

2025 Year in Review



message from the Director

As 2025 draws to a close, it is clear that this has been a year of consolidation, connection, and influence for the Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN). Across our programmes, partnerships, and platforms, we have worked to ensure that African-led evidence does not remain confined to reports or pilot projects, but informs decisions in the policy, financing, and implementation spaces where climate outcomes are shaped.

A central pillar of our work in 2025 was advancing accountability in climate adaptation. Through the Locally Led Adaptation Metrics for Africa (LAMA) initiative and the Accountable Adaptation programme, ARIN collaborated with communities, researchers, and policymakers to interrogate what adaptation success looks like in practice. This work directly informed Africa's engagement with the Global Goal on Adaptation, reinforcing the need for indicators that are grounded in context, responsive to inequality, and meaningful to the communities they are intended to serve.

Equally important was ARIN's role as a cross-sector convener. In October, ARIN co-led the Pan-African Conference on Environment, Climate Change and Health in Nairobi with national ministries, research institutions, and regional partners. Bringing together researchers, policymakers, donors, community actors, and the private sector, the conference strengthened science-to-policy pathways and elevated African climate-health evidence, underscoring the urgency of integrated approaches to resilience, public health, and environmental sustainability.

ARIN continued this convening role through regional roundtables on adaptation effectiveness, the BioCAM4 Workshop in Kakamega on nature-based climate actions, and a range of technical dialogues linking climate, biodiversity, and human well-being. These were not symbolic gatherings, but working spaces that produced methodologies, evidence compendia, and policy-relevant insights.

At the global level, ARIN's participation in COP30 was the culmination of sustained pre-COP engagement, including SB62 in Bonn, regional summits, and the LAMA Pre-COP Webinar Series. These efforts ensured that Africa arrived at COP30 not as a passive recipient of global frameworks but as a contributor with evidence, clarity, and coordinated positions on adaptation, urban resilience, and climate finance.

The year also marked a significant investment in African knowledge systems. The launch of the ARIN Publishing Academy, in partnership with Taylor & Francis, reflects our long-term commitment to strengthening African-led scholarship, enhancing research integrity, and ensuring that African evidence is presented with credibility and influence on global knowledge platforms.

Across emerging areas such as AI for climate resilience, climate-health governance, urban adaptation, and climate finance, ARIN continued to test new ideas while remaining anchored in ethics, equity, and local ownership. Our partnerships with universities, governments, research institutions, and international networks expanded both the scale and depth of our work.

None of this progress would have been possible without the trust and collaboration of our partners, funders, fellows, researchers, and community actors. 2025 demonstrated that when evidence is co-produced, when convening is purposeful, and when African institutions lead with clarity, meaningful influence follows.

As we look ahead, ARIN remains committed to advancing locally led adaptation, strengthening accountable climate action, and ensuring that African evidence continues to inform policy, finance, and practice across the continent and beyond.

Africa is not just adapting. Africa is defining the future of adaptation.

Dr. Joanes Atela

2025 at a Glance: Flagship Highlights

- ✔ Launched the ARIN Publishing Academy in partnership with Taylor & Francis to strengthen African scholarship and research integrity
- ✔ Led continental conversations on AI, adaptation effectiveness, and climate–health governance
- ✔ Advanced African priorities within the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) ahead of and during COP30
- ✔ Participated in COP30 in Belém, Brazil, positioning African evidence in global negotiations
- ✔ Released flagship evidence, including the Africa State of Evidence: Climate & Health
- ✔ Convened stakeholders across policymakers, researchers, and communities to ensure adaptation works where it matters most



PILLAR 1: From Evidence to Policy Influence

ARIN at COP30: From Local Evidence to Global Decisions

In November 2025, ARIN participated in COP30 in Belém, Brazil, represented by Dr. Joanes Atela, Dr. Humphrey Agevi, and Dr. Akinyi Eurallyah. Our engagement was the culmination of a year-long strategy to ensure that African-led evidence meaningfully influenced global climate outcomes.

Through targeted side events, technical dialogues, and high-level engagements, ARIN advanced African priorities on:

- ✓ The Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), drawing on evidence from the LAMA initiative to advocate for indicators that are locally grounded, measurable, and just
- ✓ Urban climate resilience and housing rights, through the Building Climate Resilience for the Urban Poor (BCRUP) programme
- ✓ Adaptation finance, engaging policymakers and financiers on aligning resources with community realities

ARIN's COP30 participation built on sustained pre-COP engagement, including SB62 in Bonn, the LAMA Pre-COP Webinar Series, and regional summits. Together, these efforts ensured that Africa arrived at COP30 not as a passive recipient of frameworks, but as a co-author of global adaptation priorities.

Making Adaptation Accountable

In partnership with FCDO, ARIN led a groundbreaking East Africa Roundtable Series on assessing the effectiveness of climate adaptation. From Arusha to Nairobi to Kigali, these dialogues moved beyond assumptions to ask hard questions: Where does adaptation work? Where does it fail? And why? The outcomes are now directly informing GGA indicators and Africa's collective positioning in global adaptation debates.

A Call for Urgency, Unity, and Action at BioCAM4

ARIN, in partnership with York University and IDOS, hosted the BioCAM4 Workshop in Kakamega, Kenya (December 8-10, 2025), advancing Nature-Based Climate Actions (NBCAs) in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB). Stakeholders co-developed methodologies for climate-biodiversity-health interlinkages, mapped NBCAs in key sites like Kakamega Forest and Lake Victoria Basin, and produced evidence compendiums and action plans through sessions led by Dr. Humphrey Agevi.

Accountable Adaptation Fellows

On April 1st, ARIN proudly welcomed a new cohort of fellows under the Accountable Adaptation initiative. These brilliant researchers are tackling pressing climate adaptation challenges across Africa through innovative, impact-driven research. Through evidence-based, community-centered, and policy-relevant research, the fellows are contributing to strengthening accountability in adaptation efforts.

Shaping the State of Adaptation

ARIN proudly led the development of the State of Adaptation Report (SoAR) 2025 for the Africa Adaptation Initiative. More than a report, SoAR is a continental mirror, grounding global adaptation debates in African realities, lived experience, and locally led solutions.

PILLAR 2: AI, Innovation, and Climate Futures

AI for Climate Resilience

Can artificial intelligence strengthen climate resilience without deepening inequality? Throughout 2025, ARIN answered this by pairing innovation with ethics, equity, and local ownership.

Key milestones included:

- ✓ Hosting the AI for Climate Resilience Workshop with the University of Nairobi
- ✓ Releasing a Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) on AI readiness in African higher education
- ✓ Launching a Call for AI Fellows to bridge technology, policy, and locally led adaptation
- ✓ Featured in the Daily Nation, highlighting digital sovereignty and community-centered AI

Our conclusion was clear: Africa's climate future must be technologically advanced and socially grounded.

Global Research Partnership

ARIN expanded its global research footprint through a new partnership with LEAMLAB at the University of Illinois, opening funding opportunities for early-career researchers, advancing AI-driven climate adaptation studies, and strengthening mentorship links between the USA and Kenya.

PILLAR 3: Locally Led Adaptation & Community Realities

Listening Before Measuring

Through the Locally Led Adaptation Metrics for Africa (LAMA) project, ARIN spent time where adaptation is lived and not theorized. In Kenya's Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB), farmers, women's groups, and youth shared what success looks like on the ground. What emerged was not just data, but agency, trust, and narrative evidence, now shaping how adaptation metrics are being designed across Africa.

Urban Climate Justice

ARIN advanced collaboration with Kenya's Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development on the Building Climate Resilience for the Urban Poor (BCRUP) initiative, centering street-level realities in national and global adaptation frameworks.

Climate, Health, and Human Well-being

2025 marked a major leap in integrating climate and health in African policy spaces. ARIN:

- ✓ Co-designed the Pan-African Conference on Environment, Climate Change and Health with KEMRI, Ministries of Health and Environment, and the CHANCE Network
- ✓ Released the Africa State of Evidence Report 2024: Climate & Health
- ✓ Through CAPCHA, spotlighted the mental health dimensions of climate change

Our position remains firm: climate resilience is incomplete without human health at its center.

Knowledge, Publishing, and African Scholarship

A major milestone this year was the launch of the ARIN Publishing Academy, in partnership with Taylor & Francis Group. The Academy reflects our long-term commitment to:

- ✓ Strengthening African-led scholarship
- ✓ Improving research integrity and data stewardship
- ✓ Amplifying African voices in global knowledge systems

ARIN collaborated with Taylor & Francis to deliver a workshop on strengthening data stewardship and upholding research integrity in STEM fields.

Additional 2025 Milestones

- ✓ Nurtured future thought leaders through the ARIN Fellowship Program 2025, empowering early-career researchers in climate adaptation and policy innovation
- ✓ Hosted an FCDO Study Dissemination Webinar to translate evidence into climate resilience strategies
- ✓ Participated in the Step Change Learning Review Workshop in Tanzania, exploring sustainability and research-to-action pathways
- ✓ Engaged with PlanAdapt on community-led adaptation and early-career researcher empowerment
- ✓ Launched a study on Opportunities for Mobilizing NDC Finance in African countries with Frankfurt School of Finance & Management and IDRC support
- ✓ Represented at AHAIC 2025 in Kigali on climate, health, and gender inequalities
- ✓ Contributed to the 2nd Africa Climate Finance Conference in Kampala, advocating justice-driven finance
- ✓ ARIN Regional Dialogues on Bridging the Finance Gap in Africa

Looking Ahead

As we move into the new year, ARIN remains committed to advancing locally led adaptation, grounding global goals in African realities, and shaping evidence that moves power, policy, and practice. Thank you for walking this journey with us. Happy Holidays!

With appreciation,

ARIN Editorial Team

Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN)