



Strengthening Regional Capacity for Climate Services in Africa

Concept for a Workshop/ Side Event at the Fifth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA-V), Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 28-30 October, 2015.

Background

Climate information and services are critical inputs for effective climate risk management in Africa. Although smallholder farmers in Africa have survived by mastering the ability to adapt to widely varying weather and climatic conditions, increasingly erratic climate variability and the rapid pace of other drivers of change are overwhelming indigenous knowledge and traditional coping practices that address climate related risks. Effective climate information and advisory services offer great potential to inform farmer decision-making in the face of increasing uncertainty, improve management of climate-related agricultural risk, and help farmers adapt to change. Several initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa have used innovative approaches to overcome these challenges. Even though these initiatives have tended to be pilot-scale and project-based, they demonstrate good practice and provide valuable insights. Building on experience from these projects, the Fifth Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA-V) conference scheduled to take place in October, will provide an ideal platform to share emerging lessons and develop collaborations to strengthen the use of climate information and services in the agricultural and food security sectors. CCDA is an annual forum designed to strengthen linkages between climate science and development policy by promoting transparent discussions between key stakeholders in the climate and development community.

This proposed event; *'Strengthening Regional Capacity for Climate Services in Africa'*, will create an opportunity for scientists and technical experts from the CGIAR, African Climate Policy Center (ACPC, UNECA in Addis Ababa), and the AGRHYMET Regional Center (CILLS, Niamey), the IGAD Center, ICPAC as well as National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and other stakeholders to learn from and build on examples of good practice in farmer-focused climate information and advisory services, and to share elements of good practice in food security contingency planning.

Objectives of the workshop

- To capture and share lessons and evidence on how climate information and advisory services can be used to improve the lives of smallholder farmers.
- To discuss methods, tools and high-resolution information products (historical, monitored, seasonal forecasts) that can be used to enhance institutional capacities to produce agriculturally relevant climate information.
- To identify critical gaps in the design, delivery and effective use of climate-related information for risk management and food security contingency planning.
- To initiate a collective process toward regional roadmaps for strengthening and scaling-up climate information and advisory services for agriculture and food security in sub-Saharan Africa.

Expected Outcomes

- A shared vision on how to advance evidence based climate services investments in the region.
- A community of practice to accelerate intra- and inter-regional cooperation on climate information and advisory services.
- A common framework for agriculture and food security institutions, using climate information to respond more effectively to climate-related risks and to inform decisions

Target Audience

The event will target climate, agriculture and social scientists, development and humanitarian agencies, policy makers and development practitioners, meteorological agencies and other key users in the agriculture and food security sectors.

Organizers

- The CGIAR Research Program on climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)
- The Africa Climate Policy Center (ACPC)