

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP FOR THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR CLIMATE SERVICES (GFCS) ADAPTATION PROJECT IN MALAWI, CROSSROADS HOTEL, LILONGWE, MALAWI, 9-11 JUNE 2014

1. BACKGROUND:

The Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) was established by the Third World Climate Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland in 2009 and is a United Nations-led initiative spearheaded by the WMO to guide the development and application of science-based climate information and services in support of decision-making. The GFCS will therefore enable the society to better manage the risks and opportunities arising from climate variability and climate change, especially for those who are most vulnerable to such risks. This will be done through development and incorporation of science-based climate information and climate prediction into planning, policy and practice.

The GFCS is a global partnership of governments and organizations that produce and use climate information and services. It seeks to enable researchers and the producers and users of information to join forces to improve the quality and quantity of climate services worldwide, particularly in developing countries.

The GFCS has four priority areas, namely: Agriculture and Food Security, Disaster Risk Reduction, Health and Water.

The GFCS has the following as its goals:

- i. Reducing the vulnerability of society to climate-related hazards through better provision of climate services;
- ii. Advancing the key global development goals through better provision of climate services;
- iii. Mainstreaming the use of climate information in decision making. Promoting better uptake, understanding and awareness of the need for climate information and climate services; and demonstrating the value of the services in socio-economic, safety and sustainability terms;
- iv. Strengthening the engagement of providers and users of climate services. Building relationships between providers and users of climate services at both the technical and decision-making levels; and
- v. Maximising the utility of existing climate service infrastructure. Improving coordination, and strengthening and building this infrastructure where needed.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

The National Consultation Workshop was held at Crossroads Hotel in Lilongwe, Malawi from 9th to 11th June 2014 and was hosted by the Department for Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) in Malawi. The workshop was attended by 63 participants from each programme partner and other key stakeholders.

The opening ceremony of the workshop was presided over by the Principal Secretary for Environment and Climate Change Management, Dr. Yanira Ntupanyama; the Director of the

GFCS at the World Meteorological Organization, Mr. Filipe Lucio; and the Director of Climate Change and Meteorological Services in Malawi, Mr. Jolamu Nkhokwe.

The aim of the workshop was to identify the institutional and operational needs, gaps and capacities for climate services in the agriculture, food security, health and DRR sectors in Malawi. The workshop was successful in identifying a number of user needs, especially in the health sector to inform the design and implementation of the project activities as part of the GFCS Adaptation Programme in Africa.

3. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

SESSION TWO: OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR CLIMATE SERVICES (GFCS) AND CLIMATE SERVICES FOR ACTION (CSA) PROGRAMME

This presentation concentrated on the following issues: Introduction and overview of GFCS with emphasis on the need to bring on board different actors. It was observed that the frequency of severe weather events has increased in the recent past. There is need to develop strategies to deal with climate uncertainties. In the same presentation, Climate Services (CS) were defined as the provision of user-tailored products to meet user needs, rather than just providing data and information. An overview of the GFCS Adaptation programme was also given. There was also an outline the objectives of nation consultation workshop as outlined in the previous section.

SESSION THREE: OVERVIEW OF CLIMATE SERVICES CURRENTLY USED AND AVAILABLE IN MALAWI

The preliminary results from the analysis of existing knowledge of climate services using documents were presented by Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). The aim of the study was to understand integration of CS in environmental policy documents, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) etc. So far, the following documents had been studied: the NAPA (2006), the Disaster Response and Management Policy draft, the draft Malawi National Climate Change Policy, the National Climate Change Programme, the Press Release for 2013/2014 rainfall season in Malawi

- The conclusion of the preliminary findings was that the main challenge is the downscaling of seasonal rainfall forecasts.
- Other findings include:
 - MDCCMS should consult Ministry of Agriculture and issue an advisory that would give the farmers guidance on agricultural matters – same with health and DRR
 - Requires people in the sector ministries to discuss the forecasts with DCCMS to ensure that they fully understand the forecast and can communicate that clearly to the end-users. Seasonal forecast only focus on agriculture, not focusing on other sectors.

- Great scope for seasonal forecast improvement to contain sector advisories – in absence of such advice that are understandable to end users their usefulness will be minimal
- The Draft Climate Change policy has not identified access to CS as a challenge yet it is an important component in ensuring communities are able to adapt
- The NAPA does not clearly state how climate information will flow from producers to end users

SESSION FOUR: HOW CLIMATE SERVICES WORK IN PRACTICE IN MALAWI: THE MALAWI RED CROSS SOCIETY (MRCS) EXPERIENCE

Malawi Red Cross Society presented experiences from the project that was jointly implemented with the DCCMS in two districts of Salima and Lilongwe. The aim of the project was to give the MRCS a chance to see if Climate Information can be tailored to end users. The major focus was on health EWS. The conclusion was that some of the messages issued by the Met Services are not understandable by the user community;, therefore there is need for interpretation of meaning and effects of the forecasts issued.

Facilities are needed to help the information trickle down to the end users as there was no strong relationship between DCCMS, local authorities and communities. Lack of EW Communication system and feedback between the producers and users was a serious gap and rendered the forecasts useless. In some cases, the community members were reluctant to take the weather information seriously.

Discussion

In communities, people require information in their local language at the right time. Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) said that a study found that farmers use their indigenous knowledge and not formal information. A representative from Nsanje district emphasized the need to know how much rain is coming and when, they also need information on the rainfall in the highlands as that will lead to flooding in lowland Nsanje. He emphasized the need to provide accurate forecasts/ information in order not to lose trust of the end users.

In contrast to the above assertions, a representative from Chikwawa district informed members that a DFID project providing specific district forecasts in 12 districts have found that farmers have started trusting the information as it is accurate and specific to that district.

The GFCS Director said that we need to manage expectations – will determine the interest of users. This can only be done if you have mechanism for dialogue so there is great scope for a mechanism that will bring together stakeholders at the national level to discuss the applications of climate services.

SESSION FIVE & SIX: CLIMATE/WEATHER FORECAST PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE AT NATIONAL LEVEL, PRESENTATION, GROUP WORK AND PLENARY

In these sessions, the World Café approach using participatory method to communicate climate science with users was used. Participants were put in five groups to go round and interact with climate services providers who were manning different stands representing the following five modules: Observation service, Forecasting service, Aviation service, Climate and Agromet Services, Public Weather and Climate Change Services.

In Plenary, the users ranked the usefulness of the modules as per the below:

- PW & CC
- Agriculture
- Forecasting
- Observation
- Aviation

Discussion:

All the groups found the exercise very useful, with many participants from both the user and producer groups describing the exercise as an eye opener. In forecasting there was a useful discussion on the term normal – using 30 year standard verses index with a shorter range climate. There was a lot of interest from user community in what met service is providing, but not a lot of understanding so need for dialogue to continue. MDCCMS found that a lot of questions were educative. In some cases, use of terminology had to be changed to capture the attention of the audience. All the groups asked questions that are being regularly asked by the general public. The GFCS project is an opportunity for MDCCMS to become visible.

The representative from CCAFS stated that it was obvious that the met service are working very hard, but are not very big. Need to have a network reaching people on the ground that can be trained on met information so that messages can get to the villages. Need to think about innovative ways of communicating.

SESSION FIVE: GOVERNING MECHANISM

The Global Framework for Climate Services representative presented the structure on the governance mechanism as follows:

- Programme Steering Committee (Global level)
- Malawi Project Delivery team – a group of people who will be identified and engaged to be a key part of delivering the project in country.
- Partners need to work together to define work plan, target areas and implement activities

On the National Steering Mechanism: The aim is to establish an anchor in government. It was suggested that in Malawi this could be the National Climate Change Steering Committee which includes PS from key line ministries, plus relevant multilateral institutions such as the UNDP and World Bank. The UNDP Assistant Resident Coordinator who was present suggested that the programme should anchor the National Framework for Climate Services into this set up as the whole idea with the National Climate Change Technical Committee (NCCTC) was to ensure that all efforts complement each other.

SESSION SEVEN: SECTORAL PRIORITIES FOR CLIMATE SERVICES

Each sector lead gave a brief presentation on the priorities for climate services in their sector. Highlights are as outlined below:

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

- Overview of DRR – need for weather related information
- For communities to engage in preparedness they need to see the impact of what they are doing.
- Action plans exist for linking early warning to action: a lot of capacity building and putting institutions in place is taking place in addition to the structures which are established, the Disaster Management policy is being reviewed and a framework for Disaster Management developed.

Health

- In 2006 NAPA was developed
- Main vulnerabilities: increase in disease vectors, disease outbreak and water availability & scarcity. Typhoid increasing.
- Changing temperatures, now exceeding 40 degrees Celsius in many areas
- Floods was identified as the most prevalent disaster in country
- Malaria is a priority area, and water borne diseases are also important

Agriculture and Food Security

- Climate information is very important, but uncertainties affect farmers negatively
- Number of agricultural services are available to the farmers, and as such, there is need for it to reach out to the farmers.
- WFP will be implementing rural resilience projects in Balaka and Phalombe, plan to have some climate service related activities in those districts as well
- Balaka and Zomba – Food for assets projects, and will start implementing climate service activities in these districts as well - first it will be in Balaka.
- Also plan to work with P4P farmers and reach them with climate information to increase the food production of these farmers.

Discussion

A representative from ACMAD stated that joint development of the advisories addressed the issue of relevance of climate information and services as this is done in some countries. The representative of WFP Malawi said that co production happens in some parts of the country but not in all, and they want to strengthen the system and initiatives like this are already taking place in some districts. The representative from CCAFS stated that it is high time that other sectors start acting on the climate information in a similar way as what the DRR sectors have been doing. There is need for a broader perspective on how each sector is looking at the climate information. MoH said that there is a need for more research on climate and health: have data available from 2009 when they started health management information system database. MoH plans to undertake operational research as part of the GFCS project

SESSION EIGHT AND NINE: THE USER PERSPECTIVE: SECTORAL NEEDS FOR CLIMATE SERVICES

The meeting delegates were then broken up in sector groups (agriculture, health and DRR) to reflect on the following issues:

- Different categories of users in the sector
- What information is already being used?
- What type of information could be necessary?
- At what time should the information be delivered?
- How should the message be packaged?
- How should the message be communicated?

Discussion:

The Health group found that DCCMS collect data on climate and health but the information does not reach the MoH so the MoH plans based on health data they have available. There has not been an analysis on the correlation between diarrhoeal disease and the climate – need historical data to do this research. DCCMS stated that the group work was an opportunity to discuss with the health sector to come up with actionable plans. Need stronger groups to come up with joint weather information that includes recommended actions. For health, it is better to work with average information rather than forecasts as health issues develop over a longer period of time.

The Agriculture group emphasized that messages should be packaged in context of farmers' own experiences. One of the key issues that were raised related on whether the climate information is reliable. For agriculture can deal with some uncertainty, but for health it is important that the information is reliable. Mr Kamga from ACMAD highlighted the need to verify the forecast in the area. User needs to know the threshold after which he considers the forecast useful. Verification should come from the user. When the time to sell the climate forecast comes, there is need to have clear procedures for verification – when the climate service becomes a commercial product then the contract between provider and user need to have clarity.

SESSION TEN: DEVELOPING THE USER NEEDS SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP

Director of GFCS gave a presentation on how GFCS can support NMHSs to meet user needs:

- Value added by GFCS
- Experimental products being developed by global centres
- Systematic and continuous discussion needed
- Challenge to upgrade the observation network is a long term challenge, and need to make the best possible use of what is currently available

Director of Climate Change and Meteorological Services gave a presentation on some of the measures DCCMS are taking to meet user needs:

- DCCMS attend crop estimate meeting to disseminate products

- Use of MoU is a very effective way to ensure accountability.
 - One MoU with Christian Aid.
- Shire River Basin programme acquiring one weather radar station for MDCCMS. Will help a lot to get more information out of the equipment – challenges is to maintain the equipment as Malawi has had these before but they have not been maintained. Depend on users to push the requirement for improved observation network
- DCCMS has a strategic plan, will be reviewed soon together with the users.
- DCCMS are using products from global centres – enhancing communication system from national to the global level. Get information from GICOS – get satellite data every 15 minutes. They are confident that will meet the demand of the users – experience of working with MRCS and DCCMS was able to provide the information that was required. DCCMS also working with DoDMA on a daily basis. Plan to strengthen linkages with MoH and MoAg to meet their demands better.
- Need for human and financial resources. Currently a number of forecasters are being trained. The DCCMS also want to have district climate centres in all 28 districts in Malawi

SESSION ELEVEN AND TWELVE: ANCHORING CLIMATE SERVICES IN THE NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME

Project Manager gave a presentation on the National Climate Change Programme (NCCP):

She explained that the aim of the NCCP is to coordinate climate change implementation in the country. The following have been done so far: Policy framework: CCP (Climate Change Policy), and Climate Change Investment Plan (CCIP). Process of working on NAPs and NAMAs will commence soon.

The NCCP has a component of knowledge management that aims to produce various pieces of relevant information and make it available to user communities. It also has a Mapping tool to analyse what various actors are doing on climate change in Malawi.

There is a Learning strategy for climate change in country: a reference book on Climate Change for teachers. There have been pilot adaptation activities at the district level e.g. the district climate information centres

The Project Manager also briefly touched on NAP and said that

- The NAP is in the process of being drafted
- Mainstreaming Climate Change into the national development planning process
- Consultant has been identified to work with sectoral experts on the NAP process.
- There is a lot of capacity building at national and community level but tend to overlook the capacity building of “Frontline” staff – extension workers
- NCCP trained health surveillance staff
- There is need to strengthen the link between health and climate change

Coordination structures: The following outline was presented

- GoM – Donor WG on CC

- National Steering Committee on Climate Change (NSCCC)
- National Technical Committee on Climate Change (NTCCC) takes information to NSCCC who then takes it to GoM Donor WG
- Expert Working Groups (CDM and REDD+) but expect more to meet and discuss
- Government Ministries and Departments with Focal Points

SESSION THIRTEEN: ROADMAP

An outline of the Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Framework for Climate Services in Malawi was presented. The National Meteorological Committee (NMC) is to be revamped to serve as a platform for climate services in Malawi. Relationship between NMC and the National Technical Committee on Climate Change will ensure continued dialogue for Climate Services.

A lot of the discussion focused on whether the revived NMC would be an independent committee or act as a sub committee to the NTCCC. The proposition was generally well received by the participants, but it was emphasized that the membership of the revived NMC would need to be expanded from the original membership. As a way forward, it was agreed that DCCMS will work to develop the ToRs with suggested composition for the revived NMC and share it with key stakeholders to be adopted and enacted.

SESSION FOURTEEN: EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES FROM DISTRICTS

Representatives from three districts and one NGO presented their experiences from the districts. A summary of issues that each one covered included:

i) Nsanje District:

- Is a transboundary district and therefore various facilities are being shared with citizens from Mozambique.
- Apart from the District Climate Information Centre, there has been establishment of information centres at Traditional Authority (TA) and community levels. This has been done by some NGOs working in the districts like GOAL Malawi.
- Civil protection committees have been identified as useful entry points for information for dissemination to communities
- There is need for data from the Met Service on onset, cessation and information on dry spells. This would be very useful for planning

ii) Zomba District

- Zomba is prone to frequent climate related disasters such as floods and droughts and these are getting worse due to deforestation
- There are also outbreaks of diseases and food insecurity
- At Likangala irrigation scheme farmers use rainfall information to decide on what and when to plant.
- Information is accessed through radio and TV on when and what to plant
- Information is shared through Lead farmers who receive agricultural text messages

- Main challenge is that information/ messages that is provided by the Met Service are not area specific
- They recommended that more weather stations must be procured and installed; while the already existing stations should be standardized. Farmers use indigenous knowledge, and this needs to be integrated with the science based forecasts
- Met Department should conduct regular awareness campaigns in the district.

iii) Chikwawa District

- Farmers compare weather forecasts with their own experiences, and indigenous knowledge
- Based on remarks made by farmers as users, confidence is being built on usefulness of information from the Met Services – but there is need to intensify public awareness campaigns for farmers to better understand the information from Met Services.
- Met Service should start working in close collaboration with Civil Protection Committees in the district

iv) Christian Aid: Enhancing Community Resilience Programme (ECRP)

- They are involved in the provision of weather information to people. Information is being provided to people but they do not understand it, or it does not come at the right time. Seasonal outlook difficult to understand for people.
- Work through Area Civil Protection Committees at the district level
- Plan to adopt Participatory Scenario Planning as a tool to produce advisories to have an interface with the communities.

SESSION FIFTEEN: THE CLIMATE SERVICES FOR ACTION (CSA) ACTIVITY PLANS - GROUP WORK IN THE SECTORS REVIEWING THE ACTIVITIES PLANNED UNDER THE CSA PROJECT IN THE LIGHT OF THE CAPACITIES, NEEDS AND GAPS IDENTIFIED

The participants worked in the sector groups, with each sector being joined by at least one representative from MDCCMS and one from the research partners. The sector leads presented highlights of the activities planned under the GFCS project, followed by the DCCMS and the research partner doing the same, and there was discussion among the groups about the activities. The suggestions that came out of the group work will be taken forward by the GFCS Project Delivery Team (PDT) in their subsequent meetings to review the activity plans.

SESSION SIXTEEN: CLOSING REMARKS

In closing, the Director of Climate Change and Meteorological Services pointed out the following:

- The GFCS in Malawi is a showcase implementation for SADC member states so he advised the stakeholders to be committed in the execution of the programme.
- DCCMS vision is to increase the resilience of Malawi for sustainable development

- For DCCMS to achieve its objectives there is always a need for building human and capital resources – always a need for GFCS type programme.
- He expressed optimism that the national consultation workshop is the start of strong dialogue between providers and users of climate services.
- He thanked all the participants and the PDT members for their efforts to pull together this workshop.

4. CONCLUSION

The national consultation workshop was highly successful from organization, venue of the meeting, involvement of diverse stakeholders and the degree of participation by all.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

To ensure the sustained dialogue between users and producers of climate services in Malawi, the workshop recommended that the now defunct National Meteorological Committee (NMC) should be revived, and its mandate and composition expanded to serve as a National Steering Committee for Climate Services in Malawi. The NMC would be linked to the existing coordination structures for climate change in Malawi: the National Technical Committee for Climate Change (NTCCC) and the National Steering Committee for Climate Change (NSCCC).

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COLLABORATIONS AND SPONSORS

The Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) would like to thank the Royal Norwegian Government through the World Meteorological Organization for providing the funds and all technical support for hosting the National Consultation Workshop. Appreciations also are due to PDT members and all participants to the workshop for organizing and honoring the invitation, respectively as well as for their meaningful contributions to the proceedings of the National Consultation Workshop.

7. ANNEXES ATTACHED TO THE REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE:

Annex 1: List of participants to the National Consultation Workshop.

Annex 2: Final agenda of the National Consultation Workshop.

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