

# Rethinking the medium of communicating ensemble flood forecasts to small-scale farmers in the Delta State of Nigeria

By

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# Introduction

- Flood warnings are crucial because they save lives.
- With technological advancement in seasonal climate forecasts, it is possible to predict the climate few months ahead.
- However, the most sophisticated forecast is of little or no value if it fails to reach it's targeted end-users.
- Broadly speaking, the performance of flood-warning systems is poor.

# Introduction

- The information fails to reach vulnerable people due to inappropriate medium of communication. This was exactly what happened in the coastal communities in the Delta State of Nigeria in 2012.
- In 2012, Nigeria experienced it's worse flood disaster.
- Surprisingly, the flood was predicted by the Nigerian meteorological agency (NIMET) a month ago before the flood disaster actually occurred.



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# The Delta State as a case study

- Igbide, Olomoro and Uzere communities were severely affected by the flood disaster.
- All but one participant claimed they never received or heard of the forecast.
- The use of the media alone as an effective means of disseminating flood warnings will hardly reach the rural farmers.
- *“We leave our homes first thing in the morning to the farm. By the time we get back home and after preparing dinner for the family we are totally exhausted. What time do we have to listen to the radio?”*



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# Case study cont...

- Lack of constant power supply and poverty are other reasons why the media channel alone will not suffice.
- Thus, it is imperative for risk communicators to prioritize the various ways rural people in the developing world disseminate information within their communities.

# The way forward

- Town-hall meetings in the form of farmers workshop.
- Town-criers, which can be modified by using the bus-advocacy system in places with accessible roads.
- Bringing extension workers into the picture.
- Utilizing the various local meeting groups that these farmers belong to.
- In conclusion, it is imperative for risk communicators to utilize the various mediums of communication rural communities have been relying on for decades simultaneously with the media channels.

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