GHACOF53 – event report

Background

GHACOF 53 was held on 26 -28 August 2019 at the Kilimanjaro hotel, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), the Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA) and Partners organised the conference to develop a regional consensus climate outlook for the October – December (OND) 2019 rainfall season over the GHA region. The GHA region comprises Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Opening of GHACOF 53

The Minister of Works Transport and Communications of Tanzania, Hon.Eng. Isack Kamwelwe, officially opened the Conference. The following also made remarks at the opening; Dr. Guleid Artan, Director IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC); Dr Ernest Afiesimama, Representative of WMO, Dr Solomon Ngoze, Representative of African Development Bank, Dr. Agness Kijazi, Director General (TMA); and Mr. Adam Curtis, WISER Technical Lead (photographed).

Participants from Met Office

WISER delivery and Fund Management teams represented the Met office. These included: Adam Curtis and John Mungai, Dr. Richard Graham and Andrew Colman (supporting ICPAC in the development/generation of consensus forecast).

Consensus Climate outlook

The forum reviewed the state of the global and regional climate systems and their implications on the OND 2019 seasonal rainfall over the region. Among the principal factors taken into account were the observed and predicted sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the global Oceans. Users from agriculture and food security, livestock, water resources, disaster risk management, health, conflict early warning, non-governmental organisations and development partners discussed the potential implications of the consensus climate outlook, and developed mitigation strategies for their respective countries and sectors. The consensus climate outlook for OND 2019 can be found here; http://www.icpac.net/wp-content/uploads/GHACOF53_Statement.pdf

GHACOF 53 Sessions

GHACOF51 was conducted through a number of plenary and breakout sessions as follows:

i) Performance of October – December (OND) 2018 seasonal climate and user feedback
ii) March - May (MAM) 2019 consensus Climate Outlook, Preparedness and Mitigation Strategies

iii) Partnerships

Partnerships

Mr. Mungai made a presentation on the WISER Programme during the Partnership session. He pointed out the progress made so far in implementation of WISER Programme in East Africa and plans for the remaining period.

Climate Services Market place

The post GHACOF 53 learning workshop on 28th August 2019 brought together GHACOF participants, climate services providers and users to learn from each other on good practices, opportunities and challenges of provision of climate services in the GHA region. The market place was designed to be a lively fair to show case progress in coproduction of user centered climate services. The theme was early warning for early action in support of climate resilience.

Thirteen projects and groups show cased their work at the market place. Among these were four WISER projects namely; HIGHWAY, Tanzania National project, Weather Wise and DARAJA. Other WISER related displays included ENACTS and NECJOGHA. After showcasing the work being done to develop early warning products, a plenary was held for further discussion. The market place was formulated and executed by CARE who are partners in the W2-SIP project.

Market place feedback in plenary

CARE collated and shared the following points that will be processed further for a more detailed report of the event.

Key points for successful user centered coproduced climate services:

i) **Strengthen linkages** – between climate information and existing activities and systems – early warning, local knowledge, communications, climate smart agriculture, climate change adaptation and resilience, environmental management etc. and between actors – users, intermediaries, producers.

ii) **Multi-stakeholder interaction** is critical to ensure user engagement in leadership of coproduction and well-informed decision processes. Facilitation of climate services requires skills in social processes.

iii) **Opportunities for knowledge sharing, cross learning and coordination** need to be strengthened to avoid duplication of effort among climate services developers and between climate services and disciplines that are already responding to climate change (climate resilience, early warning for early action, adaptation, climate smart agriculture etc.). Climate knowledge brokering skills and clear roles for connectors are needed.

Participants liked approaches which:

i) Used mapping of and linkage with existing systems – e.g. concerned stakeholder organisations, decision making spaces, popularity of different communication channels by different groups

ii) Combined climate information with other elements, e.g. tech (ICT, solar panels), agriculture, urban development, fishing etc.

iii) Had a user engagement, community end user focus, activities and benefits (e.g. HIGHWAY, DARAJA, ENACTS)

iv) Used local languages for dissemination

v) Recognised that communities learn and adapt fast and understand complex information

vi) Showed strong or clear links between the producer and user

vii) Benefits many actors – users and intermediaries

viii) Communicated probabilistic information and uncertainty – e.g. to enable contingency planning

ix) Demonstrated coproduction at different stages, e.g. in packaging, training, communication etc.

Challenges and gaps noted:

i) Poor reach of climate services to people who need it at community level. Reasons relate to timeliness and availability of information, coverage of and access to communication channels, gender and diversity-based barriers, language, complexity, lack of trust, lack of resources, commitment etc.

ii) Differences in language – both actual language and style / jargon of communication - used by scientists, intermediaries and users can be a barrier

iii) Climate services are time consuming,

iv) Internet and web-based access to information are important but not always accessible to end users

v) Pay more attention to use of local and traditional knowledge in the approaches

vi) Feedback loops need strengthening in most of the approaches

vii) Innovation is important to respond to a changing climate and needs more attention and support for projects to incorporate and promote innovation and experimentation

viii) Some government restrictions e.g. in data sharing