



CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR USE: ACCESS VS UNDERSTANDING IN CLIMATE SERVICES

In charge of public health related disasters is Dr. David Nanyende of the National disaster operation center (NDOC), Ministry of Interior. In his work, Dr. Nanyende deals with diseases, disease outbreaks, risks associated with biological hazards such as locust invasion. Most of these are associated with weather and what is happening in the environment, socio-economic factors and impacts within the country. These hazards are assessed based on the disaster management cycle mitigation looking into what should be done to address, response preparedness and recovery.

In his work, Dr. Nanyende values weather and climate information as part of the input in decision making and planning within the disaster management cycle. Consequently, having access to timely forecasts and understanding of the same is quite key. "Before I used to access weather information from the Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) website. Once in a while when there are joint activities we would have a representative of KMD working jointly together when required. We had very good access to the climate information from the website but the proper understanding of the information was inadequate, we did not have a clear understanding of the information."

Dr. Nanyende attended the WISER co-production workshops representing the Ministry. "Attending the workshops brought me together with the KMD colleagues and facilitated good engagement and interaction. Initially we were just getting the weather information and it just looked like general statements which we could not make something out of it. Because of this engagement we got an opportunity to talk and from that we have been able to adopt co-production of weather information where the user of the climate information gives his side of his story and the same for the producers then with this kind of engagement we were able to strike a balance where we say for us as Disaster Risk Management (DRM) persons we need this kind of information required. Also the interpretation of that information as well, because sometimes when you do not have an idea about certain statements by professional groups then without that engagement and trying to explain, you wouldn't make anything from it."

"After the first training, there were two meetings at county level where the NDOC facilitated me to interact with some of my colleagues. Through this I was able to share on the importance of climate information. I sought to find out if they are aware of the availability of climate information. Unfortunately the linkage of the KMD and my colleagues at county level is not strong, they don't get climate information." Dr. Nanyende points out that creating linkages at sub-national level is something to improve on in future. "I was able to inform my colleagues

on the useful climate information that can be made freely available to them. I further encouraged them to reach out to their county met directors and this is something they appreciated.”

“Currently we are still downloading, but now we are more free with the KMD, I have made some friends who I can seek clarification on information through phone that may not be very clear at any time and I can get the explanation I require.”, Dr. Nanyende

Dr. Nanyende argues that technical persons in the different sectors need to step up. The WISER project has just initiated the process and we are far from where we would want to be. “We as the actors who were trained including the meteorologists need to go out and spread this information. Climate Information is readily and freely available and the different actors can be shown how to interpret this information and how it can be useful to the different sectors in the economy. Through this, we will be able to add value to our work as technical persons in the various sectors.

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