

Adaptation Literacy Short Course

Professional Training Course

Updated June 2026

Garama's Adaptation Literacy Short Course runs as a 1-day in-person course or online over three 2-hour sessions. It is a condensed version of our 2-day Adaptation Literacy course with much less emphasis on climate science and global policy contexts, although there is some brief introductory content on climate science in the context of the Paris temperature goals. The course mixes taught content with short, interactive exercises, listed at the end of this programme.

This short course is aimed at people who already have a good grasp of climate change science, impacts and policy and/or who want to jump straight into the core adaptation content. A more detailed treatment of adaptation, aimed at those who need to integrate adaptation into their professional work, is provided by our longer *Adapting to Climate Change* course. See garama-training.com for more details.

1. Key concepts in adaptation

- Introduction – what we are adapting to?
 - Global warming – current status
 - Contributions to warming
 - Future warming
 - Impacts of warming
- Fundamental concepts
 - What is adaptation?
 - Maladaptation
 - The adaptation deficit
- Adaptation and risk
 - IPCC risk framework
 - Components of risk
 - Adaptation as risk reduction
- Types of adaptation
 - Incremental vs transformational
 - Other types of adaptation
 - Transformative adaptation
- Resilience
 - What is resilience?
 - How does it relate to adaptation?

2. Conditions for effective adaptation

- Why adaptation interventions fail
 - How adaptation can increase risk
 - The pitfalls of adaptation 'projects'
- Three pillars of effective adaptation
 - Addressing specific risks
 - Addressing drivers of vulnerability
 - Ensuring appropriate ownership
- Participation & inclusion
 - Different types of participation
 - Local relevance & ownership
 - Building on local knowledge
 - Scientific knowledge & co-creation
- Governance for adaptation
 - Scales & integration
 - Legislation & mandates
 - Entry points for action
 - Devolved finance & decision-making
- Principles for just & effective adaptation
 - Locally led adaptation
 - General principles for good adaptation



3. Elements in the adaptation process

- The adaptation cycle
 - Key steps based on existing guidance
- Creating enabling environments
 - Awareness & knowledge
 - Norms & values
 - Governance revisited
- Climate risk assessment
 - Key elements of an assessment
 - Assessing hazards
 - Assessing vulnerabilities
 - Data-rich vs data-scarce contexts
 - Data sources
 - Participatory assessment
 - Outputs of an assessment
 - Identifying potential adaptation actions
- Prioritising adaptation actions
 - Who decides?
 - Choosing selection criteria
 - Multi-criteria analysis
 - Selecting adaptation options
- Designing & implementing actions
 - Who is involved, and when
 - Governance & oversight
 - Maladaptation & safeguards
 - Sustainability & flexibility
- Monitoring, evaluation & learning
 - Outputs, outcomes & impacts
 - Monitoring & indicators
 - Evaluating adaptation effectiveness
 - Capturing lessons

Short interactive exercises

Session 1

- Participants' understandings of adaptation and risk
- Classifying adaptation responses – incremental or transformational?
- Participants' understandings of resilience

Session 2

- How might adaptation interventions make things worse? – participants' ideas
- Participants' experiences of participation – good and bad
- Governance challenges & entry points for adaptation - participants' perspectives

Session 3

- Participants identify key hazards, impacts and vulnerabilities from their own contexts
- Participants identify potential adaptation responses to above hazards
- Participants identify potential criteria for prioritising adaptation responses
- Ideas for indicators of adaptation success, based on above adaptation responses

Wrap-up

What are people's key takeaways from the training, and what questions do they still have?