



Understanding Information Communication Strategies among Farmers for Effective Utilization of Climate Research and Forecast in the Niger-Delta, Nigeria

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OCTOBER, 2013



**NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
RESEARCH**

**Dr Andrew Onwuemele ACC 2013
Presentation**



Introduction

- ❖ Climate research and forecasts have been shown to be useful in planning various activities that depend on climate information and products.
- ❖ In the agriculture sector, farmers are able to select more effective planting times, and choose the most appropriate crops for the coming season.
- ❖ According to Tall et al, (2012), seasonal forecasts have been underutilized for many reasons:





Introduction Cont...

- ❖ Firstly, there had been no sustained dialogue between climate services providers and end users.
- ❖ Scientifically, the information was often not salient to the latter's information needs .
- ❖ This disconnect between service providers and users is a global issue and this partly explains why vulnerable populations worldwide continue to be impacted by predictable natural hazards.





Introduction Cont...

- ❖ Despite the significant potential of climate research and forecast to aid vulnerable groups in better coping with climate variability, there are only a few haphazard instances of successful transmission and use of available climate and weather forecasts, by policy makers and communities at risk.
- ❖ One of the spheres mostly hit by this scenario in Nigeria is the smallholder farmer who constitutes over 70% of the countries farming population.





Introduction Cont...

- ❖ To a large extent, while smallholder's farmers have continuously been adapting to varying weather and climatic conditions; however, increasingly erratic climate variability and the rapid pace of other drivers of change are overwhelming their capacity to adapt.
- ❖ Consequently, the need for improved access to climate information services have become more critical more than ever before.





Introduction Cont...

- ❑ The Niger-Delta region where the study is based is particularly vulnerable to climate change due to its location in the coastal region coupled with its high mean annual rainfall of about 4500mm and hence potentially vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding.
- ❑ Studies have shown that very few farmers in the region use the results of climate research and only few have access to seasonal forecasts, even though the vast majority seem willing to use such information.





Introduction Cont...

- ❖ Other studies have shown that ICT including internet, mobile phones, emails, community radio, TV, telecenters, computers are not fully utilized by farmers, especially in rural areas.
- ❖ It is germane to state that before the advent of Information Communication Technology (ICT), farmers in various communities in the region have been interacting and effectively sharing information among themselves.
- ❖ It is therefore necessary to identify the information communication and knowledge sharing strategies among farmers in the region with a view to mainstreaming them into climate research and seasonal climate forecast dissemination .





Aim of the study

- ❖ This study aims at understanding farmer's information communication strategies in the Niger-delta region of Nigeria with a view to mainstreaming same into channels of dissemination of climate researches and forecast in the Niger-Delta region.





Analytical Framework

- ❖ Several models have been developed to explain the process of communication. One of the most prominent of these models is the Shannon and Weaver (1949) model of a communication.
- ❖ Shannon-Weaver model identifies eight prerequisite elements that are fundamental for communication, or information transmission, to occur. These elements are:
 - **Source:** The initiator, or originator of the idea.
 - **Encoder:** The format for the message including text, audio, digital or images that conveys meaning.
 - **Message:** The information, idea.



Analytical Framework Cont...

- **Channel:** This is the medium or pathways through which the information is transmitted.
- **Noise:** These are interference or distortion that changes the initial message.
- **Decoder:** Before the message reaches the intended recipient, it must be decoded, or interpreted, from its original form into one that the receiver understands. .
- **Receiver:** End-user.
- **Feedback:** For meaningful communication to come to fruition, it is vital that the receiver provides feedback to the source.



Materials and Method

- ❖ The cross sectional survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of household heads in Illushi and Isoko communities. The two communities are noted for high agricultural activities but highly vulnerable to climate change.
- ❖ Data for the study were obtained through questionnaire administration and in-depth interviews (IDI). In addition, content analysis was carried out of key official documents of NIMET.
- ❖ Analysis of data was done with the use of statistical packages of the Social Sciences (SPSS) using mainly descriptive statistics while the IDI and FGD were content analysed.



Characteristics of the Sample Communities

- ❖ A total of 234 questionnaires were successfully administered using local languages in the study communities.
- ❖ Of the total 234 respondents, 61.5% were males. About 68.7 per cent of the respondents are between the ages of 30 and 50 years. 82.5% of the respondents were married while 7.6 % were single.
- ❖ More than half of the respondents (52.7%) earned less than 10, 000 Naira per month which translate to less than one dollar a day (1 US \$ = N150) indicating a high poverty incidences.
- ❖ In addition, about 32.9 per cent of the respondents had no formal education while 49.0 per cent had primary education reflecting low literacy levels, which can be a barrier to effective access and use of climate



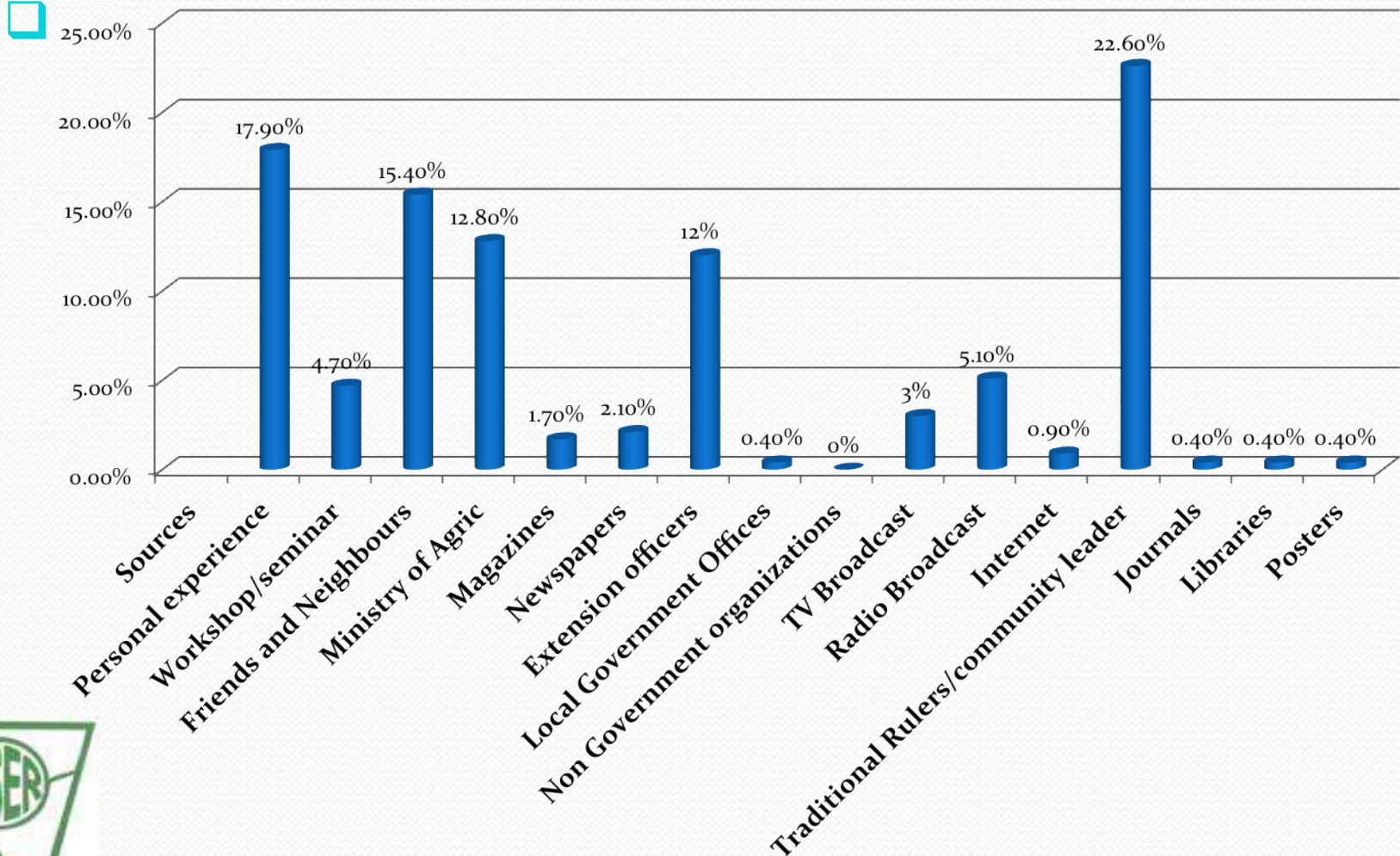
Information Needs of Farmers in the Niger-Delta

- ❖ The information needs of farmers in the Niger-delta as gleaned from the in-depth interview are grouped under six headings: agricultural inputs; extension education; agricultural technology; agricultural credit; weather and climate and marketing.
- ❖ The information needs are all agriculturally related. This is understandably due to the fact that they are mainly farmers and are probably interested in information that would lead to increased productivity.





Figure 1: Sources of Information and Communication Strategies among Farmers in the Niger-Delta





Sources of Climate Information in Nigeria

- ❑ Results indicate that NIMET has the mandate to monitor weather and climate in Nigeria and provide meteorological information.
- ❑ Institutions such as Special Climate Change Unit (SCCU), Building the Nigerian Response to Climate Change (BNRCC), Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team.
- ❑ Some academic institutions have special centres dedicated to the provision of climate information Centre for Climate Change and Fresh Water Resources at Federal University of Technology Minna and Centre for Energy, Research and Development at Obafemi Awolowo University Ile –Ife etc.





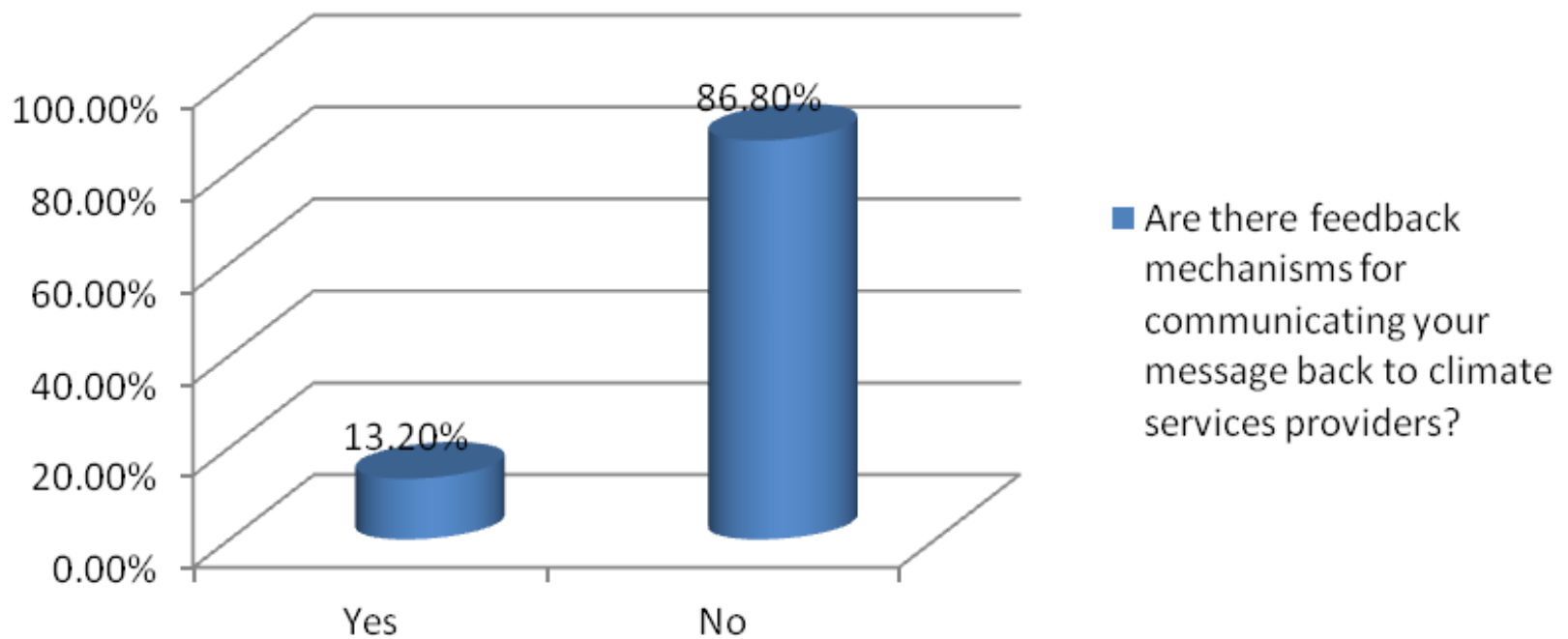
Table 1: Channels of Climate Change Communication in Nigeria

Channels of Climate Change Communication	Media
Mass Media	TV, Radio
Print media	Pamphlets, newspapers, brochures, posters
Electronic media	Internet, sms support services



Figure 2: Feedback Mechanisms in Climate Change Communication

Are there feedback mechanisms for communicating your message back to climate services providers?



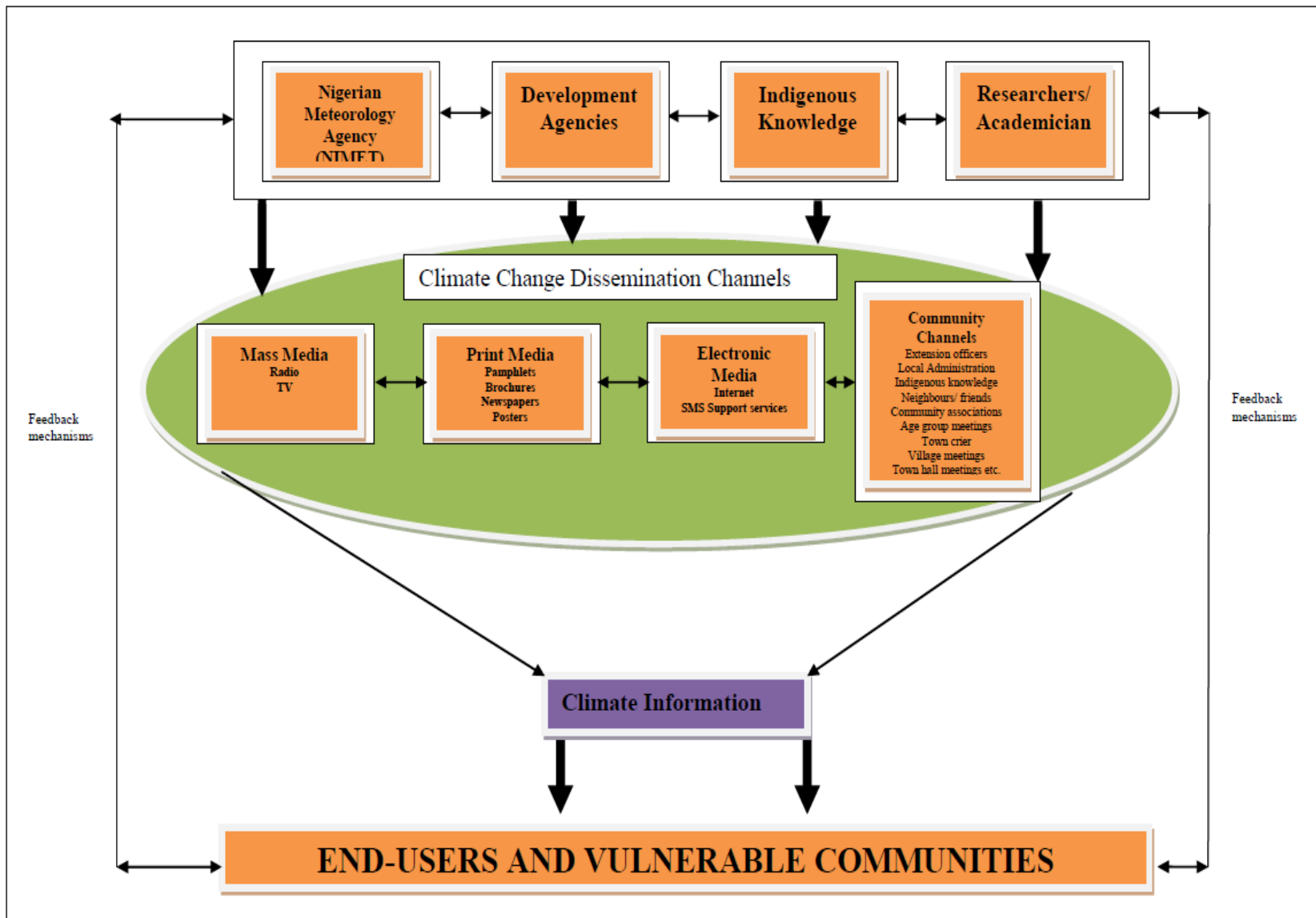


Figure 4: Framework for Climate Change Information Communication
 Source: Author, 2013

Conclusion and Recommendations



- ❖ The study shows that the information need of the farmers are agriculturally based and this was attributed to the fact that the respondent's livelihood is anchored on agriculture.
- ❖ The study further shows that community channel is the major source of accessing information in the study area and this is at variance with the channels of disseminating climate information in the study area.
- ❖ Beyond this and most critically, the study identified the absence of feedback mechanism in the existing framework for climate information dissemination.



The study recommends the mainstreaming of community channels into the channels of climate information dissemination in the study area.

- ❖ In addition, adequate feedback mechanism should be established to ensure that information disseminated are not only received but interpreted and utilized accordingly.





THANK YOU SO MUCH
FOR LISTENING

