Briefing Note: Training Climate Information Service Intermediaries

January 2015

Overview

Kenya Meteorological Services (KMS) is committed to creating user-led Climate Information Services (CIS) which are better able to support decision making at local, county and national levels. In support of this aim, the Adaptation Consortium (Ada) CIS team has initiated processes for developing a communications strategy which aims to ensure that relevant climate information is able to reach those most directly affected by weather hazards, climate variability and change. The assessment of user needs undertaken to inform these processes identified the importance of two principal channels for communicating climate information services - radio and SMS provided through a network of intermediaries.

KMS has developed a two-tiered intermediary system, with training of CIS intermediaries initiated in Kitui and Makueni in July 2014. From September 2014, KMS has piloted this element of the newly strengthened system, providing climate information via SMS and a system of intermediaries in the two counties. The CIS intermediary network aims to ensure that seasonal, monthly, weekly and daily forecasts and weather warnings support farming and livestock activities in the run up to and over the counties' two annual principal rains.

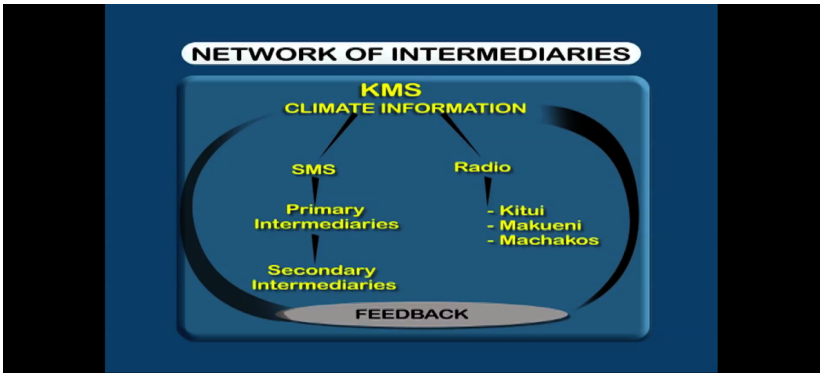
The Aim and Content of the Training

KMS' Institute for Meteorological Training and Research (IMTR) and ADA partners have developed a 2.5-day Training of Trainers (TOT) course for primary CIS intermediaries. The course is designed to enable participants to:

- Receive, appreciate and effectively communicate climate information in a language and format that can be easily understood and
- Support appropriate application of climate information and provide feedback on its use and benefits.

The Primary Intermediaries use the training and a package of tailored materials to deliver a half-day training for Secondary intermediaries. 42 Primary CIS intermediaries were trained in Kitui and 37 in Makueni. It is planned that each county will train about 1200 for Kitui and 800 Makueni. Each primary intermediary will then train 20-40 Secondary intermediaries. In evaluation of the training, over 95% of participants felt prepared to undertake their role as primary CIS intermediaries.

Between June and July 2015, the CDMs in Kitui and Makueni have coordinated training of the secondary intermediaries and so far a total of 520 and 480 have been trained in Kitui and Makueni respectively. The remaining will be trained by end of August 2015.



To support the sustainability of the system, intermediaries were selected from across institutions and agencies with existing extensive reach. Those identified were drawn from County Government Administration and the Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Cooperation, as well as religious and community leaders and NGOs, with the aim of establishing a network of 1,500 intermediaries in each county and so ensure one intermediary for every 500 people.

The system is two-tiered only as regards the training. Once trained, both primary and secondary intermediaries will simultaneously receive climate information by SMS. It is anticipated that the service would cost just under KShs12/per person during the inception phase, with an annual recurrent cost of KShs6/per person. Discussions on County Government contribution to continuation of the services have been initiated. If the service proves successful, there are also proposals to establish a demand led (paid for) service.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will assess the quality of the secondary training, the information provided via the intermediary system, the communication system and its reach to the most marginalised, as well as uptake, appropriate use and benefits of the strengthened system. Ward Adaptation Committees and intermediary networks will support the CDM in ongoing monitoring, while there will be regular post-seasonal community-based and county-level reviews to assess the impact of the service and how it can be further strengthened.

Outputs and Sharing of Learning from the Initiative

The initiative has resulted in the production of the following materials, all of which are available in working draft form from KMS IMTR:

- The Training of Trainers course for Primary CIS Intermediaries, comprising 12 modules, with an accompanying handbook and PowerPoint presentations;
- A half-day training for secondary CIS intermediaries, comprising 4 core modules;
- A Quick Reference Guide covering abbreviations employed in the CIS SMS system and definitions of key meteorological terms;
- Translation of key meteorological terms into Kiswahili and Kikamba languages, and
- A number of short films designed to support sharing of learning and future trainings.

IMTR is interested in adopting the training for roll out both nationally and more widely within the region. The initiative has been shared at a meeting of the WMO's Regional Severe Weather Project, while components of the training have also been employed within a WMO GFCS pilot intermediary training in Tanzania and are proposed for inclusion within a CCAFS guide for training CIS intermediaries to reach farmers ***(see http://ccafs.cgiar.org/blog/strengthening-availability-and-use-climate-services-africa)*** . A poster on the initiative was also presented at the American Geophysics Union conference in San Francisco in December 2014.