



## CIS Case Studies

---

# The County Climate Information Services (CIS) Plan: Developing Decentralized, User-relevant Climate Information



## Summary

---

Supporting the process of devolution and decentralisation in Kenya, the Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) piloted the development of a County Climate Information Services (CIS) plan. Designed to develop climate information which can support decision makers across County Government and key livelihood groups, the plan was developed through focus group, key informant interviews and technical reviews, with the draft plan reviewed and agreed through stakeholder consultation. Piloted in Kitui, the process has been endorsed by County Government and KMD, accepted as a template for roll out nationally and is informing complementary approaches in neighbouring countries.

## Background

---

KMD is mandated to provide meteorological services to protect lives and property and contribute to sustainable development. In line with the process of devolution and decentralization, KMD has established County Meteorological Offices (CMOs) each headed by a County Director of Meteorology (CDM) who is responsible for delivering national policies on meteorology at county level and developing Climate Information Services (CIS) which can best support the County's planning processes and principal livelihood groups. The process of developing County CIS plans was piloted in Kitui County, one of the five Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) counties where the DFID Kenya-funded Adaptation (Ada) Consortium is operational<sup>1</sup>.

Aware of the low uptake and confidence in its services, the County CIS plan sets out how KMD will deliver locally-relevant information at time frames of hours, days, weeks, months, seasons and years to support local, sub-county and county-level decision making, strengthening livelihoods and building resilience to the impacts of severe weather hazards, climate variability and change. It sets out 1,3 and 5 year plans which can then be supported through different funding, including KMD and the County Administrations.



Stakeholder review of the Kitui County CIS Plan, February 2014

<sup>1</sup> Financed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Ada Consortium (Ada) aims to introduce a 'combined approach' to adaptation in the Arid and Semi-Arid counties of Isiolo, Wajir, Garissa, Kitui and Makeni. The 'combined approach' consists of establishing County Climate Change Funds; integration of weather and climate information and resilience assessment tools into county and community planning; establishment of adaptation planning committees and a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. Ada is led by the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) working with Christian Aid, WomanKind, ALDEF and RAP, with the Met Office and KMS leading the CIS elements with the University of Sussex. The Ada Secretariat is based in the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA).

During project inception, partners agreed on a framework and set of principles to underpin the collaborative development of decision-relevant climate information. It was recognized that climate information need to:

- Be relevant to users' needs/livelihoods and gender-sensitive;
- Be accessible;
- Be explicit about the levels of confidence and uncertainty and strengthen appropriate communication and use of probabilistic and uncertain information;
- Foster increased trust through developing two-way channels of communication; and
- Recognise and be integrated with local knowledge systems.

Engaging the cross-disciplinary capacities of Ada partners and bringing in communications expertise, the development of the County plan sought to operationalize these principles. The process included key informant interviews with key ministries of County Government, decentralized agencies and development partners and local and regional radio stations, focus groups with livelihood groups across climatic zones and technical reviews of observational and communications networks.

## Methods

---

As a key member of the Ada Consortium, KMD was engaged from the outset and supported by partners to lead in coordinating an inclusive process for developing Kenya's first County CIS plan. Project inception included: agreeing principles to underpin climate services, analysis of key spaces and places where climate information could support County Government structures and processes, reviewing partners' and wider experience in developing user-relevant CIS, coproducing a Theory of Change and framework for monitoring and evaluating CIS.

A team comprising representatives from KMD head and county office, national and local development partners (Christian Aid and ADS-E) and UK Met CIS and communications consultants jointly developed the plan through:

- Consultations with key livelihood groups across the climatic zones and key informant interviews with County Government ministries and decentralized agencies, including the National Drought Management Authority and representatives of the Ministries of Environment, Livestock, Planning, Agriculture and Water. These discussions assessed climate information requirements and communications preferences, simultaneously developing a baseline in the current access to and use of existing KMD services.;
- A review of communications networks to develop an innovative approach combining local and regional radio, SMS and social networks to maximize reach;
- A review of the County's observational network and plans for its strengthening;
- Drafting of a CIS plan combining the above cross-disciplinary inputs;
- Stakeholder review of the draft CIS plan with participation from across key ministries, decentralized and development agencies, research bodies, farmers' groups, religious leaders and teachers.
- Implementation of the plan was linked to a series of related initiatives including: developing a strategy for strengthening KMD communications, CDM training and the establishment of a network of CIS intermediaries [see parallel case study].

## Implementation, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

---

Coordinated by KMD, the development of the plan recognized that, to achieve buy in, the process required support and expertise from across a wide range of County and national Government ministries and decentralized agencies, national and local development partners, religious networks and local and regional radios. Developed through a series of consultations at community and County Government levels, the draft plan was endorsed by the County Government Ministry of Environment and the Director of KMD. Ongoing implementation of the plan is subject to annual review within County Government and KMD head office. Ada has developed a framework for monitoring the process of developing user-relevant CIS, through technical review of product development and regular post-seasonal review of the access, use and benefits of strengthened CIS with key livelihood groups and County Government stakeholders.



Inspecting rain gauges within a review of Kitui County's Observational Network, January 2014

## Resources

---

The Ada Consortium brought together the required range of meteorological and climate science, humanitarian, development and communications expertise and contributed infrastructural support, such as observation equipment. As a key partner of the project, KMD prioritized human resources, while the initiative clearly demonstrated that effective decentralized services demand increased investments in observational networks and technical and communication capacities.

## Outcomes and Future Activities

---

The process for developing a County CIS plan has [a] been formally adopted within KMD for upscaling to all 47 counties, [b] included within the responsibilities of KMD County Directors of Meteorology, and [c] recognised in the KMD Strategic Plan as reference material for Decentralisation of services to the county level. Plans are either complete or being prepared in the five Ada focus Counties, while a grant from the DFID Weather and Climate Information and SERVICES [WISER] programme is supporting establishment of plans within the development of strengthened CIS across 4 counties [Trans Nzoia, Siaya, Kisumu and Kakamega] in Western Kenya. The approach has also informed complementary initiatives to develop decentralised CIS in Tanzania.

## Lessons Learnt

---

The development of user-relevant CIS is a cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary process requiring the active engagement of a wide range of stakeholders as both providers, users and intermediaries of climate information.

Ongoing two-way exchange between the providers and users of climate information is essential for both regular communication and ongoing monitoring and review.

Working with established social networks and media channels builds trust and supports sustainability.

Climate information alone is not enough. To be integrated within ongoing decision making, livelihood advisories and technical guidance are required to support appropriate application.

CHALLENGE # 1: Developing inclusive decentralized CIS plans through:

- Widespread consultation across decision making levels, sectors and livelihood and social groups, integrating regular feedback and review mechanisms

CHALLENGE #2: Developing credible, relevant climate information, through:

- Co-producing advisories with technical expertise from across livestock, agriculture, health, disaster risk reduction, transport and other key sectors, and integrating with local knowledge sources
- Clearly conveying the levels of confidence and uncertainty in the climate information

CHALLENGE #3: Creating sustainable services through:

- Demonstrating benefit by ensuring comprehensive baselines and regular monitoring and evaluation of both the process and impacts of strengthened CIS
- Creating a clear framework and identifying opportunities for County Government and national budget support and external investment.

## REFERENCES

[http://www.adaconsortium.org/images/publications/Briefing\\_Note\\_-\\_County\\_CIS\\_Plans.pdf](http://www.adaconsortium.org/images/publications/Briefing_Note_-_County_CIS_Plans.pdf)  
<http://www.adaconsortium.org/images/NEW-CLIMATE-INFORMATION-SERVICES-FOR-KITUI.pdf>  
<http://www.adaconsortium.org/images/publications/CIS-Final-Circulation.pdf>

## Fact Sheet of the Project/Activity

Name of case study or project	Developing a County Climate Information Services (CIS) Plan, through the DFID-Kenya supported Adaptation (Ada) Consortium
Author organization	Emma Visman, King's College London and Independent Consultant
Contact person's name	Ayub Shaka, Kenya Meteorological Department
Contact person's email [+phone number]	ayubshaka@ymail.com , +254722747738
Providers of the service (including partners)	KMD, County Government Ministries, NDMA, IIED, Christian Aid, Anglican Development Services-Eastern [ADS-E]
Project timeframe [e.g. 2009-2011]	2013-2016
Location [region/country/village etc.]	Kitui, Makueni, Isiolo, Wajiiir, Garissa
Primary target audience	County Government ministries and principal livelihood groups in each County
Funding mechanism(s)	UK Department for International Development (DFID) Strengthening Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change in Kenya (Plus) [STARK+] support for the NDMA and IIED-coordinated Adaptation Consortium [Ada]

---

The Adaptation [ADA] consortium is a core component of the National Drought Management Authority strategy and funded within the Strengthening Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change in Kenya plus [STARCK+] programme. The aim of the Adaptation Consortium is to pilot climate change adaptation planning approaches to enhance climate resilience in five Arid and Semi-Arid Lands [ASALs] counties [Garissa, Isiolo, Kitui, Makueni and Wajir]. The consortium consist of Christian Aid working with ADS-Eastern in Kitui and Makueni, International Institute of Environment and Development [IIED] working with Resource Advocacy Programme [RAP] in Isiolo, WomanKind Kenya in Garissa, and Arid Lands Development Focus [ALDEF] in Wajiir, Met Office [UK] and the Kenya Meteorological Services [KMS].

---



Adaptation Consortium

email: [info@adaconsortium.org](mailto:info@adaconsortium.org)

[www.adaconsortium.org](http://www.adaconsortium.org)

@adaconsortium

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Adaptation-Consortium/365373970267118?ref=hl>

Download more publications at <http://adaconsortium.org/index.php/ada-publications.html>

Funded by:



This research was funded by UK aid from the UK Government, however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the UK Government.