

# LOST IN TRANSLATION

## OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE HEALTH SECTOR ACCESS TO CLIMATE INFORMATION

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### Climate impacts on SADC region:

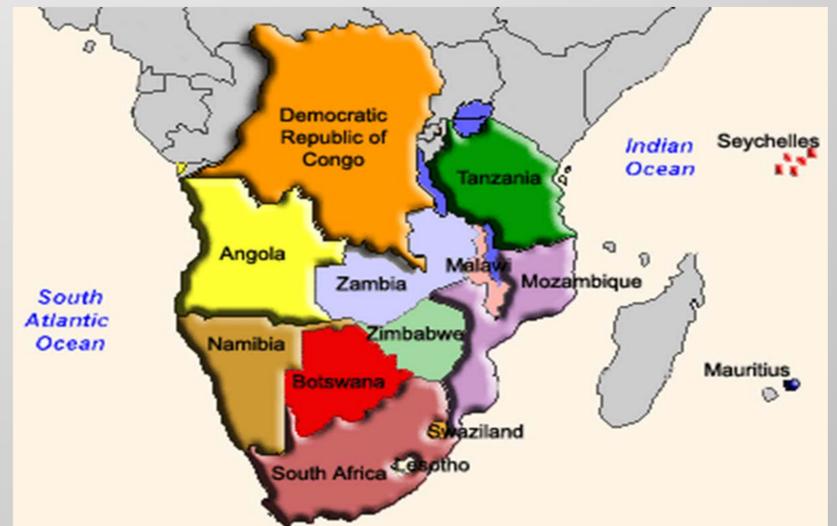
1. Hydro-meteorological disasters
2. Disease outbreaks

### Existing climate services:

#### Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF) – since 1996.

1. Two annual Meetings to discuss rainfall forecasts
2. Consensus on seasonal forecast reach users through joint workshops for developers and users.
3. Meeting include: Disaster Risk Management Teams from the 15 MS, Regional and International partners and users of the climate information.

**SADC Climate Services Centre:** lead Unit convening the SARCOF meetings, compiling and disseminating of the information.



### Approaches to improving health user access to climate information and services:

#### 1. Train Health-meteorologists

Health-meteorologist are specialized personnel that understand the language used by the health sector to which they are attached and can therefore translate climate information in a user friendly manner.

Many countries and Regional Organisations have specialised meteorologist cadres such as agro-meteorologists and hydro-meteorologist, serving this purpose.

#### 2. Multi-disciplinary expert teams

SARCOF and Member States could create multi-disciplinary expert teams skilled in translating climate information for users, to make sure users of climate information understand the language of the climatologists or weather experts.

#### 3. Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into all sectors in SADC.

At the National Level all climate-sensitive sectors, including health, should be part of the DRM and quarterly meetings -- to enable all sectors better access to relevant climate risk information,

#### 4 Seek users feedback

Providers should seek user guidance for the development of tailored-services. Providers can inquiry on how user are utilizing current existing products to improve them.

### Conclusion

*Climate information exists that is relevant for most sectors in development, however approaches to improving access and usability of information are required to allow sectors to benefit from it*

### Factors limiting user access to climate service:

- **Lack of translation into usable information** users claim the vocabulary used in and the format of the information disseminated is not understandable or sufficiently tailored to user decisions.

*Users don't understand normal, above normal, or below-normal*

- **Limited opportunities for user sectors to participate in meetings:** Participation in SARCOF meetings limited to meteorologists due to funding schemes

*Lack of domestic resources for health partners to attend SARCOF meetings.*

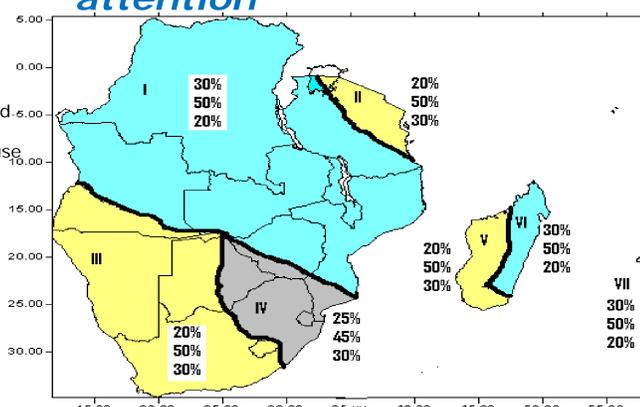
- **Accuracy of information Communication** climate scientists should provide accurate and more friendly information for users to plan better.

*Forecast probabilities are given scant attention*

#### Example: Malaria Climate Outlook Forum:

A novel climate service produced from 2005 – 2011 was not maintained due to inadequate use and uptake by the health community.

#### Rainfall outlook for malaria DJF 2005/2006



Source: SARCOF Forecast December-February 2005-2006: Malaria Outlook.