

ACACIA Newsletter

August 2026



Newsletter highlights

- ❖ ACACIA welcomes new project partner!
- ❖ WP1 delivers peer community meetings
- ❖ WP2 builds stronger local disaster risk management systems and more resilient communities across the Sofia Region
- ❖ More successful testbeds from WP3 and WP4
- ❖ WP5 takes over state-of-the-art EMI offices to deliver Python training
- ❖ Baseline survey yields key insights across Sofia region for WP6
- ❖ ALBATROSS launches [report](#) exploring climate, migration and urbanisation
- ❖ SAFE4ALL launches Climate Stories Initiative

Celebrating the first 18 months of ACACIA

- ❖ In May 2026, a [full report](#) was submitted covering the work and finances of the first 18 months of ACACIA (October 2024 to March 2026).
- ❖ This was followed in June 2026 by a review meeting with the European Commission and two external reviewers.
- ❖ The project is on track and has in many cases done much more than initially promised. Well done to all!
- ❖ The next report will cover the subsequent 18 months up to September 2027. There will then be a final report covering the last 12 months.



STAY TUNED: NEXT ACACIA GENERAL MEETING

The next project-wide meeting will be held in **Madagascar** shortly after **Easter 2027**. All ACACIA members are strongly urged to attend. More details to follow.

ACACIA welcomes new partner!



Laboratoire
de l'Atmosphère et des Cyclones

- ❖ We are delighted to welcome new partner Laboratoire de l'Atmosphère et des Cyclones (LACy), at Université de La Réunion, from 1 January 2026.
- ❖ They are working closely with WP3 and WP4 running high-resolution, convection-permitting simulations to model climate change impacts on tropical cyclone characteristics.
- ❖ Efforts have been ongoing to expand the team in readiness for the collaboration with ACACIA.

WP1 cultivates peer community in Ethiopia

- ❖ May 2025: NORCE worked with the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) to invite a group of around 20 disaster risk governance experts for the Awash Basin, convening them for the first time at the National Climate Outlook Forum in Adama.
- ❖ Since then, EMI has built a working rapport with this group over several meetings, sharing climate information with them.
- ❖ NORCE and EMI collaborated to prepare the first peer community meeting in May 2026, in advance of the Kiremt rain season.

WP1 responds to local context in Madagascar to keep peer communities on track

- ❖ To work around regional challenges including difficulty of travel, two extended peer communities (EPCs) were established, one in the capital of Antananarivo with national level experts, and one in the Sofia region.
- ❖ With CRM participating in the peer community and therefore unable to facilitate independently, Prof. Mahefa at the University of Antananarivo was employed as facilitator.
- ❖ The first peer community meetings took place in April 2026: one in Antananarivo, and one in Port Bergé in the Sofia Region. They were planned for October 2025, but a government coup forced a postponement to after the cyclone season.
- ❖ The aim of these first EPCs was to agree on a list of quality criteria for the on-going assessment of the ACACIA project, and to map out the existing steps taken for anticipatory action in advance of a cyclone or flood event by national and local governance actors.

WP2 enhances emergency preparedness with SIMEX

- ❖ In December 2025, the ACACIA project strengthened disaster preparedness capacities across the Sofia Region through the implementation of Simulation Exercises (SIMEX) in the four intervention districts.
- ❖ These exercises brought together 255 key stakeholders, including four Malagasy Red Cross regional staff members, one representative from the Sofia Meteorological Service, 16 members of the District Disaster Risk Management Committees (CDGRC), 17 Administrative District Chiefs, 17 Mayors, 100 Fokontany Chiefs, and 100 members of the Local Rescue Teams (LRTs).
- ❖ The SIMEX activities tested emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, identified areas for improvement, and enhanced coordination among local actors involved in disaster risk management.



Bringing together:

- 4 MRC regional staff members
- 1 Sofia Meteorological Service rep
- 16 CDGRC members
- 17 Administrative District Chiefs
- 17 Mayors
- 100 Fokontany Chiefs
- 100 LRT members



New Whatsapp groups boost connectedness

- ❖ WP2 established four district-level WhatsApp groups connecting Disaster Risk Management Committees, Mayors, and Administrative District Chiefs.
- ❖ They facilitate rapid information sharing, strengthen collaboration between authorities and disaster management actors, and support timely dissemination of early warning messages, particularly during periods of increased risks related to floods and cyclones.

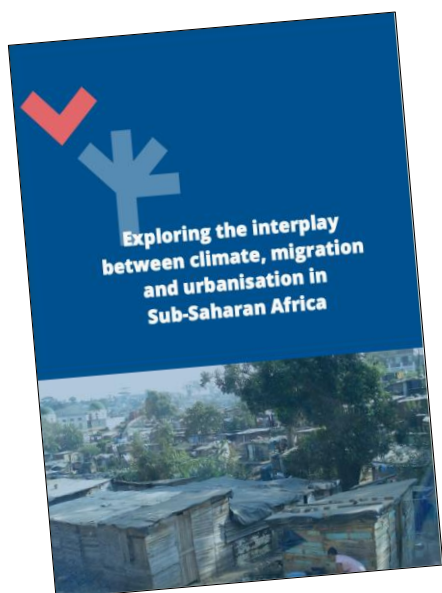
WP2 launches Preparedness Action Plans (PAPs) in Madagascar

- ❖ 53 Community Preparedness Action Plans (PAPs) were developed to strengthen community-based preparedness.
- ❖ Developed through a participatory approach with local communities.
- ❖ The PAPs identify priority anticipatory actions, clarify the roles and responsibilities of community stakeholders, and support more effective preparedness before, during, and after hazard events.



ALBATROSS publishes new report on climate vs. human factors

- ❖ Sub-Saharan Africa stands at the intersection of multiple transformative forces: climate change, migration, and rapid urbanisation.
- ❖ [This report](#) offers a comprehensive analysis of how these forces interact, drawing on evidence from Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar, and South Africa.
 - ❖ The findings are based on extensive country-level assessments of climate trends, migration dynamics, and urbanisation processes, complemented by interviews with national experts, as well as policy and governance reviews.
 - ❖ While climate change threatens livelihoods and infrastructure through slow-onset stresses (e.g., drought, soil degradation) and sudden shocks (e.g., cyclones, floods), human responses—particularly migration—are shaped by diverse social, economic, and political factors.



WP5 opens doors and minds with Python training workshop: [blog post](#)

- ❖ WP5 delivered a week-long Python training workshop in Addis Ababa, hosted by the Ethiopian Meteorological Service in brand new state-of-the-art offices.
- ❖ The workshop brought together meteorologists, climatologists and IT specialists, helping participants build practical capability in Python, data processing, visualisation and forecast analysis. Participants gained hands-on experience analysing sub-seasonal forecast data and were introduced to Git and GitHub.
- ❖ The workshop deployed a flexible training design that could be adapted in real time to participants' needs, ensuring both beginners and more experienced users could benefit. This will be developed at future events to include more time for participants to focus on their own assignments.
- ❖ The same training is being delivered in Madagascar in August 2026.
- ❖ The workshops form the basis of a sub-seasonal forecasting hackathon planned for later in 2026 – more details to come!



ACACIA project features on *The Climate Carrot* podcast!

- ❖ ACACIA project members discuss how new sub-seasonal forecasts, local forecasters and community planning come together to reduce the impacts of cyclones and floods in Madagascar.
- ❖ The episode explains co-production testbeds, preparedness actions and how early warnings are turned into practical measures on the ground.
- ❖ Please share widely in your networks, for instance by reposting [this LinkedIn post](#) from the Climate Centre.



[Listen Here](#)



[Blog Post](#)

SAFE4ALL launches Climate Stories

- ❖ SAFE4ALL has launched a Climate Stories initiative to highlight how climate change is experienced in everyday life across African food systems and landscapes.
- ❖ Through short stories, videos, and social media content, the campaign aims to bring forward personal and community-based experiences of climate change, adaptation, food production, and resilience.



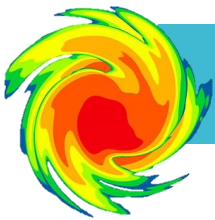
Join the initiative and share your Climate Story via [Instagram](#) @safe4all_africa

WP6 dives deep into baseline survey and completes RCT design

- ❖ Following completion in late 2025 of the baseline survey covering 3,600 households across the Sofia region of Madagascar, WP6 has been analysing the data and has produced a snapshot of vulnerabilities, preparedness, and experience with severe weather among the sampled population in the Sofia region.
- ❖ At the same time, WP2 and WP6 have worked closely to finalise the design of the randomized control trial (RCT), which will measure the causal impact of the early-warning and anticipatory action programs that are currently being implemented by CRM in treatment communities in Madagascar.
- ❖ WP6 has also recruited a consultant at the Malagasy company ATW to oversee the implementation of interventions and help ensure that these adhere to the randomization protocol.
- ❖ Next, WP6 is planning a lab-in-the-field experiment to test the potential impact of improved forecast lead times.

A second year of successful testbeds for WP4

- ❖ The first substantive testbeds (TB1s) are now almost complete, with Madagascar concluding in March 2026 and Ethiopia concluding in September 2026.
- ❖ This builds on a productive first year of baseline testbeds, cultivating strong relationships and establishing a shared understanding of the forecasting landscape in both regions.
- ❖ Information gathered during the baseline testbeds contributed to WP4 deliverable [Report on the Current State-of-the-Art for Flood and TC Risk Forecasting](#), which defined a reference point against which to measure progress and identified a critical gap in decision-relevant forecasting at the 2–6 week timescale. ACACIA's sub-seasonal approach directly addresses this challenge by bridging short-range weather forecasts and seasonal outlooks.
- ❖ WP4 & WP5 have also delivered the first iteration of the [Testbed Handbook](#).



Madagascar: tropical cyclone early warning
(testbed period January - March)

Ethiopia: Awash basin flood risk
(testbed period June - September)



WP3 digging deeper into sub-seasonal drivers

- ❖ WP3 continues to make strides in understanding sub-seasonal drivers in extreme rainfall and tropical cyclones across Eastern and Southern Africa.
- ❖ Development and dissemination of Python package *acacia_s2s_toolkit* has equipped all ACACIA African partners with direct access to operational sub-seasonal and reforecast data.
- ❖ Through rollout of Python training and ongoing testbeds, Both African NHMSs are now accessing operational, sub-seasonal forecast data with strong user interactions supporting new co-produced sub-seasonal forecast products.
- ❖ Future developments will focus on forecast verification and post-processing through *acacia_s2s_toolkit*.

Upcoming ACACIA activities for the rest of 2026 and 2027:

- ❖ Python workshop in Madagascar delivered in August 2026 and sub-seasonal forecasting hackathon planned for later in 2026.
- ❖ WP2 developing Training of Trainers in Madagascar, working with local Red Cross to enhance understanding and interpretation of forecasts in their communities.
- ❖ The ACACIA project-wide meeting will be held in Madagascar in early 2027 - more details to follow.

Contact us

For any questions, queries, or if you have content that you would like showcased in a future ACACIA newsletter, please contact us at: k.bartholomew@metoffice.gov.uk



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