoods. They also serve as a valuable opportunity for capturing MEL insights.

This document presents the methodological toolkit and approach of the Capacity Strengthening Responsive Fund Cross Border Exchange project: Applying and adapting INACCT Resilience and REPRESA project's approach.

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