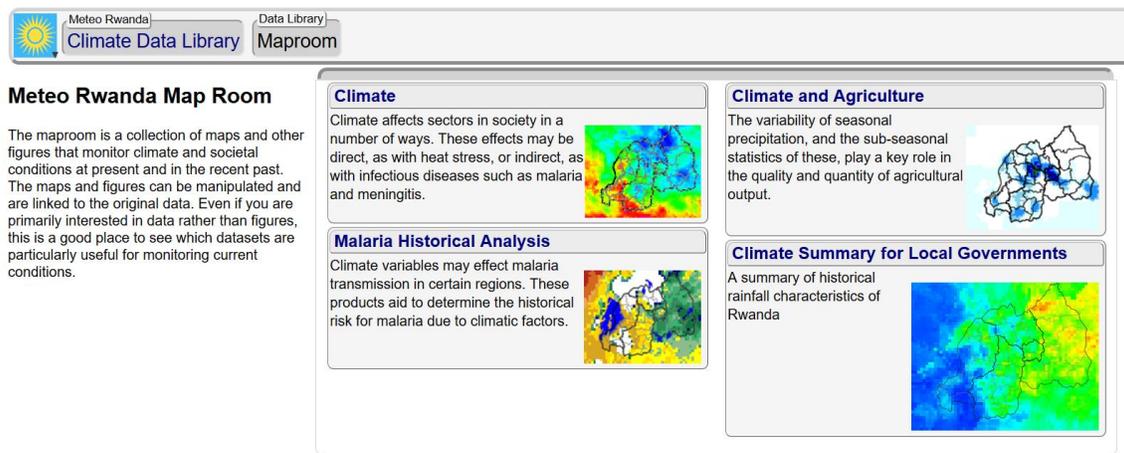**Making climate maps speak in Rwanda**

By: Yvonne Uwase Munyangeri (CIAT-Rwanda), Seble Samuel (CCAFS), Desire M. Kagabo (CIAT-Rwanda), Gloriose Nsengiyumva (CIAT-Rwanda) and Livingstone Byandaga (CIAT-Rwanda)

Intro: Key stakeholders in Rwanda learn the ins and outs of the country's Climate Maproom.

Maps are powerful tools, breaking down language barriers and gaps across disciplines to translate complex concepts. Rwanda's Climate Maproom, a collection of maps and figures of the national meteorological agency, Meteo Rwanda, does just this.

In April 2019, Meteo Rwanda, a public institution that facilitates access to reliable weather and climate data, organized a three-day training workshop on the use of the Climate Maproom. The system monitors climate conditions and provides guidance on historical, present day and seasonal climate forecasts.

The training workshop was organized in collaboration with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and the Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA). The workshop brought together the provincial directors of agriculture and district development programs, district directors of agriculture and natural resources, government institutions, international and local non-government organizations and research centers concerned with the production and use of weather and climate information. The Rwanda National Police, media, academia and other stakeholders involved in climate information production and use were present as well.

View of Meteo Rwanda Climate Maproom. Source: Meteo Rwanda

Different Climate Maproom products were presented, including climate data across time scales, malaria historical analysis, and the intersections of climate information and agriculture outputs, among others. Participants learned how to navigate the Climate Maproom and explored different products available on this platform. Through practical sessions, participants learned to interpret and use Climate Maproom products in planning and decision making depending on their sectors. Through deep analysis, participants learned how onsets, cessations, dry and wet spells, length of the season, and other climate factors, are calculated and forecasted. They also learned to analyze and monitor diseases vis a vis weather and climate variabilities, such as malaria.

It is very helpful to know that the climate situation of your region can be easily available before the season starts," said Theogene Mugabonake, Director of Agriculture and Natural Resources Management in Nyanza District in southern province. "This will help us in planning our agricultural activities and reduce the risk of losing some crops."

The workshop outcomes included ensuring that:

- a) climate information products, including their uncertainties and limitations are understood and communicated to users
- b) user opinions were discussed on how to make climate information accessible, user-friendly and applicable
- c) a user feedback mechanism was created between Meteo Rwanda and weather and climate users to promote and enhance co-production of weather and climate information products

Participants during the Climate Maproom training. Photo: G. Nsengiyumva (CIAT-Rwanda)

"Meteo Rwanda's Climate Maproom is available for you. It intends to help you in planning and decision making," said Desire Kagabo, the chairperson for the board of directors of Meteo Rwanda. "There should not be any planning without taking into consideration the climate information."

Through the 5Q approach, a simplified and innovative monitoring and evaluation method developed by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) and CIAT, participants were trained to share their feedback on climate information services via mobile phones. This approach has been harnessed to ensure that information provided by Meteo Rwanda is suitable for users, and that they may provide feedback for improvement where needed, hence promoting the co-production of climate information.

At the end of the training, participants visited the weather radar located at Maranyundo in Nyamata District to learn more on the process of climate information production and dissemination.

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