



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

**Training of Pan-African Parliamentarians
on
The application of Climate Information
Services in development planning**

Report

10th March 2018

Midrand, South Africa



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1. Introduction

The African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in collaboration with the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) and the African Climate Legislative Initiative (ACLI) organized a training on uptake and use of climate information services (CIS). The event convened at the Pan African Parliament (PAP) in Midrand, South Africa on the 10th March 2018 at the Gallagher Convention Centre was attended by 28 members of parliament drawn from across the continent. The training event was organized under the Pan-African component of the Weather and Climate Information Services for Africa (WISER) programme, which is implemented by ACPC.

The purpose of the training was to enhance the knowledge and understanding of the potential application of CIS policies in development planning with the aim of building capacity of parliamentarians to assist in catalyzing the uptake and use of climate services by vulnerable communities in their respective countries and constituencies. The emphasis was on developing and applying active learning methodologies such as exercises and simulations to reinforce trainees learning. The training was highly participatory and practical, focusing on techniques, tools and tips of training management, with the participation of the Members of Parliament through sharing of experiences and lessons from national and regional contexts.

2. Need for CIS training for Parliamentarians

The background to this training is the fact that effective use of climate-related information is essential to helping institutions build capacity to service needs across various sectors, including land-use planning, infrastructure planning, agricultural development, and power generation. Furthermore, the mainstreaming of climate information and services will increase the ability of regional and national early warning networks to anticipate and respond to extreme climate events, strengthening both national and sub-national capacities to complement other disaster preparedness systems that will ultimately help the most vulnerable populations. Supporting decision-makers, legislators and civil society organizations with climate-related information is critical to advance climate proof development. Integrating of Climate Information (CI) and CIS into development and practice has paramount importance to advance cross-sectoral climate resilient development in the continent.

Unfortunately, on the continent, policy and practice remains far behind in terms of integrating CI and CIS. This is due in part to the paucity of CI and CIS on the continent, but also to the absence of planning frameworks that are designed to integrate CI and CIS into laws, policies and practices.

Hence, to build the capacities of policy-makers, legislators and other stakeholders in the use of Climate Information and Services for development planning, decision making and practices, the ACPC with the financial support from the Government of the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through the Department for International Development (DFID), and under the “Weather and Information Services for Africa (WISER)” Pan-Africa program, developed a toolkit for integrating climate information and services into legislation, development policies, plans and practices as well as an open-access CIS online training module. The module aims at building: (i) awareness among various development actors of the value and centrality of CI and CIS to the planning process; and (ii) their capacities to integrate CI and CIS into development planning, policies and programmes.

The economic development and growth of Africa depends heavily on climate-sensitive sectors and natural resources. Global warming continues to bring about an increase in the costs of adaptation across the continent at an annual average that is estimated to be between 1.5 and 3 per cent of gross domestic product. This phenomenon threatens to undermine the achievement of both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the aspirations articulated in Agenda 2063. To sustain the growth trajectory of Africa and to build resilience for sustainable development, an enhanced ability to adapt, plan and manage climate-induced risks is required.

The availability of climate information services and the timely use of climate information are critical to maintaining the continent’s steady economic growth. Such information contributes to efforts focused on limiting the impact of climate change. The use of relevant climate data and information has the potential to boost agricultural productivity, foster an effective public health environment, enable the deployment of different types of renewable energy technologies, and enhance investments by factoring in climate issues for resilience and sustainability.

3. Training of PAP members

The training was therefore designed to enable decision makers to better understand the importance of CIS in decision making. Presented in a power point as an off-line tutorial, with active participation of the parliamentarians, the training explained what CIS are, their uses in planning and decision making, details of the physical structure of CIS, describing the global context, continental, regional and national contexts of CIS and delved into the products and services available for decision makers. The state of CIS in Africa was assessed and a comprehensive examination on what can be done to strengthen CIS infrastructure, the policy and institutional environment, communication and toolkits for parliamentarians to mainstream CIS into laws, plans and policies. The main objectives of the meeting were twofold:

- a) Enhance the knowledge and understanding of the potential application of CIS policies in development planning with the aim of catalysing the uptake and use of climate services by vulnerable communities. The emphasis was on developing and applying active learning methodologies such as exercises and simulations to reinforce learning. The training was highly participatory and practical, focusing on techniques, tools and tips of training

management, with the participation of the Members of Parliament through sharing of experiences and lessons from national and regional contexts.

- b) Built on and reinforced participants' pre-existing skillsets and aptitude to CIS, for instance, the participants learnt how to integrate CIS into policies, programmes, development and macroeconomic planning.

Statements made during the opening of the training

The Chair of the session, Hon. Amongin Jacqueline, the Chairperson of the PAP Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Natural resources and Environment, welcomed participants, members from UNECA and the resource persons before giving some brief remarks. She thanked her fellow parliamentarians for turning up in huge numbers to participate in the training, noting that climate change is not only an environmental threat, but is impacting the socio-economic sectors and thus impeding achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Africa, with agriculture being impacted most. She also thanked ACPC and Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) for organizing the training.

Frank Rutabingwa, Senior Natural Resources Management Expert with the Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) at the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) gave the opening statement. He presented a brief history of the on-going collaborative initiative between ECA, and PACJA under the framework of the Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER) initiative. Mr. Rutabingwa reiterated to the African parliamentarians the importance of mainstreaming CIS into development policy, plans and practices on the African continent, noting that Africa needs to develop a strong, scientific understanding of the impacts of the changing weather and climate patterns on its vital sectors and future scenarios to mitigate and adapt to climate risks to ensure sustainable development. He underscored that accurate and accessible climate information, for example rainfall and wind information, helps farmers decide not only when to plant and harvest, but when to dry their crops, and when to look out for pests and disease outbreaks that can ruin yields.

Mr. Mithika Mwenda of PACJA stressed the importance of Climate Information and Services as part of understanding and fulfilling African Countries mandate under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). He pleaded with Parliamentarians to be active participants and messengers of CIS, more so given that many of them attend the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC. He thanked Parliamentarians for sparing their weekend to attend the training, noting that such commitment and sacrifice cannot be taken for granted.

Hon. Jacqueline Amongin then invited Mr. Stephen Mutimba to start the training entitled: *The application of Climate Information Services in development planning.*

4. Training materials and methodology

Materials used and learning methods entailed

- a. Presentation using PowerPoint slides and description
- b. Questions and Answer from parliamentarians
- c. Comments and suggestions
- d. Sharing of experiences and knowledge from region of origin

The training was divided into the following sections:

- Introduction of CI and CIS, which included why understanding CIS is crucial for Africa development
- Brief overview of the economics of climate change focusing on the economic impacts and costs that climate change has caused in various sectors and parts of the continent
- Definition and brief analyses of the state of CI and CIS in Africa and the socio-economic benefit of understanding CIS
- Mandate and Status of climate information and services infrastructure with focus on National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) in Africa
- Governance of CIS with focus on networking and collaboration with regional and sub-regional entities in providing climate information and services - African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), ICPAC and the Africa Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET).
- Challenges and Opportunities in Governance of CIS in Africa:
 - Need for increased budgetary allocation to NHMSs to support socio-economic planning and development,
 - Need to integrate CIS in national development programmes,
 - Public Private Partnerships to boost investments in CIS.
- The presentation also dealt on the requirement for the production and delivery of CIS and mainstreaming climate information into legislation.

There was lively discussion during presentations, with parliamentarians giving their opinion and views with regards to climate change at international level vis a vis at the local level, noting the need for climate justice given that developed countries caused the problem and the need for them to shoulder responsibility as per the UNFCCC agreements. with regards to the status of CIS infrastructure, parliamentarians agreed on the need to lobby for adequate funding to be availed to NMHSs and related organizations in their respective countries.

5. Follow up and support

Mr. Mithika Mwenda, the PACJA Secretary General, gave a brief presentation emphasising on the urgent need for legislators to work hand in hand with the civil society and researchers for climate adaptation and in advancing the climate discourse at the

global level. He urged the participants to embrace the Talanoa dialogue introduced in the UN Climate negotiation process whose purpose is to share stories, ideas, skills, experiences, build empathy and to facilitate wiser decisions for the collective good. There was consensus that Talanoa dialogue will help in stock-taking of the achievements so far, as well as the challenges, which should inform the way Africa should engage in global climate negotiations.

Legislators at the PAP were eager to learn more and especially on how to seek accountability by industrialised countries, whose activities, they alleged, have resulted in excess emission of greenhouse gasses that are causing global warming. However, it was the view of the majority that the changing climatic conditions is a problem all over Africa, and the priority should be to accept that there is a problem that must be tackled immediately before pursuing those who caused it.

They urged ACPC (ECA) and the African civil society on climate change led by PACJA to continue to convene such training events to heighten understanding of CIS and its role in addressing climate change impacts on the economic, social and environmental sectors. Mr. Frank Rutabingwa, who is also the WISER coordinator at ACPC, informed participants that the objective of WISER is to contribute to the enhancement of the policy and enabling environment for increased application of CIS in development planning and that ACPC is available to support any follow up training in advancing this cause.

Lastly, the PAP) and ACLI members appreciated the training and indicated they would use the knowledge acquired in developing their climate resilient strategies at the national and regional level.

6. List of Participants

No.	NAME	Country	Language	Function
1.	Hon. Jacqueline AMONGIN	Uganda	English	Chairperson of Committee on Agriculture
2.	Hon. Mai Mahmoud	Egypt	Arabic	Deputy Chairperson
3.	Hon. Mathias OUEDRAOGO	Burkina Faso	French	Member
4.	Hon. Hon. Charles Majak Aleer	South Sudan	Sudan	Member
5.	Hon. Kokou AGBO	Togo	French	Member
6.	Hon. Kone DOGNON	Cote D'Ivoire	French	Member
7.	Hon. Patrick Mayombe Mumbyoko	DRC	French	Member
8.	Hon. Yaw AFFUL	Ghana	English	Member
9.	Hon. Saloun CISSE	Guinea Conakry	French	Member
10.	Hon. Charles Majak Aleer	South Sudan	French	Member
11.	Hon. Mamedi SIDIBE	Mali	French	Member
12.	Hon. Aminata NIANG	Mauritania	Arabic	Member
13.	Hon. Assane Marou Dit KOUBOU	Niger	French	Member
14.	Hon. Simon GILL	Seychelles	French	Member
15.	Hon. Okot Ogong Felix	Uganda	English	Member
16.	Hon. Ignatienne Nyirarukundo	Rwanda	English	Member
17.	Hon. Domai Gatpan Kulang	South Sudan	English	Member
18.	Hon. Goodness Khanyisile MALAMBE	Swaziland	English	Member
19.	Hon. Mboni Mohamed MHITA	Tanzania	English	Member
20.	Hon. Békéyi SOGOYOU	Togo	French	Member
21.	Hon. Bangirana Anifa KAWOOPA	Uganda	English	Member
22.	Hon. Mutinta C MAZOKA	Zambia	English	Member
23.	Hon. Margaret MITI	Zambia	English	Member
24.	Hon. Ladislus NDORO	Zimbabwe	English	Member
25.	Hon. Amina SOUNA	Niger	French	Member
26.	Hon. Bongani Mdluli	Zimbabwe	English	Member

No.	NAME	Country	Language	Function
27.	Hon. Babiye Veronica Kadogo	Uganda	English	Member
28.	Hon. Caesar Bayeh Loyalala	South Sudan	English	Member