Briefing note
Health and climate workshop report
October 2016

Introduction

In October 2016, the Addis Continental Institute of Public Health (ACIPH) hosted a workshop entitled *'Improving climate information availability, access and use for Malaria and other climate-sensitive health issues'* in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop was organised by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), ACIPH, the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), the Ethiopia National Meteorological Agency (NMA) and the Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH), with financial support from the UK's Department for International Development and the WISER programme.

The full report on the workshop can be accessed here.

Background

In Africa in general, and in Ethiopia in particular, climate is an important driver of variations in malaria transmission in highland and semi-arid areas. Because of this, the Ethiopian health community has long expressed the need for quality-assured and locally relevant climate information as part of their surveillance activities (Ghebreyesus et al.,2008). Yet little attention has been paid to the systematic incorporation of climate information into malaria intervention programming.

The ENACTS (Enhancing National Climate Services) initiative emerged in Ethiopia in direct response to perceived user needs. This initiative seeks to improve climate data availability, access, and use by national decision makers.

As the Ethiopian National Malaria Control Programme advances its strategy for malaria elimination, the demand to incorporate climate variables into the malaria surveillance system is increasing. The resources created through the ENACTS initiative have multiple applications for malaria. In addition, public health policy makers, practitioners and researchers can use them to explore the relationship of climate and other vector-borne diseases as well as other climate-sensitive health outcomes.

Workshop objectives

The primary objectives of the workshop were to showcase the available climate information and tools to support the public health community for improved decision-making.

In particular, the four-day workshop consisted of the following main components:

(i) Review activities following the recommendations from the NIH 2014 workshop including impact of the December 2015 Ethiopia El Niño Policy Brief

(ii) Share recent analyses/activities/endeavours regarding the relationship between climate/climate variability and malaria and other climate-sensitive diseases in Ethiopia

(iii) Review impact of 2015/16 El Niño on malaria in Ethiopia by region

(iv) Review the current Ethiopia ENACTS Maproom as a tool to support the analysis of climate sensitive diseases, including hands-on training session

Expected outcomes

This workshop was expected to provide a unique opportunity for improving climate information access and use for malaria and other climate-sensitive health issues.

Specific expected outcomes of the workshop included:

• Knowledge shared on current challenges and opportunities for using climate information in health decision making
• Details of the impact of El Niño on malaria in Ethiopia established
• Public health policy makers and practitioners trained in the use of ENACTS climate products
• Recommendations for new Health Maprooms
• Recommendations for Proxy Surveillance Malaria Suite
• Assessment of training activities via verbal response and online survey
• Workshop report detailing:
   - Participant experience in the use and relevance of climate information (e.g. ENACTS data, etc)
   - Summary of recommendations for future research and policy engagement.

Outcomes and recommendations

	This Year (2016-17)	**Next 3 years**
Operations	• Establish National Meteorology Agency (NMA) and FMOH as a responsible body • Establish a technical working group. • Disseminate workshop information and recommendations • Allow access to data (10x10 km grid) for all Ethiopian districts • Improve NMA infrastructure • Develop prediction models (e.g. rainfall forecasting for predicting malaria and for planning interventions like flood forecast) • Enable NMA forecasts to link to Maproom • Refine forecasting information sent to FMOH so that it is more specific • Enable better and more varied season selection • Expand the Maproom development to the water sector to enable analysis around the river basins • Build an Agricultural map room with the daily data • Update rainfall and climatology to 2014 and rainfall monitoring data for every 10 days • Update the CSMT Maprooms country map to fill in gaps	• Incorporate analogue years within the Climate Monitoring Maproom in order to show ENSO impact • Promote awareness and education on the availability of the climate data. • Train health workers • Use the Media to promote climate data knowledge and its importance to the public • Strengthen the entomological surveillance system and build the capacity of the existing health workers • Support the utilization of climate information at all levels (even those smaller than districts) • Incorporate environmental management using irrigation data and climate data for malaria • Provide training of trainers (TOT) - cascading of training • When issuing health bulletin, use climate information to show it is an important influence but not the only one. (close the gap of meteorology and epidemiology)

Education	• Incorporate ENACTS into public health university curriculum at undergraduate, graduate and PhD levels • Provide training of trainers (TOT) - cascading of training • Provide short-term training on ENACTS for faculty • Develop certificate programme for ENACTS	• Advocate for intensive training on ENACTS for policy makers • Provide cascading training as outreach program at regional, zonal, districts level • Allow PhD candidates the opportunity to develop Maprooms on climate and heath as dissertation project
Research	• Hire consultants to provide assessments on knowledge, attitude and practice for climate information for climate sensitive diseases at national, regional, and district levels • Assess 2015/16 El Niño impact on climate sensitive diseases	• Assess the associations of malaria prevalence/incidence and vector dynamics in relation to climate variables in sentinel sites • Assess the associations of prevalence of malnutrition in relation to climate variables in hot spot areas • Assess the associations of prevalence of emerging and re-emerging diseases (yellow fever, Dengue, etc.) with climate variables in hot spot areas • Undertake inter -sectorial collaborative research on impact of climate on health, flooding, drought, and food security • Strengthen the national climate and health database

Conclusion

The workshop achieved its objectives in terms of updating the Ethiopian health community on the impact of ENSO on malaria, and furthering the development of ENACTS in Ethiopia as a means to improve climate sensitive policy and practice in the health sector. The recommendations provided for developing ENACTS as an opportunity for health operations, -education and -research had the buy-in of the relevant stakeholders and were considered to be both needed and practical.

Overall, the organisers were delighted with the level of active engagement by participants in the workshop and the detailed recommendations provided for next steps.