

Outcomes Article



OECD-PCCB Network Workshop Series #2 Climate services and data - a capacity development agenda




The second virtual OECD-PCCB Network workshop, in collaboration with the [International Research Institute for Climate and Society of the Columbia Climate School \(IRI\)](#), took place on 28th June 2022 and gathered over 50 stakeholders from donor and partner countries, international organisations, multilateral development banks, funds, academia and civil society. The workshop focused on capacity development to support developing countries in the area of climate services and data, including: a technical panel discussion looking at the current bottlenecks that partner countries experience in this space; and three 'lightning talks' that focused on (a) effective and innovative mechanisms to support partner countries access climate services; (b) supporting the capacity of countries in climate data; and (c) initiatives focusing on the situation of SIDS.

Representatives from the [OECD](#) and [UNFCCC PCCB](#) highlighted the importance of having reliable, accurate, timely and affordable climate services and data in developing countries, especially SIDS. The [PCCB Network](#) is helping identify concrete capacity-related bottlenecks and look for ways to help countries lift them; while capacity development in this area is at the core of donor activities, as it helps build resilience and promote well-informed decision-making. In fact, investing in climate services and data can help climate-proof activities across a range of sectors, as well as make activities in the area of climate change easy to invest in. In addition, investing in partner countries' access to climate services and data can accelerate local action and ambition, according to a recent [OECD report](#).

A technical panel included representatives from IRI, [Paris21](#), [TomorrowNow](#), and the [WMO](#). Panelists highlighted the following issues:

- Climate services help produce data across value chains – which is useful for decision-making, even though different users have different data needs. Needs are broad and range from data generation, interpretation and then getting it to the users. A further challenge refers to the limited capacity of countries to deal with the variety and complexity of data that can be generated. Finally, most partner countries have no mandated institution that could co-ordinate this data – with data being generated across a range of fields with a lack of consistency in the methods and definitions used. There also is a lack of data stewardship and legal bottlenecks, resulting in different stakeholders having no or different information, including citizen-generated data, which could be an opportunity for climate change – but that needs to be harnessed. A good example of overcoming this challenge has been provided by Paris21, which helped stakeholders to talk to each other in Zambia and Kenya where they helped improve citizen-generated data for climate change.



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- Support for data in the area of climate change is relatively less frequent than producing data in other areas – and most of this data is being produced to monitor and report on climate change to the UNFCCC – not always geared towards the development of activities in countries. This opens up new opportunities for donors in this area, despite its complexity, and donors should avoid repeating past mistakes, particularly by ensuring that they reach users, including the private sector, which is underutilised in providing long-term climate services.
- Meteorological agencies are at the centre of the provision of climate services and data. However, they struggle to explain why their services and data can help inform policy-making, therefore weakening the potential of providing informed-based decisions and solutions. Installing meteorological stations is a good way of bumping up the capacity of these agencies – yet this is expensive and agencies are usually underfunded and understaffed, which hampers their maintenance – all of this is happening in a context where needs are growing and where the services of such agencies are critical to preparing for and responding quickly after a crisis. TomorrowNow is providing solutions in this part of the equation – e.g. with a call centre on climate data for farmers – reaching out to those most in need and training these communities to respond to climate-related hazards.
- Donors often deliver their support in disorganised ways – and partially overlapping with partner country needs. A key area of work is ensuring resources are localised (reaching those most in need, intentionally), co-ordinated and not fragmented. Recipient countries have limited capacity, becoming dependent on external funding, which is short-term and unsustainable. Consequently, countries have no choice but to request their agencies to provide seasonal climate data without donor support, e.g. using the IRI/WMO models of capacity development. One way to overcome this challenge is to support unified policies to exchange data within countries that have similar climatic patterns and vulnerabilities across sectors, such as the WMO does. This requires data standardisation and competency-based training, including to produce socio-economic data that can go hand-in-hand with climate-related data.

Lightning talks – 1

The first group, on ‘effective and innovative mechanisms to support partner countries access climate services’ included presentations and solutions from [GIZ](#), Canada, and the [MiCRO](#). The presentations highlighted the following solutions:

- GIZ highlighted the importance of developing an enabling environment (e.g. laws and plans) that makes data needs on climate change mandatory, as well as promoting the use of climate services (e.g. the MERCI Methodology in Costa Rica). Another key element is the human capacity to create and sustain these services and data – donors can help pilot initiatives or create networks of experts (e.g. engineers, infrastructure developers, meteorological services) to develop trust and show that methodologies can work.
- Canada noted how early warning systems can help promote climate resilience – but for these to work, capacity development is key and this requires collaboration to ensure the right design, implementation and application (e.g. deciphering what to expect and what to do from such systems). Regional support is key and tools and systems that benefit several countries can be cost-effective. An example is provided by the WMO’s [CREWS](#), to which Canada contributes by supporting with flash flood guidance, promoting co-ordination and technical capacity, thus helping to limit losses and damage associated with flash floods in the Dominican Republic, for example.
- By using climate data produced by other stakeholders, MiCRO is able to produce parametric insurance products, limiting residual risks. Micro also helps with financial education, working across a range of products and services from the private and public sectors, thus incentivizing people to understand the value of insurance and be more resilient against climate hazards. Often, information is available and forecasts are accurate but the legal responsibility to use these and anticipate actions in the field is not there – technology can help with this.

Lightning talks - 2

The second group focused on initiatives that are supporting the capacity of countries in climate data and featured presentations from TomorrowNow, Paraguay and IRI. Speakers highlighted the following solutions:

- TomorrowNow in Kenya works to leverage the convening power of different partners across a range of organisations and the scientific community, and the private sector – with the aim to support farmers take the right decisions and build their resilience against climate-related hazards.
- In Paraguay, Paris21 supported the creation of a Climate Atlas, which includes environmental data, SDG-related data and water data, among other elements. With all these inputs, the Atlas provides a multidimensional data source which is suitable for climate-proofing decision-making across several sectors, and across public and private actors.
- The [ACT Today project](#), developed by IRI in Latin America, offers a novel approach to strengthen capacity against climate variabilities – it is produced for various climate data ecosystems, and focuses on health and infectious diseases that may be promoted by climate change (e.g. Zika or Chikungunya).

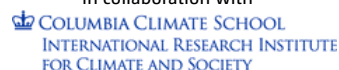
Lightning talks - 3

The third group dealt with initiatives focusing on the situation of SIDS, with presentations and solutions from [AFD](#) and [Météo France](#), the [Commonwealth Secretariat](#) and Jamaica. Presenters highlighted the following solutions:

- AFD and Météo France presented the [BRIO Project](#), which is helping SIDS in the Indian Ocean develop high-resolution climate projections that will describe the climate of the region until the year 2100. The climate model will make it possible to identify long-term trends in temperature, rainfall and cyclonic activity in the region. This is a valuable assistance provided to these SIDS to enable them to understand the implications of climate change on human and animal health, food security, water reserves or soil erosion.
- The Commonwealth Secretariat provided an overview of its [CommonSensing project](#). This is an innovative international project based on a partnership between Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and a range of international partners, working together to support and build climate resilience and enhance decision making through the use of satellite remote sensing technology.
- Jamaica noted that data underpins all activities that meteorological stations do. The country worked with the PPCR in the tourism sector, notably to develop a M&E strategy to ensure continuity of projects, maintenance of equipment, and generally to support the work with donors to factor in these elements.



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In the plenary discussion, participants highlighted the following general elements:

- The terms "Adaptation" and "Weather/Natural Events alerts" ought not to be confused. Early Warning System(s) are necessary but not automatically linked to "Adaptation". Adaptation is needed even before "events" happen.
- Opening up on data has some challenges. Some countries in the Caribbean have had the experience of sharing their data which is then developed into products which people try to sell back to them. This is one of the reasons that some have become more cautious. When sharing data, it needs to be made clear that it is for statistical purposes, not for monitoring purposes, such as for taxation, for marketing, etc. This is really crucial if we are going to convince organisations to share their data.
- People experience the weather. A drought is felt as a result of dry weather and higher temperatures. Seasonal forecasts help support networks prepare for the weather that will prevail next season and plan crops for the entire season, whether it will be "normal," dry or wet, cool or hot.

For further information on the workshop, please visit the PCCB Network Activities [webpage](#).