ClimateForAL

Climate Forecasting, Adaptation, and Livelihoods

Turkana Climate Information System

Briefing re: Scientific Advisory Group

by ClimateForAL co-leads

Dennis Ochieng, Julian Dyer, and Ellen Dyer

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University of Exeter

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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Introduction

Turkana county stakeholders including the Turkana County Government, the Kenya Meteorological Department, the National Drought Management Authority, and the Red Cross, have recently begun an initiative to create an integrated Climate Information System (CIS) for Turkana County. The goal of this CIS is to create a comprehensive, unified platform where all climate relevant information can be shared in a way that is practical and accessible for end-users. As part of this initiative, theses stakeholders reached out to the ClimateForAL team (Ellen Dyer, Julian Dyer, and Dennis Ochieng) to request that we lead a Scientific Advisory Group (CIS-SAG) to provide policy-relevant input to this initiative from the many research projects in Turkana. This initiative reflects the fact that climate vulnerabilities in Turkana County are heavily researched, yet this scientific knowledge is not easily translated into policy insights. The goal of the Scientific Advisory Group is to bridge this gap.

Objectives

The major objectives of the Scientific Advisory Group are as follows:

1. Synthesis of scientific knowledge from research project active in Turkana to provide evidence to assist with the development of the CIS. Special attention will be given to solving "last-mile" issues with the dissemination of this research to ensure it reaches vulnerable people and that feedback loops allow contextual information to inform the design of the CIS.
2. To design and implement a best-practice randomized impact evaluation of the CIS to rigorously measure the impact on climate resilience and identify potential areas of improvement.

Current Status:

The Scientific Advisory Group has assembled the expertise of four research projects active in Turkana:

1. **ClimateForAL:** Focus on barriers to the last mile of climate information, including communication, trust and legitimacy, and blending of traditional/conventional information for culturally appropriate advisories. Experimental methodology for impact evaluation, testing how end-users update their seasonal expectations, how behaviour changes.
2. **PALM-TREEs:** Focus on building sustainable capacity for climate forecasting, including weather station capacity. Strong focus on multiple dimensions of vulnerability and understanding how different demographics are at risk from different extreme events. Strong gender lens to understand how access to information shapes empowerment.
3. **ALBATROSS:** Research into Nature-Based Solutions to climate shocks that can be incorporated into the climate information system. Emphasis on co-

development so tailor-made NBS can be identified for communities. Working on droughts and floods to generate flood-specific forecasts.

4. **PASSAGE:** Work on cross-border regions and working with different levels of government to create appropriate forecasts. Strong focus on communication for different stakeholders to create qualitative assessments/risk narratives and early action protocols to create consistency across different countries in the region. Working on the vegetation index with NDMA to improve forecasting and building capacity within those agencies

Next Steps

The next step for this initiative is to identify the currently existing information that is ready to be disseminated to users. Our next milestone as the SAG is to conduct a Situational Analysis to identify the end users appropriate for existing climate information products, and identify their specific information needs. The aim is to produce and conduct a randomized roll-out of this intervention by the end of June as a pilot to learn preliminary lessons about the function of the CIS as we expand the scope of the CIS to include more information for a greater range of stakeholders.