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## ResilientAfrica Network conducts Deliberative Poll in Tamale

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The ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) has conducted a Deliberative Poll (DP) in the Tamale Metropolis on interventions that responded to the felt needs of the people in relation to rapid urbanisation that it developed.

The RAN in collaboration with the University for Development Studies (UDS) is aiming to strengthen the resilience of people and systems in Africa by leveraging the knowledge, scholarship and creativity that exist in partner universities to build resilience of communities.

The two-day DP brought together some 242 deliberators who discussed 39 intervention proposals in small groups each, with a panel of experts who supported the participants by answering questions that arose during deliberations.

The RAN also made available a video version of the briefing documents for the non-literate deliberators to appreciate the changes and for their active participation.

The DP is the first of its kind in West Africa and second in Africa after Uganda, and spearheaded by the UDS, which has a sub-contract to host the USAID-funded West Africa Resilience Innovation Lab (RILab WA) as part of the RAN with Makerere University in Kenya.

DP is based on the principle that when people have accurate and comprehensive information, they reach informed decisions and make qualitative contributions to policies and programmes.

Mr Dennis Chirawurah, Co-ordinator of RAN, speaking at the opening of the two-day programme, said Tamale was chosen for the poll because it was one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa.

He said as part of the poll, RAN had incubated, tested and scaled innovations that would strengthen individual and system-wide capabilities to reduce vulnerabilities.

Mr Chirawurah said before the DP took place, stakeholders' forum was held last year, where diverse expertise were assembled and deliberated over the dimensions and relevance of issues of rapid urbanisation to the people of Tamale and built consensus on critical areas of the DP.

Deliberators discussed issues of rapid urbanisation, waste management and implication for public health and urban livelihoods, and also gave suggestions to work out for attitudinal change other than over reliance on District Assemblies to address their problems.

Most of the deliberators, at the group level, which centred on water, sanitation and hygiene, expressed concern about the manner in which community members were not observing personal hygiene and some land developers building houses without toilet facilities, which was bad.

They commended UDS and RAN for the DP and assured that what they had learnt would be put into practice to ensure that they lived responsible lives that would rid their environments of filth.

Measures would also be put in place to ensure that their water bodies were not polluted, they said.

Professor Gabriel Teye, Pro Vice-Chancellor of UDS, who opened the function, said the UDS would continue to partner institutions whose work were in line with the university and described the DP as a success, saying it would help address problems associated with rapid urbanization. GNA

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