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Newsletter Vol.37

Climate Information Services for Improved Productivity

Dear AR4D colleagues,

ASARECA in collaboration with ASARECA the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT organized a training workshop on application of foresight data in enhancing agricultural policy implementation and decision making in Eastern and Central Africa. The training was organized under is the Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) Project in Nairobi, Kenya, on June 23 to 24th, 2022. The overall objective of the training was to enhance capacity in the application of foresight data in agricultural policy implementation and decision making.



The specific objectives were:

- Raise awareness on the relevance of climate foresight data in agricultural decision making and policy implementation
- Enhance capacity in interpretation and analysis of climate foresight data
- Facilitate sharing of lessons, experiences and challenges on access to and use of climate foresight data in agricultural policy implementation and decision making
- Link farmer groups with sources of climate agro-advisories.

Among the many outputs of this important workshop was a joint declaration committing key African institutions to implement actions aimed leveraging on climate information services for a better AR4D.

I invite you to familiarize with these commitments and determine which actions to take in this joint cause.

Dr. Enock Warinda

Executive Director-ASARECA

THE NAIROBI DECLARATION ON ENHANCING THE USE OF CLIMATE INFORMATION TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY UNDER VARIABLE CLIMATIC CONDITION

June 23 to 24, Nairobi, Kenya

Recognizing the commitment of ASARECA, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, ILRI, ICPAC and the National Agricultural Research institutes in Eastern and Central Africa to build the capacity of stakeholders in co-production of climate information services enhance the application of foresight data for agricultural policy implementation and decision making in Eastern and Central Africa.

Cognizant of the financial support of the World Bank to strengthen the technical, institutional, and human capacity needed to enhance transfer of climate-relevant information, decision-making tools, and technologies in support of scaling efforts in Africa.

Participants from the private sector; farmer groups, policy makers, extension workers, and climate scientists from National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs), Ministries of Agriculture, and National Meteorological Agencies in Kenya and Ethiopia held a training a training and sensitization workshop on June 23 to 24, 2022 in Nairobi, Kenya.

The objectives of the work were to:

- Raise awareness on the relevance of climate foresight data in agricultural decision making and policy implementation.
- Enhance capacity in interpretation and analysis of climate foresight data.
- Facilitate sharing of lessons, experiences and challenges on access to and use of climate foresight data in agricultural policy implementation and decision making.
- Link farmer groups with sources of climate agro-advisories.

The participants deliberated on challenges, lessons learnt, best practices and agreed to undertake the following 14 actions now designated as ***The Nairobi Declaration on Agricultural Early Warning System to fast track the application of accurate foresight data in enhancing agricultural policy implementation and decision making in Eastern and Central Africa:***

1. **Policy and capacity strengthening framework for CIS:** Develop policy framework at national and regional levels for engagement of value chain actors in climatic services and products, support to regional climate outlook forum, as well as frameworks for awareness and capacity building for all actors in generation and utilisation of climate products and services.
 2. **Mainstream top leadership:** Sensitize top leadership at the ministries of agriculture to invest financial resources to metrological units and experts at national and subnational level, provide enabling policy environment for transforming climate information needed for provision of agro advisories.
 3. **Convene high level dialogue:** Convene a high level research policy meeting on climate information to talk data, funding decisions and policy decisions.
 4. **Document best practices:** Document best practices on CIS and disseminate widely within the region
 5. **Capacity strengthening:** Build a critical mass of experts, suppliers and users of climate smart information to inform location specific smart planning at policy level, provide
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- accurate advice at the simulation level, inform extension support, and fairly accurate decision making and investments at the farm level for both livestock and crop production.
6. **Collaboration:** Continue to promote partnership and collaboration through ASARECA as a reputable regional organisation which supports a smooth delivery of international interventions to the national agricultural system. This collaboration should focus on catalysing coordinated and speedy achievement of early warning impacts as well as work towards reduce the accuracy gaps.
 7. **Integration of and leveraging on existing systems:** Through the ASARECA network, and taking advantage of the AICCRA project, continue to integrate already established agro metrological systems developed in Kenya and Ethiopia, and by international institutions to provide better solutions for all countries in Eastern and Central Africa.
 8. **Investment in downscaling agro metrological information:** Empower the national systems to continue to prioritize investment on building capacity for downscaling metrological data from regional to national to zonal and to community levels. Prioritize spatial considerations in determining the accuracy of agro metrological data.
 9. **Co-production and co-development of interventions and information:** Establish platforms for both national and regional in co-design and co-delivery of climate services. There is need to encourage co-production or joint production of metrological and early warning data to ensure it is well informed by stakeholders and that it addresses the needs of users. Co-production supports decision makers to be in the know, meets the needs of end users.
 10. **Private sector role:** Borrowing from Ethiopia, mainstream the private sector to support the delivery of agro-metrological data and invest in feedback mechanism for agro metrological information to ensure farmers get what they need.
 11. **Indigenous knowledge:** Research, extension and simulation experts should continue to mainstream indigenous knowledge to complement the technical simulations and geospatial information to reduce the accuracy gap in agro-met information. This calls for maintenance of databases of indigenous experts who should be consulted relevant times.
 12. **User Interface Platforms (UIPs):** Promote the use of User Interface Platforms (UIPs) to facilitate interactions to enable climate service actors to come together, learn, and improve communication, coordination and collaboration.
 13. **Participation in Key Early warning forums:** ASARECA and other regional partners should support key stakeholders including farmers to participate in the Great Horn of Africa Climate Smart Agriculture conference in August in Mombasa, and other such forums.
 14. **Resource mobilisation:** CIAT and ASARECA should continue with strategic networking to raise more donor funds for advancing NFCs.
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