

Methodology

CLIMATE
CHANGE
PREPAREDNESS
WORKSHOPS**Bettina Koelle & Donna Kotze**

Climate change is a complex and abstract challenge for all of us. However climate change might affect small scale farming communities in devastating ways - and thus it is important to learn with farmers using local and scientific knowledge in the process.

This paper describes a methodology that can accompany a range of adaptation processes in the long term. The main idea is to create a structure that allows a continuous process of sharing and learning using all available types on knowledge and stimulating finding creative ideas to address impacts of climate variability and change or even better to anticipate possible challenges and prepare for these.

We called this methodology Climate Change Preparedness workshops (or CCP workshops).

These workshops have been launched in the Suid Bokkeveld (South Africa) in 2004 - following a severe drought that raised many questions with the farmers around climate, variability, seasonality and weather.

Looking back on a 10 year process - we distilled some of the experiences in this paper - so as to be able to share this with others.

Forecasts

Seasonal forecasts are of great importance to farmers. However the uncertainty attached to them makes it necessary for us to explore how the seasonal forecasts can be interpreted jointly with farmers. The CCP workshops also allow critical reflection on past seasonal forecasts, and the opportunity for farmers to include their own predictions, based on local knowledge.

Discussing the seasonal forecasts in the workshops is thus an integrated process that continues as a thread through all workshops.

Playing the seasonal forecast game can support better understanding of the uncertainties of seasonal forecasts and creates a platform to engage with concepts such as

**Community Climate Monitoring**

A process of local climate monitoring can support discussions around current and future climate.

Using a climate diary and recording maximum and minimum weekly temperatures, rainfall and any other observations and farming practices helps having a record of how weather and other factors impact on farming practices.

percentages and likelihoods in an engaging way (see box for more information).

The Climate Change Preparedness workshops combine reflection on observation and scientific findings with local knowledge and observations. Each workshop contains some practical exercise to engage participants in deeper ways of learning (see photo below).



ELEMENTS for CCP workshops



Create experiential learning spaces

Engaging participants in experiential learning activities can be an effective way to engage new groups in the climate change workshops. As they provide safe options for participation, in the Suid Bokkeveld experiential learning drew more and more young adults to the workshops.



Create time for relaxation

The Climate Change workshops also provide time to engage and socialize, network and relax together. These are deliberate spaces created as part of the workshop programme.



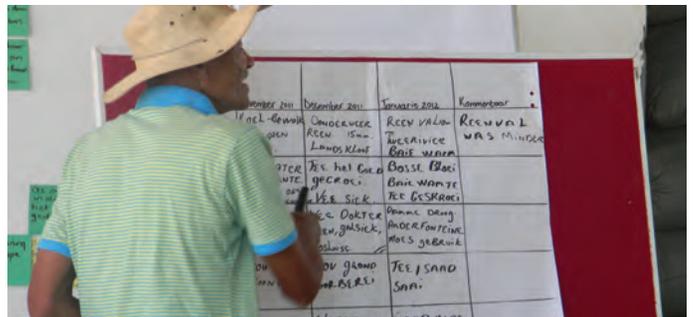
Seasonal forecasts and seasonal calendars

Each farming area compiles their own seasonal calendar - detailing the weather patterns of the past 3 months and reflecting on how this is impacting on farming practices. The calendar is an interesting tool for reflection - but the really crucial part is after the presentation of the different calendars. When farmers share their ideas and challenges, new adaptation options often emerge.



Link in ongoing community research activities

Community and scientific research activities are included in the CCP workshops. They include Climate Diaries, that allow farmers to record max and min temperatures weekly and daily rainfall.



Creating opportunities for all groups to engage and contribute to the learning process is crucial for deeper learning to take place.



Using seasonal forecasts with land users

Seasonal forecasts can be useful for land users if they are communicated clearly and form part of a larger integrated monitoring and learning process.

The seasonal forecast game is a creative way of exploring probabilities of seasonal forecasts. The game was first tried and tested in the Suid Bokkeveld, South Africa. Farmers explore the linkages between seasonal forecasts and planning of farm strategies while playing the game.

(see also *Adaptation and beyond No 10*)

Climate Change Preparedness workshops -Overview

A regular forum for community members participating in an on-going adaptation process with elements such as presenting the seasonal weather forecasts, reporting back on community monitoring processes, sharing monitoring data, planning for adaptation action, etc.

Objectives

To facilitate learning about weather, climate and adaptation in the context of a longer term process

To create a platform to share experiences and to reflect on impacts and responses to weather events

To share the latest long term weather and climate predictions in an interactive and accessible manner.

Description

Climate change preparedness workshops can be held quarterly (every three months) for members of a group wanting to explore and engage with weather patterns, climate variability and change and related possible adaptation options.

We suggest limiting the workshops to a few hours (for example starting early in the morning and closing with lunch for all participants). Ensure that the process of the workshop is geared to foster reflection and learning. Including interactive exercises that help people engage in a safe space is crucial. The workshop should be designed to fit the local context and should address and explore topics that really matter to people in the group. For inspiration regarding workshop elements you can explore the exercises described in this compilation of cards and place them in an order that would make sense to the group. Ensure that you vary energizers and more contents based exercises. The most important is to keep the process relevant to the participants, to bring everybody on board and to maintain a relaxed learning atmosphere.

Opportunity for Adaptation

Climate Change Preparedness workshops are an excellent platform to ensure integration of different projects and activities into one larger process that can lead to joint learning an action.



The workshops are also a good platform to surface the unexpected (positive or negative). If the facilitation team can ensure that the workshops are light and encourage participation of all, the workshop process becomes pleasurable and energized: a great basis to discuss adaptation and plan integrated action.

Challenges in this process

Regular workshops are sometimes taxing to organize. In order to ensure participation of most vulnerable groups it is important to consider what could be barriers for participants to attend and to ensure these barriers are addressed. Some examples are transport to the workshop venue and childcare options to allow participation of child-minding parents.

We strongly advise organisers not to pay participants for attending the workshops. If there is no interest in the workshops, the team should reflect and assess if the process could be improved to be more enticing or relevant. Maybe these regular workshops designed to facilitate an overall adaptation process are not the best vehicle for a particular learning process.

Regular reflection within the facilitation team and at the end of each workshop are crucial. This allows the learning space to evolve and grow.



Parallel children's workshops

Young children are the custodians of the natural resources of tomorrow. We offer a parallel children's workshop - always offering experiential learning activities. The children engage in the morning and report back their findings to the adult workshop just before closure. This increases the confidence



of the learners to speak in front of the elders and at the same time brings the time dimension of adaptation into clear focus. It is also amazing to see how adults are proud to see children from their community present and engage in important discussions on natural resource use for future generations.

Additional links and information

Currently available climate change projections for Africa:

<http://www.meteo.unican.es/en/projects/CORDEX>

To read more about forecasting:

<http://iri.columbia.edu/climate/forecast/tutorial2/>



Engaging farmers on their questions and then asking scientists and other resource persons and partner to join the dialogue has been key in the ongoing learning process. This ensures sound dialogue and a research and implementation agenda that is shaped in partnership and implemented jointly.

References

ARCHER, E. R. M., OETTLÉ, N. M., LOUW, R. & TADROSS, M. A. 2008. 'Farming on the edge' in arid western South Africa: climate change and agriculture in marginal environments. *Geography*, 93, 98-107.

KOELLE, B. 2013. Women farmer scientists in participatory action research processes for adaptation. In: ALSTON, M. & WHITTENBURY, K. (eds.) *Research, Action and Policy: Addressing the Gendered impacts of Climate Change*. Dordrecht: Springer.

KOELLE, B. & ANNECKE, W. 2010. *Community Based Climate Change Adaptation (CBA)*. *Adaptation and Beyond*, 01, 4.

KOELLE, B., OETTLÉ, N. & PARRING, S. 2014. *Experiential Learning for Adaptation - Facilitation Cards*, Cape Town, Indigo development & change.

KOELLE, B. & WAAGSAETHER, K. 2014. Growing rooibos and a stronger community: participation and transformation. In: ENSOR, J., BERGER, R. & HUQ, S. (eds.) *Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change - Emerging Lessons*. Rugby, UK: Practical Action Publishing.

OETTLÉ, N., KOELLE, B., LAW, S., PARRING, S., SCHMIEDEL, U., ARCHER VAN GARDEREN, E. & BEKELE, T. 2014. *Participatory Adaptation Handbook - A practitioners guide for facilitating people centred adaptation to climate change*, Cape Town Indigo development and change.

SUAREZ, P., MENDELER DE SUAREZ, J., KOELLE, B. & BOYKOFF, M. 2014. Serious Fun: Scaling up community based adaptation through experiential learning. In: SCHIPPER, L. F., AYERS, J., REID, H. & RAHMAN, A. (eds.) *Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change*. London and New York: Earthscan/ Routledge.

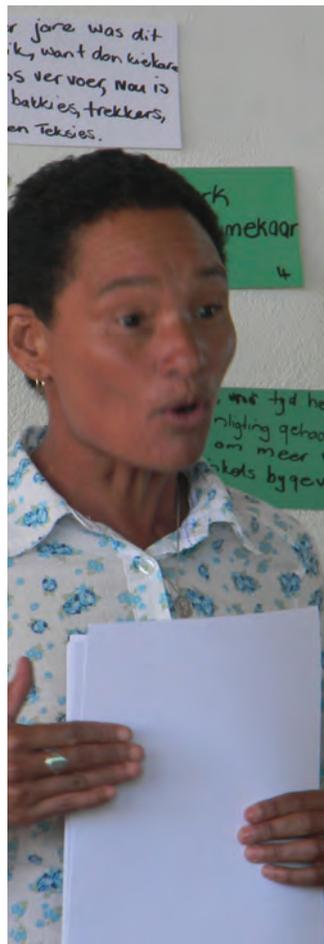


Creating opportunities for various types of engagement

It is important to create a range of engagements in the course of the workshop that allows people to interact in different ways. Learning can be fun - and a workshop should be ideally a positive engagement on the cognitive and emotional level. The Lucky Draw includes some new technology to be tested and is awarded to a participant at the end of the workshop.

Creating safe spaces for learning

Creating safe spaces for learning is crucial for successful Climate Change Preparedness workshops to become events of deep and ongoing learning. These spaces might be difficult to create, but they are a crucial foundation for an engaging learning process.



Creating opportunities for all groups to engage and contribute to the learning process is crucial for deeper learning to take place.



Adaptation and beyond is published by Indigo development & change as a contribution towards effective and participatory adaptation to climate change. The contributions are varied and demonstrate the multitude of adaptation options we can draw on.

Indigo development & change

Nieuwoudtville, South Africa
info@indigo-dc.org
www.indigo-dc.org