



LEARNING AGENDA ON CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate variability and change due to its high exposure to climate shocks and stresses (e.g., droughts) and relatively low adaptive capacities.

In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), more than 65 percent of the population derive their livelihood from rain-fed agriculture. This makes the rural economies in SSA especially susceptible to weather and climate. Providing decision-makers - from individual farmers, to agribusinesses, to government officials - with timely, accurate information on climate and weather variations helps inform decisions. Informed decisions can increase agricultural production and avoid harvest loss, thereby improving food security, raising agricultural incomes, and ultimately increasing the resilience of farmers to shocks and stresses.

While climate information services (CIS) have been used with success in other regions of the world, they are used to a much lower extent in SSA. Even as investments in CIS in SSA are increasing, the generation and delivery of CIS in the region remains underfunded. To ensure these growing investments result in improved rural livelihoods and sustainable CIS systems, objective evidence regarding the effectiveness of CIS investments is needed. Research is also needed regarding the socio-economic circumstances that constrain the use of such services in SSA, as well as business models appropriate for CIS production and delivery in SSA.

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report 2014

OPPORTUNITY

In response to these needs, the U.S. Agency for International Development is implementing a learning agenda to better understand how to develop effective, sustainable, country-led CIS programs in SSA. The Learning Agenda on Climate Information Services in sub-Saharan Africa will generate new information, evidence, and learning on the effective and sustainable production, delivery, and use of climate information to improve rural agricultural livelihood decision-making and outcomes. This learning agenda harnesses a wide range of partners to examine CIS systems from the production of information at the national level down to the use of tailored products by individual farmers and others involved in the agriculture sector in SSA.

RESPONSE

This learning agenda is composed of two companion projects: Climate Information Services Research Initiative and Assessing Sustainability and Effectiveness of Climate Information Services in Africa. Together these projects seek to:

- Improve understanding of, and access to, knowledge on the effectiveness of CIS programming.
- Produce evidence and tools to improve understanding of the factors and structures that influence CIS delivery, uptake, use, and effectiveness.
- Produce innovative evaluation methodologies and evidence on the degree of effectiveness of CIS.
- Develop metrics to assess sustainable and effective provision of CIS by National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and others, and conduct a baseline assessment of current gaps.
- Identify business models for CIS and options to improve the sustainability of NMHSs including collaboration with the private sector.
- Build partnerships, synthesize knowledge, and ensure uptake of lessons learned.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

This learning agenda will generate the evidence necessary to inform the design and implementation of future CIS investments, leading to an increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of such investments, and ultimately an increase in the number of users of CIS who benefit from improved livelihoods.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LEARNING AGENDA

This program began in October 2016 and runs through September 2019. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.climatelinks.org/projects/learningagendaonclimateservices>

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