

Innovation for Climate Adaptation and Resilience (iCARE)

Hyper-local medium-range weather forecasts to improve the climate resilience of smallholder coffee farmers in India

Six Monthly Progress Report

Reporting period: Jan– June 2024

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1. Project Information

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| Project Title: | Hyper-local medium-range weather forecasts to improve the climate resilience of smallholder coffee farmers in India |
| Project Code: | WBCAR |
| Partner Organisation: | Precision Development (PxD), Coffee Board of India, and Climate Forecast Applications Network (CFAN) |
| Reporting Period: | May 01, 2024 to May 31, 2024 |
| Date of Submission: | August 05, 2024 |
| Contact Name: | Sannihit |
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| Contact Skype: | |
| Status of project progress in this reporting period | <input type="checkbox"/> Significant delay <input type="checkbox"/> Delay <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On Track |
| Report sign Off | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed all the information provided for each section, including the number of beneficiaries. The information provided for each section of the report is complete. Name: Sannihit Designation: Program Associate |

2. Summary of the Achievements

2.1 Summary of the overall progress

Significant progress has been made in achieving most outcomes within the reporting period. Out of the eight listed outcomes in the Work Plan, six have been completed already; one is in progress and will be completed by the end of October, and another is due towards the end of the project in January 2025.

2.2 Output-wise Description: List of all results/achievements

| Output-wise description | Results/achievement |
|---|--|
| Output 1.1 Final coffee crop calendar | Finalized the coffee crop calendar, with input from the Coffee Board |
| Output 2.1 List of viable message templates and alert triggers: | Finalized the forecast templates and the logic of selection of these templates |
| Output 3.1 Mass recorded and assembled voice-based: | Created a library of voice-based audio files |
| Output 3.2 Tested and deployed audio-stitching technology for forecast advisory use-case: | Multiple rounds of testing were done internally before launching the service. Identified errors were rectified. |
| Output 4.1 Clean, readable forecast datasets ready to be fed into the data backend: | Automated the extraction, cleaning, and storage of CFAN forecast data in PxD's database |
| Output 4.2 Dashboard UI & backend | The dashboard was initially launched to track forecast and weather realization data. It has been upgraded to include indicators such as hit, miss, false alarm, and correct negative to track forecast accuracy. |
| Output 5.1 Pilot design document: Completed | |
| Output 5.2 Internal-team tests: | Thorough testing of broadcasting of audio-stitched forecast information. In particular, the accuracy of variable information, such as location, rainfall quantity, and rainfall chance, was closely monitored. |
| Output 5.3 Distribution and delivery of forecast-based advisories: | The service was pilot-launched in April with a sample of 1212 farmers. Published a social media announcing the launch |
| Output 6.1 Finalized and ready-to-implement survey instrument: | A post-pilot survey questionnaire was prepared to keep in mind the need to track key indicators reported in the M&E plan |
| Output 6.2 Quantitative and qualitative data from the pilot survey: | Post-pilot survey data was collected and analyzed. The findings will be shared via blog in September, which meets the Project Development Objectives (PDOs) of conducting events and reaching users through these events. |
| Output 6.3 Farmer feedback on the service synthesized in a report: | Farmer response data was analyzed to identify areas for improvement, in particular, the need for regular |

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|---|---|
| | training calls on interpreting rainfall chance provided in the forecast. The response data also helped track key project-specific indicators such as comprehension of the forecast, expectation of rainfall, trust in the forecast, and adoption of the forecast. |
| Output 7.1 Fully scaled service to all 50,000 coffee farmers: | This is in progress. The first round of expansion was done in early July to 12,500 farmers. The second round of expansion was towards the end of July to another 12,500 farmers. The final round of expansion will happen over August and October to reach 50,000 farmers. This helps meet the PDO of reaching more users. |
| Output 7.2 Engagement data organisation and analysis: | Necessary changes made to the data tables to organize forecast engagement data |
| Output 7.3 Bi-weekly engagement reports: | Automated the generation of monthly reports, which helps track project-specific indicators such as pickup and listening rates |

2.3 Gender mainstreaming and outreach to marginalized groups

Close to 97% of coffee farmers are smallholder farmers. Offering low-cost solutions to such user groups is central to PxD services. Additionally, 12% of the registered farmers on the [CKT](#) are women. PxD has also revised the profiling strategy to include questions on women decision-makers to identify more women. PxD is also re-profiling already registered male farmers to identify if there are any women decision-makers in the family and is collecting their contact details. Furthermore, PxD is contacting Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the coffee-growing regions. As SHGs are women-led organizations, PxD hopes to enroll more women in the service.

While the current project is operational in Karnataka only, in the long term, with assistance from the Coffee Board, the weather service can easily be scaled to coffee-growing regions in Andhra Pradesh, where farmers are predominantly from tribal communities.

3. Summary of Project Beneficiaries

- **Direct Project Beneficiaries:**

The project currently benefits 27,400 farmers including 1,600 women, organized into four distinct groups. Each group receives a specific type of forecast information:

1. Deterministic forecast only
2. Probabilistic forecast only
3. Deterministic forecast with advisory
4. Probabilistic forecast with advisory

This randomized approach allows for an evaluation of forecast preferences among farmers, enabling the project to optimize service delivery and scale the most effective model. PxD is using this strategy to identify the preferred forecasting method, which will be expanded to reach a broader group of farmers.

Preliminary feedback indicates high levels of farmer satisfaction with the forecasts' accuracy. Farmers have reported using this information to make informed decisions about coffee cultivation practices such as fertilizer application, shade management, and renovation of cradle pits.

- **Indirect Project Beneficiaries:**

The indirect beneficiaries include families and friends with whom the direct beneficiaries share forecast information.

4. Performance Outcome Mapping

Table 2: Implementation progress as of 30th June 2024

| Description | Approved budget (in US\$) Please mention the approved budget here. If the budget is revised during the year, please mention the revised budget. | Actual expenditure in US\$ | Target The # of the deliverable which was planned at the beginning of the year. | Result/achievement The # of deliverables which were achieved (output/result delivered) within this reporting period. Please add a link of evidence (if available). Please report the number of achieved deliverables/ result here with very brief details. |
|---|--|----------------------------|--|---|
| Outcome 1: Strong understanding of agronomic and weather-related information most beneficial for farmer consumption | | | | |
| Output 1.1 Final Coffee Crop Calendar | \$2427.65 | \$2,390 | 1 deliverable - Coffee crop calendar | Deliverable achieved : The coffee crop calendar has been finalized with inputs from the Coffee Board |
| Activity 1.1.1 Analysis of current seasonal cycle | | | | |
| Activity 1.1.2 Incorporating findings from the lab-in-the-field (conducted prior to and outside of the scope of this project) to generate an advisory calendar. | | | | |
| Outcome 2: Development of a reliable and accurate weather alert system | | | | |
| Output 2.1: List of viable message templates and alert triggers | \$32,994.25 | \$32,995 | 1 deliverable - final message templates | Deliverable achieved : The forecast message templates have been finalized. The trigger logic for these templates has been established, considering the relevant weather conditions for ongoing priority practices and |
| Activity 2.1.1 Commencing receipt of forecasts from CFAN | | | | |
| Activity 2.1.2 Finalize set of probability triggers and alert frequencies for non-monsoon and monsoon periods. | | | | |

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|---|------------|---------|--|---|
| Activity 2.1.3 In-depth analysis of skill for each alert template to arrive at accuracy scores | | | | analyzing historical weather trends. |
| Outcome 3: Development of a technology set that allows dynamic message creation for forecasts at scale | | | | |
| Output 3.1 Mass-recorded and assembled voice-based snippets. | \$2,402.40 | \$2,410 | 1 deliverable: Voice-message repository | Deliverable achieved: Human voice-based audio files for all the static and variable content necessary for generating customized template messages, have been recorded |
| Activity 3.1.1 Translation of forecast templates to Kannada | | | | |
| Activity 3.1.2 Recording of audio snippets for testing | | | | |
| Activity 3.1.3 Final recording of voice snippets & quality checks | | | | |
| Output 3.2 Tested and deployed audio-stitching technology for forecast advisory use-case. | | | | |
| Activity 3.2.1 Audio stitching technology is developed, configured, and integrated with PxD's in-house IVR system. | | | 1 deliverable: Successful team delivery of messages | Deliverable achieved: The audio stitching service has been thoroughly tested by the internal team |
| Activity 3.2.2 Audio stitching of recorded voice snippets is conducted for sample participants for a 5-day forecast period. | | | | |
| Activity 3.2.3 Audio-stitched recordings are tested in-house, refined, and adapted. | | | | |
| Outcome 4: Real-time insights from visualizable trends in forecasts and associated information delivery | | | | |
| Output 4.1 Clean, readable forecast datasets ready to be fed into the data backend | \$2,029.45 | \$2,030 | 1 deliverable: Functioning dashboard | Deliverable achieved: A functioning dashboard that tracks forecast and realization data, and additionally other critical metrics necessary for determining forecast |
| Activity 4.1.1 Finalize set of KPIs and metrics critical for monitoring needs | | | | |

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|--|--|--|--|--|
| Activity 4.1.2 Raw forecast data integrated into a data warehouse that the dashboard can access | | | | accuracy such as hit, miss, false alarms, and correct negative |
| Activity 4.1.3 Collected data cleaned, transformed and processed into a format suitable for visualization. | | | | |
| Output 4.2 Dashboard UI & Backend | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.1 Finalize UI and UX that is user-friendly, efficient and intuitive. | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.2 Finalize front-end and back-end components that include creating interactive elements, integrating data sources, and implementing user authentication and authorization. | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.3 Implement mechanisms for forecast real-time updates | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.4 Thorough testing of the dashboard to ensure accurate data representation, responsive design, and functionality. Address any bugs, inconsistencies, or performance issues. | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.5 Conduct user testing to gather feedback on the dashboard's usability and functionality and make necessary adjustments. | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.6 Deploy the dashboard on a suitable hosting environment, ensuring it is accessible and secure. | | | | |

| Outcome 5: Pilot of a customized forecast-based advisory service for sample farmers | | | | |
|---|------------|---------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Output 5.1 Pilot design document | \$771.60 | \$800 | 1 deliverable: Execution of pilot | Deliverable achieved: The service was pilot-launched with a sample of 1212 farmers in April 2024. |
| Activity 5.1.1 Prepare a sample for a pilot based on stratification parameters. | | | | |
| Activity 5.1.2 Agronomists and agro-met designs advisory based on upcoming forecasts | | | | |
| Output 5.2 Internal-team tests | | | | |
| Activity 5.2.1 Relevant advisories are audio-recorded | | | | |
| Activity 5.2.2 Tech team audio stitches advisory snippets | | | | |
| Output 5.3 Distribution and delivery of forecast-based advisories | | | | |
| Activity 5.3.1 Disseminate forecast + advisory with 1000 sample farmers | | | | |
| Outcome 6: Improved service design and direction | | | | |
| Output 6.1 Finalized and ready-to-implement survey instrument | \$6,789.10 | \$6,800 | 1 deliverable: Pilot report | Deliverable achieved: Following the pilot launch, in-depth surveys were conducted with a subset of farmers. Farmer responses were analyzed to write the pilot report, which has been shared with the iCare team. |
| Activity 6.1.1 Identify parameters for data collection | | | | |
| Activity 6.1.2 Prepare the questionnaire. | | | | |
| Activity 6.1.3 Survey translation to local language, coding on surveyJS and surveyor training | | | | |
| Output 6.2 Quantitative and qualitative data from a pilot survey | | | | |
| Activity 6.2.1 Phone-survey-based data collection | | | | |

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|--|-------------|---------|--|--|
| Activity 6.2.2 Testimonial collection on the field | | | | |
| Output 6.3 Farmer feedback on the service synthesized in a report | | | | |
| Activity 6.3.1 Clean and analyze collected data | | | | |
| Activity 6.3.2 Summarize findings in a report. | | | | |
| Outcome 7: Increased understanding of the operational challenges of and farmer engagement with a service catering to 50,000 farmers | | | | |
| Output 7.1 Fully scaled service to all 50,000 coffee farmers | | | | |
| Activity 7.1.1 Scaling to 25,000 farmers | | | 1 deliverable: Fully scaled service to all 50,000 coffee farmers | Deliverable in progress: The service has been expanded to 27,000 farmers. We are on track to reach 50,000 farmers by the end of October. |
| Activity 7.1.2 Incorporate findings from the farmer feedback survey. | | | | |
| Activity 7.1.3 Scaling to 50,000 registered coffee farmers. | | | | |
| Activity 7.1.4 Ongoing Field Testing | \$11,146.75 | \$5,450 | | |
| Activity 7.2 Engagement data organization and analysis | | | | |
| Activity 7.2.1 Identify and finalize engagement tracking indicators. | | | 1 deliverable: Engagement reports | <u>Deliverable achieved</u> : Weather service engagement data has been included in the monthly report, |
| Activity 7.2.2 Set up a dedicated weather service engagement table within PxD's in-house server. | | | | |
| Output 7.3 Bi-weekly engagement reports | | | | |
| Activity 7.3.1 Automate generation of biweekly engagement statistics | | | | |

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|--|-----------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
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| Outcome 8: Deriving an understanding of the utility of the intervention and pilot with respect to climate adaptation while providing a verified use-case for weather-forecast services to be further scaled and integrated within state efforts | | | | |
| Output 8.1 Analysis Plan | \$39,880.73 | \$13,150 | 1 deliverable: Monitoring Analysis Report | Deliverable in progress: The Analysis Plan, including key metrics of interest, and data collection instruments, is ready. Finalization of the plan and field-based feedback collection is in progress |
| Activity 8.1.1 Prepare monitoring plan highlighting key metrics of interest | | | | |
| Activity 8.1.2 Prepare instruments for data collection; finalize survey samples. | | | | |
| Activity 8.1.3 Finalize analysis plan. | | | | |
| Activity 8.1.4 Field-based qualitative feedback collection | | | | |
| Output 8.2 Post-Intervention Analysis | | | | |
| Output 8.3 Compilation of knowledge of the entire service | | | 1 deliverable: Case Study | Yet to begin. Scheduled for November onwards. |
| 8.4 Final Project Report | | | | |
| TOTAL | \$98,442 | \$66,025 (67% utilized) | | |

5. Partnership

Coffee Board:

1. Enhanced technological capability: The integration of audio-stitching technology equips the CKT service to customize voice-based messages. This technology has applications beyond weather forecasting, thereby enhancing Coffee Board's capabilities to offer customized services to farmers.
2. Enhanced Farmer Engagement: Forecasts have consistently shown higher engagement rates compared to standard advisories. Combining forecasts with tailored advisories in a single communication is anticipated to significantly boost farmer interaction. This integrated approach will ultimately increase farmer satisfaction with the CKT service.
3. Efforts to improve infrastructure: The Coffee Board has responded positively to requests for enhancing server capacity and increasing phone lines, which will ensure speedier delivery of time-sensitive forecast information

6. Sustainability

1. Integration with existing technology: Integrating the weather service into the existing CKT platform ensures the service's sustainability beyond the project duration. The Coffee Board sees CKT as critical to its extension services and is committed to maintaining the platform.
2. Transition from CFAN to IMD Data: CFAN data will be used until the project's end and replaced by data from [IMD](#), a government organization. IMD data is cost-free and is the Coffee Board's preferred long-term source for forecast information. This data switch is facilitated by the audio-stitching technology, which operates independently of the forecast provider
3. Service transition plan: PxD has started gradually transitioning the service to the Coffee Board, which includes training the Board's staff to manage the service. Such knowledge transfer ensures the long-term sustainability of the service.
4. Potential for Ongoing Partnership with Operations and Research: PxD has initiated discussions about extending its role as an operations and research partner beyond the current project. Details regarding the scope and financials of this extended partnership will be presented to the Board shortly.

7. Communication and Knowledge Management

Table 3: Communication and Knowledge products activity and progress achieved

| Related activity number | Communications Activity. Strategy/Tactic | Related communications or Knowledge product | Impact /Change perceived. Big or Small wins. Numbers (If any) |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| NA | Video | Training video on how to interpret probabilistic forecast | 1212 farmers have been given access to the video. |
| 6.2.2 | Social media campaign | An online post announcing the launch of the services. | 1009 impressions, 82 engagements, 53 clicks, 25 reactions, 4 reposts |
| 6.3.2 | Blog post | Blog post on pilot survey results | In progress |
| 8.2.2 | Research paper | A research paper on whether nudges reminding farmers of the probabilistic nature of forecasts help boost trust in and engagement with, the service. | Yet to begin |

8. Challenges and Risks

- Delay in communication: Delay in communication with the partner organizations (CFAN and weather expert) can lead to delays in the chain of tasks associated with such communication (analysis of the data, finalizing a set of probability triggers, evaluation of skill for each alert template)
- Delay in technology development: PxD experienced delays due to unforeseen technical complexities highlighting the need to account for buffer time in future project timelines.
- Finalising the dashboard for tracking weather-related metrics within 2-3 months is challenging because PxD sees the need to include more parameters as the project progresses.
- Telecom network issues could seriously impair call pickup rates.

9. Lesson Learnt

- Proactive collaboration and information sharing between partners from the outset can ensure aligned expectations and avoid challenges in integrating new ideas later. Further developing a flexible monitoring plan will help to address suggestions as they arise.
- Building buffer time into technical task timelines can accommodate unforeseen complexities and ensure timely project delivery. It will also help build robust testing to identify potential bugs before deployment.
- Products such as the dashboard are best developed iteratively throughout the project. Therefore, it's beneficial to allow longer timelines for creating several versions with incremental improvements
- Regular to monitor 'hangup' reasons to identify network issues

Annex 1: Records of Events

| Activities/Events Title | Date | Progress in last 6 months |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Social Media Post | July 25, 2024 | Completed |
| Internal Knowledge-sharing Webinar | Q4, 2024 | Yet to start |
| Blog | Q4, 2024 | Yet to start |
| Social Media Post/Article | Q1, 2025 | Yet to start |

Annex 2: Event reports/minutes, Learning documents, Knowledge products, Communication products or other documents

| Activities/Events Title | Date | Progress in last 6 months |
|---|---|--|
| Social Media Post announced the launch of the weather service, including a testimonial from a farmer explaining the benefit of forecast service 1009 impressions, 82 engagements, 53 clicks, 25 reactions, 4 reposts | July 25, 2024 | Completed |
| Internal Knowledge-sharing Webinar | Yet to start | Completed |
| A blog on post-pilot survey results | Yet to begin September, 2024 | Yet to begin The post-pilot survey has been completed. |
| Training video on interpretation of probabilistic forecast | July-August 2023 | Completed |
| Research paper on whether nudge messages reminding farmers of the probabilistic nature of forecasts help boost trust in and engagement with the service. | Yet to start December-January 2025 | Yet to start However, the nudges will start going out in mid-August |

Annex 3: Results Framework

| <i>PDO Indicator Description: Government agencies and Citizens who have access to climate-resilient solutions tested under the project (Number)</i> | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| | <i>Current Value</i> | <i>End Target</i> |
| <i>Government Agencies</i> | 1 | 1 |
| <i>Male Citizen</i> | 903 | ~44,000 |
| <i>Female Citizen</i> | 309 | ~6,000 |
| <i>Date</i> | June 30,2024 | October 31, 2024 |
| <i>Comments</i> | 2 rounds of expansion in July. | |
| <i>Output Indicator Description: Number of people trained (in person) (by sex, country, topic, year, participant category)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | NA | NA |
| <i>Date</i> | NA | NA |
| <i>Comments</i> | PxD is arranging only online training. With over 4 years of experience in remote training farmers, PxD finds that online training helps reach a wider audience across different geographies. | |
| <i>Output Indicator Description: Number of people trained (online) (by sex, country, topic, year, participant category)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | 1212 | 1500 |

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | | |
| <i>Output Indicator Description: Number of knowledge products provided (by type of product, theme, country)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | A video has been developed to train farmers on ‘probability’, including the interpretation of probabilistic forecasts. | |
| <i>Output Indicator Description: Number of people/organizations provided with knowledge products (by recipient category, type of knowledge product, country, theme)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | <i>1212</i> | <i>1500</i> |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | The audio-visual material was used for training the farmers. | |
| <i>Output Indicator Description: Number of events supported (by type, year, theme, country)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | None as of June 30. However, a social media post was published in July. | |

| | | |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| <i>Output Indicator Description: Number of people participating in supported events (by participant category, sex, year, theme, country)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | 0 | 150 |
| <i>Date</i> | June 30, 2024 | January 31, 2025 |
| <i>Comments</i> | The social media post was shared in July. | |
| <i>Output indicator: Pickup rate (percentage of the scheduled calls answered by farmers)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | 62.72% | 55% |
| <i>Date</i> | June 30, 2024 | January 31, 2025 |
| <i>Comments</i> | The automation of broadcasting ensures regular broadcasting every five days. | |
| <i>Output indicator: Listening rate (percentage of the average length of the forecast listened to)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | 78.24% | 60% |
| <i>Date</i> | June 30, 2024 | January 31, 2025 |
| <i>Comments</i> | The impressive listening rate suggests that most farmers find the information valuable. The high listening rate may also be due to the short message length, typically 27-28 seconds. | |
| <i>Output indicator: Comprehension of forecast - Interpretation of rainfall chance (percentage of farmers who interpreted the rainfall chance correctly)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | 30% | 80% |

| | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | This metric has been tracked as part of the pilot study. Here, we asked farmers to interpret the probability figure indicating rainfall chance rather than asking to identify the rainfall chance. The low numbers here could be due to the complexity of the options offered, and as a result, not many could interpret them correctly. PxD will investigate the causes of the low rates and take corrective actions. | |
| <i>Output indicator: Rainfall expectation (Percentage of farmers accurately expecting weather events out of those who engaged with the forecast)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | <i>51.9%</i> | <i>35%</i> |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | This metric has been monitored as part of the pilot study. Over half of the surveyed farmers anticipated rainfall quantities to deviate within 25% of the forecast. Specifically, when the forecast predicted 2 inches, 51.9% of farmers expected rainfall between 1.5 to 2.5 inches. | |
| <i>Output indicator: Trust in the forecast (Percentage of farmers expressing trust in forecast information out of those who engaged with the forecast)</i> | | |
| <i>Value</i> | <i>76%</i> | <i>55%</i> |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>June 30, 2024</i> | <i>January 31, 2025</i> |
| <i>Comments</i> | This metric has been tracked as part of the pilot study. 76% of the surveyed farmers either ‘mostly trusted’ or ‘completely trusted’ the CKT weather forecast service | |
| <i>Output indicator: Adoption rate (Percentage of farmers who report to have taken decisions based on forecast information out of those who engaged with the forecast)</i> | | |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Value</i> | 79% | 25% |
| <i>Date</i> | June 30, 2024 | January 31, 2025 |
| <i>Comments</i> | This metric has been tracked as part of the pilot study. 79% of the farmers reported that they relied on the forecasts to decide the timing of agricultural activities. The pilot involved sharing forecasts only. Going forward, PxD will share actionable advisories along with the forecasts. | |