

Climate communication to inform community adaptation decision making

Experiences from the
Adaptation Learning Programme
CARE International

Parallel Session II:
Mainstreaming Climate Services
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The need for climate information

- **Pastoralists, farmers, rural communities are vulnerable**, faced with many risks and uncertainty
- They make seasonal and long term **livelihood decisions**
- Changing, **unpredictable climatic patterns and extremes** challenge success



- **Climate information can be a valuable resource** for communities, local governments and other service providers (end users) to:
 - Make more informed, **anticipatory and flexible decisions**
 - Enable effective and **timely risk management**
 - Develop **adapted and diversified livelihoods options**
 - **Reduce vulnerability**

Is **'translated'** to relate to local livelihoods, knowledge and experience

Listens and responds to locally expressed needs

Is **accessible** to everyone who needs (language, communication outreach)

The value of climate information is realised when it:

Recognises knowledge and capacity of end users:

- Understand and **adapt** to the reality of **long term climate change**
- Understand and **use forecasts and probabilities**
- Generate seasonal and short range forecasts from **local climate knowledge**
- **Record and use climate data** – contributing to localised / downscaled information

Producing data: Community rainfall recording

- Working with Meteorological services to install **rain gauges in communities** in Niger and Ghana.
 - Met. trained **community monitors on rainfall recording.**
 - **Access:** Community monitors use mobile phones ➤ Dakoro meteorological department ➤ community radio stations ➤ communities
 - Met services have additional localised data
- **Use of data:** Community members also get rainfall amounts direct from community monitors
 - In Niger this enabled successful timing of planting dates
 - In Ghana communities are maintaining records to inform future seasons



'Translating' forecasts for usability: Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP)



- **Multi-stakeholder platform** – science (meteorology) with communities, government ministries from different sectors, NGOs, CBOs.
- **Share & combine seasonal climate forecasts** > local & scientific sources.
- **Collectively interpret seasonal forecast and probabilities** into potential risks and local livelihood and sector specific seasonal **advisories**.
- Advisories **communicated** to users through local channels.
- **Enable decision making** and planning which responds to seasonal climatic risk, uncertainty and opportunities.

Forecast Translation issues

Climate forecasts cover large areas, miss out on local micro-climates

Accuracy

End user information needs and local knowledge differ from forecast products (e.g. rainfall distribution in time and space)

Relevance

Presentation of forecasts as one likely future / one message for action

Distrust when reality is different

Top down service delivery

Advisories communicate advice for action rather than **criteria and options for decision making**

Translation issues: usable information

- Interaction and **co-generation of information** between scientists and end users
- **Sensitivity and respect** by scientists of end users needs and 'language' communication styles
- Products **convey risk and uncertainty in usable ways**:
 - **Advisories** present options for different scenarios rather than fixed messages
 - Reference to **analog years**
 - **Necessary conditions and criteria** for action decisions
- **Feedback loops** to inform:
 - Scientists of **user needs** and remain relevant
 - Design of **new and improved products**



Communication issues: accessible information

Met. Services capacity to communicate to end users, requires:

- Knowledge of end user needs, local context and capacities
- Respect / interest in end user knowledge and information
- Learn local communication styles, improve communication skills
- Discuss and agree translation of technical terms and how to explain
- Interact with other local service delivery systems

Dissemination channels:

- Knowledge of end users different access to communication channels
- Work with channels to ensure understanding / messages are user friendly
- Working with existing channels e.g. radio, early warning, market information services

Research required on all the above

Research for climate products



- Products that **respond to user needs - relevant for decision making**
- Responsive to **changing need and demand**:
 - As the climate keeps changing and science develops,
 - As users become more knowledgeable about using forecasts.
- **Recognition and use of local knowledge** on risk, weather trends and related impacts.
- **Methods for co-generation of downscaled climate forecast** information, with end users knowledge.
- **Product presentation and communication.**
- **Systems for analysis and use of rainfall data collected by communities.**

Thank You!

For More Information...

ALP: www.careclimatechange.org/adaptation-initiatives/alp

email: alp@careclimatechange.org

Joto Afrika Special Issue 12 on Climate communication for adaptation:

<http://www.alin.net/Joto%20Afrika>

http://careclimatechange.org/files/JotoAfrika12_FINAL.pdf

PSP brief: http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/ALP_PSP_Brief.pdf

PSP Case study – Climate for Development:

<http://c4d.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2013-CaseStudy-CARE-Kenya.pdf>.

Community story on rain gauges:

http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/ALP_Ghana_Rainfall_Guages_Nov12.pdf

ALP is supported by

