



Participatory Mapping in Keur Moussa Ndiaye, photo by Simon Sambou, CRS



testimonies of several actors who expressed their satisfaction with the project and the participatory climate information services mapping.

Mapping: A Key Aspect of the Project Approach

Simon Sambou, Project Officer /CISRI



In Senegal, rainfed agriculture, which is vital for a large percentage of the rural population, is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Providing farmers and others with information on climate variations can help inform decisions that enhance agricultural production, thereby improving food security and agricultural incomes.

The Climate Information Services Research Initiative (CISRI), a research project funded by USAID and led by Mercy Corps, is piloting a participatory mapping technique for Climate Information Services (CIS) systems. CISRI, implemented in Senegal by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Practical Action Consulting (PAC), organized participatory workshops aiming to build synergy between the different CIS actors to better understand and improve the climate information system for the benefit of rainfed farmer end-users.

This newsletter will present the CISRI project activities in Senegal, including an overview of the workshops and

The CISRI project in Senegal aims to map climate information services so as to identify constraints and bottlenecks in the system and engage actors to identify solutions. In the following interview, Simon Sambou, CISRI

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Project Officer with CRS in Senegal, discusses the methodology used to map climate information services, identify access and use constraints, and provide solutions.

Can you talk about the CISRI project and its objectives?

CISRI is composed of four work streams, the second of which is implemented by CRS and PAC in Senegal. This activity targets the end users of climate information (rain-fed farmers) and follows five steps: framing the system, preliminary mapping, empowerment of vulnerable actors, participatory CIS mapping, and lessons learned and feedback.

What can you tell us about the mapping, a key aspect of the approach used by the project?

CIS mapping helped identify a number of challenges related to the system used to disseminate climate information, from its production to its final use. The mapping includes key actors, as well as services and support functions and the external environment. We did the mapping at the village level (Daga Birame, Médina Sy, Keur Omar Daga, Keur Moussa Ndiaye and Darou Wolof), in their respective communes (Ndiognick, Dianke Souf, Missirah Wadène, Fass Thiékène and Ida Mouride), then in the Kaffrine Region. Then, all the CIS system actors came together in Dakar at the national level to exchange on these climate information issues.

This process helped producers gradually get familiar with the various actors along the CIS dissemination chain and improve their perception of the system as well as of challenges and opportunities.

The national workshop brought together all actor categories, including the National Agency for Civil Aviation and Meteorology (ANACIM), intermediary actors in the dissemination chain (projects/programs, NGOs, government technical services, etc.), end users (farmers) and strategic institutions, in order to encourage decision making.



Photo: Participatory mapping in a village



Photo: Working group at the national workshop

Everywhere we went, the CIS actors were very engaged to work collaboratively with the CISRI project team. I think this is due to the participatory approach that was used, which helped us capture knowledge related to climate information access and use and also identify challenges linked to the system. In this way, for each challenge, an appropriate solution was identified by the actors themselves.

What was your impression of actors' testimonies during this visit?

The testimonies are very positive about the CISRI project approach and the facilitation used by the project team for the mapping process. The approach involved giving actors a voice in the process of CIS mapping, identifying challenges, gathering and prioritizing everyone's concerns, and determining responsibilities. They appreciated this approach, which gave them an opportunity to meet, engage and participate in decision making from the local to the communal and national levels.



Photo: The regional workshop in Kaffrine with the Governor, the District Advisor and the DRDR Officer.

The subject of inclusion was often raised by different actors, particularly by women who said that the number of female field agents who diffuse climate information should increase. What is your response to this?

Women are a strong link in the climate information dissemination chain. Despite this, they remain one of the most vulnerable actors in the system. In many villages where we worked, women are not integrated within the system. I think this needs to change. Everywhere, women expressed their interest in getting more involved in climate information dissemination.

Women play an important role in terms of climate information use as they use this information not only for agricultural decision making, but also for the security of their children and food stocks. ANACIM and their partners should engage women field agents more, as they do with men, in order for the CIS system to function better.



Photo: Women explaining their CIS system map in the Medina Sy village

What are the next project implementation steps?

Beyond putting together this newsletter, which will share stories from all levels of actors in the CIS system, we will also be writing the final report. These documents will allow us to share the feedback and lessons learned on this participatory mapping methodology.

Actors' Testimonies

The Kaffrine region is a climate "laboratory": there are multiple actors, projects and programs working on climate information, which was an advantage for the CISRI workstream 2 implementation as the presence of these actors helped promote better understanding of factors influencing climate information access and use. Here, we share actors' perspectives on the advantages of the mapping experience and approach, as well as the challenges related to climate information access and use.



Photo: Mapping in the Medina Sy village

Male and Female Producers

Ms. Ndèye Diané, President of the Women's Group of Daga Birame- Ndiognick Commune



Daga Birame, a climate-smart village, benefited from a project piloted by the Senegalese National Center for Forest Research and Institute for Agricultural Research (ISRA/ CNRF). Through that project, the producers in this locality now use climate information services, which have led to behavior change, according to Ms. Ndèye Diané, President of the Daga Birame Women's Group.

"I am a farmer and the president of my village women's group that is active in climate smart agriculture. In order to share climate information, I participated in the CISRI mapping process from the beginning. The availability of climate information helps us to prepare our seeds in a timely way. The main challenge relates to the language used to communicate the messages. If these messages are shared in Wolof, it would be even better."

Mariama Keita, Producer/ANACIM field agent, Sikilo, Kayi Commune

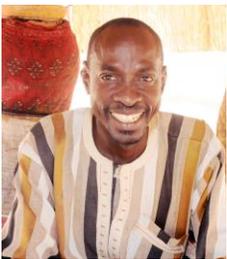


Mariama Keita, a farmer and climate information field agent, is very active regarding climate change. She participated in the regional and national mapping workshops organized by CISRI. According to Mariama, "Participating helped me understand good practices related to climate information use, which is critically important in the life of producers." She also described the

urgent need for timely access to climate information in the different local languages, in an explicit, simple, clear and straightforward way.

Ms. Keita considers the integration of female field agents into the system as a good thing considering the important role they play in development. She also says, “It was useful to organize these [communal, regional and national level] mapping workshops to better establish who does what, who should be doing what, and to identify actors in order to assess their usefulness, determine the factors causing lack of clarity and bottlenecks. The methodology used to organize these different workshops helped attain results that will support producers in making decisions.”

Ibrahima Diop, Producer and Field Agent in Médina Sy, Dianke Souf Commune



Ibrahima Diop provided these reflections on his participation in the workshops: “Thanks to the mapping workshops involving local communities, actors know each other better and many contacts have been made. Also, many constraints were identified during the workshop, including those regarding collaboration between actors, especially receiving and reading messages. It is also an opportunity to say that women should be more involved to better support the use of climate information as an agricultural input.”

Ousmane Thial, Rain Gauge Manager and Climate Change Platform President, Daga Birame, Ndiognick Commune



Ousmane Thial was among the actors who participated in the workshops on participatory mapping at all levels. He says, “I am happy to note that this methodology helped identify climate information sources and actors. The [Climate Change] Platform was invited to participate and members facilitated debates and experience sharing. Today, with climate information, we affirm an agriculture based on good crop planning and cultivation choices in the face of climate change. Climate information is at the core of our activities.”

Awa Guèye, President of the Keur Moussa Ndiaye Women’s Group



Awa Guèye notes, “The workshops that were organized as part of the implementation of Project CISRI made us aware of the issue of climate information. We identified experiences related to improving our crop yields through the use of information, as well as the security of our crops and inputs, and decision making regarding which crops to plant.”

Amdiatou Dieng, Producer, Ndiognick Commune



“I participated in three climate information mapping workshops. These meetings helped me get to know other climate information actors. I am pleased with the methodology and the approach used. The large number of actors helps to explain why it can be slow to receive the information, which is a perishable good. The earlier it is transmitted, the more useful it is for producers. With modern means of communication, it is possible to reduce the distance between ANACIM and producers – this distance slows down or blocks climate information. We shared [at the workshops] and came up with different pathways to solutions.”



Photo: The regional workshop in Kaffrine

Local Authorities

Mamadou Gaye, President of the Environment & Sustainable Development Commission



During the national workshop, Mr. Mamadou Gaye, President of the Environment Commission in the District Council of Kaffrine, announced the upcoming launch of a National Network of Climate Information Users. He welcomed the implementation of the CISRI learning program as it will generate new information, evidence and learning on effective and sustainable production and climate information access and use.

“[CISRI’s] approach was to first meet with individuals in order to exchange about conditions needed to improve problems related to climate change, starting from existing preconditions in the Kaffrine region. We were involved in the broad reflections at local, regional and national levels, to which all actors were invited. The method used was participatory and there was a good level of problem ownership on climate change, especially on climate information use related to crop or livestock production.”

“CIS systems mapping uncovered a plurality of actors in the system. The map presented before our eyes the challenge of a system with many different directions, many levels of decisions and many interlocutors.” Mr. Gaye recommends that the system of diffusion via field agents is simplified in order to improve the system, and a coherent national structure related to the Ministry of Agriculture is created that will focalize all the information and orient it towards field agent structures such as COMREC and the Climate Change Platform.



Photo: Work group at the national workshop

Awa Diouf, President of GiE “Bokk Khole”, Town Counselor, Dianke Souf Commune



Awa Diouf shared these thoughts: “The CISRI project succeeded in developing new behaviors in actors by putting them at the heart of activities. We welcome the local and participatory approaches that guided CISRI and we enjoyed participating in the workshops that helped identify actors and build relationships.”

NGO Projects and Programs and Decentralized Government Technical Services

Diadji Ndiaye, NGO IED/DFC



Diadji Ndiaye reflects on his engagement with CISRI: “We appreciate the open collaboration between the Climate Funds Decentralization (DFC) project and CISRI. The DFC project was associated with all the CISRI project implementation process steps, especially related to choosing individuals during the information collection support phase. As an NGO, IED Africa cares about community participation in project implementation and choice.

It was interesting to see how all actors were gathered at the local, regional and national levels. This helped convey information gathered at field level but also validated the information. The approach is very interesting and gave perspective to the DFC project orientations, which is an action research project. In this process, we learned a lot from CISRI.”

Babou Guèye, Agriculture and Rural Advisor/ANCAR Kaffrine



“I participated twice in the workshops organized by CISRI, at the regional and national levels. The lessons from these workshops are very satisfactory. The CRS approach brought a lot of satisfaction as actors involved in climate change were invited. The interest of a participatory approach comes from everybody being engaged in taking charge of this initiative through always working in collaboration with

weather forecast services. Using information in all activities can help make decisions. Undeniably, having the information is not sufficient; one must also know how to use it. In Kaffrine, we worked hard to solve ambiguities and constraints linked to climate information transmission and made suggestions for these issues.”

Ms. Yacine Fall, World Food Program (WFP) Senegal Office



Ms. Yacine Fall, Insurance Program Officer and Focal Point on climate services in the 4R initiative of the WFP’s Senegal Office granted us an interview. She appreciated the national workshop that not only brought together all actors, but

also gave them an environment to exchange on the issue, sharing and discussing with all actors, from the climate information provider to the end user, as well as intermediaries.

Ms. Fall expressed that the approach and methodology that were used helped take into account all participants’ perspectives and opinions. The mapping that followed from this process called for participants to assess and analyze challenges, constraints and bottlenecks that actors must consider to better support scaling of climate information dissemination. Mrs. Fall expressed that climate information is “perishable,” hence it is necessary to simplify the climate information dissemination channels as much as possible to allow beneficiaries to receive information quickly and to be able to use it in time and in synergy with their other actions.

Ms. Fall says that climate information is currently considered as an agricultural input in the same way as seeds, fertilizer and farm equipment, and in the same way as agricultural insurance, which also complements these risk management strategies. Climate information is relevant, but it is most relevant when it is integrated with other risk management strategies.

Government Institutions

Mr. Abdou Kader Touré, Statistics and Computer Engineer, Agriculture Directorate

We talked to Mr. Kader Touré, statistics and computer engineer, in charge of the information system at the Agriculture Directorate and Assistant Project Coordinator for CCASA (Climate Change Agriculture Food Security) at

the Agriculture Directorate/Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment (DA/MAER).



For Mr. Kader Touré, the approach allowed all actors to work in an inclusive and participatory environment. “It is a new approach that we are not used to; the actors themselves participated in the diagnosis of strengths, weaknesses and constraints in project implementation. This approach also helped decision makers understand actors’ common conceptions of issues related to climate change and also how to find appropriate solutions for better harmonization and capitalization to serve useful purposes, such as actor mapping where they jointly found solutions and harmonized their points of view for effectiveness and efficiency in climate information use.”

“The actions of all actors intervening in climate service dissemination should be harmonized. At the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development we have set up a national policy dialogue platform for agriculture and food security adaptation to climate change through the CCASA platform. This platform’s vision focuses on functional dialogue between national actors to effectively take into account climate change dimensions in the agriculture and food security sector. There should be an open and healthy cooperation between the platform and what CISRI has done.”



Photo: Participants look at challenges and opportunities at the national workshop

Mrs. Sokhna Guissé, Representative, Executive Secretariat, National Council for Food Security (SE-CNSA)



“My first impression [of CISRI] results from the participatory and inclusive approach along the whole process. Representativeness was assured through the inclusion of multiple actors and structures, which I appreciated as important. It is a very important initiative to accompany producers regarding good climate information, and as a

government structure in charge of food security issues and climate information within Early Warning Systems (EWS), we appreciated it.

During the workshop, mapping helped gather and identify many stakeholders in the climate information dissemination chain, and as such encourage more timely climate information dissemination and resource strengthening, where the government should make efforts so that climate information access can be easy and digestible for producers.

Through the mapping, the workshop showed the large number of stakeholders, which makes it difficult for the local level to receive timely climate information effectively and efficiently. This is the challenge of adequate and timely climate information reception – in order to be efficient, the system should be managed by local populations to be used and accessed more quickly.

At the strategic level, for the different policies of Senegal to really take CIS into account, it is necessary to encourage more advocacy and awareness-raising for decision makers on issues linked to the climate information system. At this level too, SE-CNSA has a quality mechanism: we are members of the national GTP in addition to the decentralized GTPs, where we actively participate. Through these mechanisms, at a decentralized level, we must work in close collaboration for a better use of climate information by users. There are also Regional Food Security Committees that are being revitalized. As such, these are issues that can be taken charge of at the regional and district levels.”

Ms. Soukeyna Chimere Diaw Cissokho, Coordinator, Executive Secretariat, National Council for Food Security (SE-CNSA)



Ms. Cissokho shared about issues relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of climate information access and use. In her opinion, to address the challenges of climate information at a strategic level, SE-CNSA advises, beyond advocacy, a development of public-private partnerships in order

to improve the climate information system at the level of different users. She suggests this in conjunction with the regional food security committees and all of the local level actors, where a real involvement of all is necessary.

Media professionals

Ousmane Sarr, Journalist at Bambouck FM Community Radio



Ousmane Sarr, a journalist and radio host in the Koungheul district, is also an agricultural producer as well as a climate information field agent in the Makka Yopp commune. He welcomes the participatory approach adopted by the CISRI project, a break from what was done

by other projects and programs that used to work in their communities. He also considers that “mapping is a tool that helps identify each actor involved in receiving information. Today, the CISRI project stimulated a new dynamic that helped to identify users and discuss pathways for efficient and effective delivery of climate information.”

Mohammed Wilane, Journalist at Kaffrine FM Community Radio



Mohammed Wilane, a journalist at Kaffrine FM community radio in charge of information and programs says: “As a journalist, I have learned a lot. My capacities were strengthened in terms of knowledge and identifying actors involved in climate information in agriculture, also knowing local elected

officials in the region, local, regional and national directorates.”

Babacar Séne, Secretary General, Network of Journalists Associated with Agricultural, Pastoral and Fishing Issues in Senegal (REJAQUES)



Mr. Séne provided these reflections: “REJAQUES gathers all journalists and communicators working in farming, livestock, and fishing. We participated in this [CISRI] workshop in which all issues for climate information use, dissemination and access were highlighted at the communal and regional as well as national level.”

“During the workshop, we noted that the main information provider is ANACIM. From there, it is easy for journalists to have access to climate information, to know information sources, to have an easy, clear, transparent, and straightforward understanding of this climate information to share it with producers for effective and efficient use in their everyday activities.”

“As we live in an era of fast information, media cannot be overlooked for climate information dissemination, whether TV, radio, specialized journals, social media or traditional communicators. This is why we should be at the core of development and planning processes. The CISRI project understood that and focused its actions on communication.”

Acknowledgements

CISRI thanks all actors who have been involved in work stream 2 in Senegal. We thank media and community radios that play a local role with producers and whose engagement was valued all along the process. CISRI is also grateful to local governments, including the Kaffrine region’s decentralized government and local authorities that understood the spirit of the activity and engaged in the participatory initiative, and were interested and willing to accompany CISRI in its implementation process. Multilateral organizations and government technical and strategic institutions also contributed to the success of CISRI’s activities and we thank them for their collaboration.

CISRI Senegal also thanks Mercy Corps, who coordinates the CISRI consortium and collaborates with CRS and PAC with workstream 2. We thank USAID for funding this initiative as part of the Learning Agenda for Climate Information Services.

The knowledge that has been generated through this pilot will be captured and shared widely in order to inform decision making for actors seeking to improve their CIS systems, addressing bottlenecks and promoting ideas to bring CIS to scale.

These short interviews demonstrate the importance of connecting the actors in the CIS system, and the value of participatory research for improving CIS by starting with a focus on the user and supporting multi-stakeholder dialogue to develop locally-led sustainable solutions. We hope that these learnings encourage others who are working on CIS to take a more user-centered approach to enhance the effectiveness and utility of future CIS products, programs and investments.

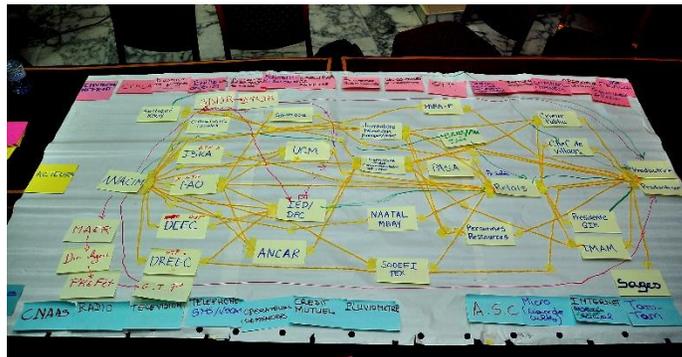


Photo: A CIS system map developed at the national workshop in Dakar, March 14, 2018



Photo: Participants at the national workshop in Dakar, March 14, 2018

For more information please visit:
<https://www.climatelinks.org/project/climate-information-services-research-initiative>

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