

Report of ACMAD's Side Event at the African Climate Summit (09 September 2025, Addis Ababa)

“Scaling Africa’s Climate Resilience - Strengthening Strategic Partnerships for Climate Services and Early Warning Systems”



1. Executive Summary

This report presents key outcomes of the panel discussion on ACMAD's led side event at the ACS2 held in Addis Ababa on 09 September 2025. The event explored opportunities to strengthen Climate Information Services (CIS) across Africa. The session brought together high-level experts, including Dr. Agnes Kijazi, Director of the WMO Regional Office for Africa; Dr. Rao Naveen, Vice President of Health at the Rockefeller Foundation; Dr. James Kinyangi, Program Coordinator at AfDB; Dr. Joseph Insful, Early Warning Systems Specialist at GCF; Dr. Marco Massabo, Program Coordinator at UNDRR; Ms. Renata Jagustovic, ARC Consortium Manager (NORCAP); Dr. Jente Broeckx, Program Coordinator at VITO; Dr. Lucy Mtilatila, Permanent Representative of Malawi with WMO; Mr. Katielou Gaptia, Permanent Representative of Niger with WMO; Mr. Abdoul Madjidi Moutari, Program Coordinator at Save the Children Niger; Dr. Jolly Wasambo, CLIMSA Coordinator at AUC; and Dr. Ousmane Ndiaye, Director General of ACMAD.

Discussions reaffirmed ACMAD's central role as a continental technical body and highlighted urgent needs to close data gaps, enhance capacity, and develop sustainable business models for CIS. Partners emphasized collaboration on infrastructure, impact-based forecasting, smart agriculture tools, political support, and financing opportunities such as the GCF. There was



strong consensus on ACMAD's relevance and potential to drive climate resilience, particularly in health, agriculture, and disaster risk reduction. The panel concluded that climate change is a reality, adaptation is Africa's best strategy, and CIS is the continent's most powerful tool to safeguard communities and advance sustainable development.

2. Opening remarks

At the opening remark, Dr. Agnes the Director of WMO regional office for Africa highlighted the WMO effort to strengthen Collaboration and support to the development of Climate Information Services (CIS). She also emphasized the urgent need to invest in addressing data gaps and to strengthen joint efforts. The Director General of ACMAD, Dr. Ousmane Ndiaye presented an overview of ACMAD mandate and key flagship initiatives which include the Impact based forecasting, the climate services for Health and the AI modelling.

3. Presentations:

Two case studies were presented to share success story of CREWS support to Malawi meteorological department and the SAVE THE CHILDREN work to disseminate early warning in rural communities in Niger.

Presentation of Success Story – CREWS Project in Malawi

Dr. Lucy Mtilatila, the director of Meteorological Department of Malawi presented the success stories from CREWS implementation. She emphasized that the CREWS initiative has made significant contributions to the institutional strengthening of climate services in Malawi. It has supported the review of the Meteorological Bill and related policies, as well as facilitated a comprehensive gap analysis by the Malawi Meteorological Department. The analysis revealed that 53% of the population currently utilizes Climate Information Services (CIS), with weather applications accessible in two languages. Findings from the gap analysis informed strategic interventions, including enhanced support from NORCAP, the establishment of thematic working groups, and the development of a Strategic Plan, Roadmap, and Concept Note to guide implementation. The process also led to the establishment of specialized departments to further reinforce institutional capacity. In terms of innovation, CREWS is piloting the application of Artificial Intelligence in climate forecasting. Demand for CIS continues to increase steadily, demonstrating the relevance and impact of these initiatives. By 2030, Malawi aims to extend CIS access to more than 80% of its population.

Presentation of Save the Children

Mr. Abdoul Madjidi Moutari presented lessons learned from Save the Children's experience in strengthening Niger's resilience through the dissemination of early warnings by children.

Weather information becomes truly valuable when it is understood, and Save the Children adapts ACMAD's data into user-friendly formats, delivering it to communities through sensitization campaigns in local languages. Children have proven to be powerful messengers, playing a vital role in sharing early warnings. Building direct connections with NMHSs is also critical, and a partnership with DMN is underway. This experience highlights the importance



of recognizing the role of children in disseminating early warnings and building stronger community resilience.

4. Panel discussion

The panel discussion highlighted ACMAD's central role and the opportunities for deeper collaboration with partners. The **African Development Bank** recalled its long-standing partnership with ACMAD, particularly in supporting operational NWP, and expressed interest in building on this work. Priorities include retransmission of station data, strengthening ACMAD's technical capacity, expanding the use of meteorological applications for development, and supporting climate modelling for sectors like energy and hydrology as well as the establishment of operational wind monitoring stations.

ACMAD can pursue accreditation with the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** and demonstrate its capacity to implement GCF-supported projects through dedicated readiness initiatives. The centre can also partner with accredited entities to access and implement GCF projects. Political and institutional support at both continental and national levels is crucial to secure GCF funding, alongside national co-financing to ensure sustainable investment. Strengthening CIS infrastructure and developing a clear, sustainable business model are key, as the absence of a business model makes it difficult to attract funding. Leveraging public partners can further enhance resource mobilization. Moving forward, GCF is committed to supporting ACMAD with guidance in access GCF fund and developing a business model that can strengthen and sustain ACMAD's work for the benefit of the continent.

UNDRR reflected on a decade of the Sendai Framework, noting progress but also persistent gaps, as many African countries still lack Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems. Seven regional situation rooms are already operational, with five more under development. UNDRR continues to prioritize strengthening national-level use of climate information, supporting RCCs in impact-based forecasting and risk tools, and reaffirmed its commitment to work closely with ACMAD.

NORCAP highlighted its role in deploying experts to RCCs and NMHSs to strengthen forecasting capacity and translate products into actionable advisories. Through the ARCS program, NORCAP combines research on the impact of CIS and vulnerabilities with practical innovations, such as piloting smart agriculture in Malawi and Ethiopia.

VITO, a Belgian applied technology organization, shared its work on climate projections and smart agriculture tools, noting its contribution to developing platforms adapted to African realities and its interest in strengthening collaboration with ACMAD building on existing initiatives such as CLIMTAG.

The African Union Commission acknowledged ACMAD as a key technical body supporting the AUC on critical issues related to CIS and disaster risk reduction, including contributions to the AU's situation rooms.

Closing the session, Dr. Rao from Rockefeller foundation thanked the panellists and underlined the strong consensus on ACMAD's value and the opportunities to scale up its impact. He urged a greater focus on climate services for health, stressing the importance of shifting from what the weather will be to what the weather will do.

5. Key messages and Way Forward

- Climate change is already threatening African communities, and **the strongest adaptation strategy is building robust Climate Information Services.**
- **Strengthening partnerships and networks:** ACMAD should leverage collaboration with partners (UN agencies, AUC, NORCAP, AfDB etc...) for technical capacity building, data sharing, and co-development of innovative CIS solutions.
- **Invest in data and technology:** It is urgent to expand the coverage and accuracy of weather stations and integrate emerging technologies such as AI and machine learning to enhance forecasting precision.
- **Enhance financing and sustainability:** ACMAD, RCCs, and NMHSs should pursue GCF accreditation and readiness initiatives, develop sustainable business models for CIS, and leverage both public and private resources for co-financing.
- **Scale community-based dissemination:** Together with partners, we should scale up successful models where children and local actors act as climate messengers, ensuring climate information reaches rural and vulnerable populations in an actionable format.
- **Focus on impact-oriented services:** Partners should support the strengthening of multi-hazard early warning systems and regional situation rooms to deliver timely, actionable information.
- **Policy and institutional support:** ACMAD needs the support of partners to advocate strong political and institutional commitment at continental and national levels to reinforce CIS infrastructure and sustain interventions.