

# Credibility and Scale as Barriers to Uptake and Use of Seasonal Climate Forecasts in Bobirwa Sub-District, Botswana

**Janet Selato**  
Botswana



# Research Questions

How credible and scale-relevant are seasonal climate forecasts that reach communities in Bobirwa sub-district?

How do the credibility and scale-relevance of these seasonal climate forecasts influence decision-making and livelihoods in Bobirwa sub-district?

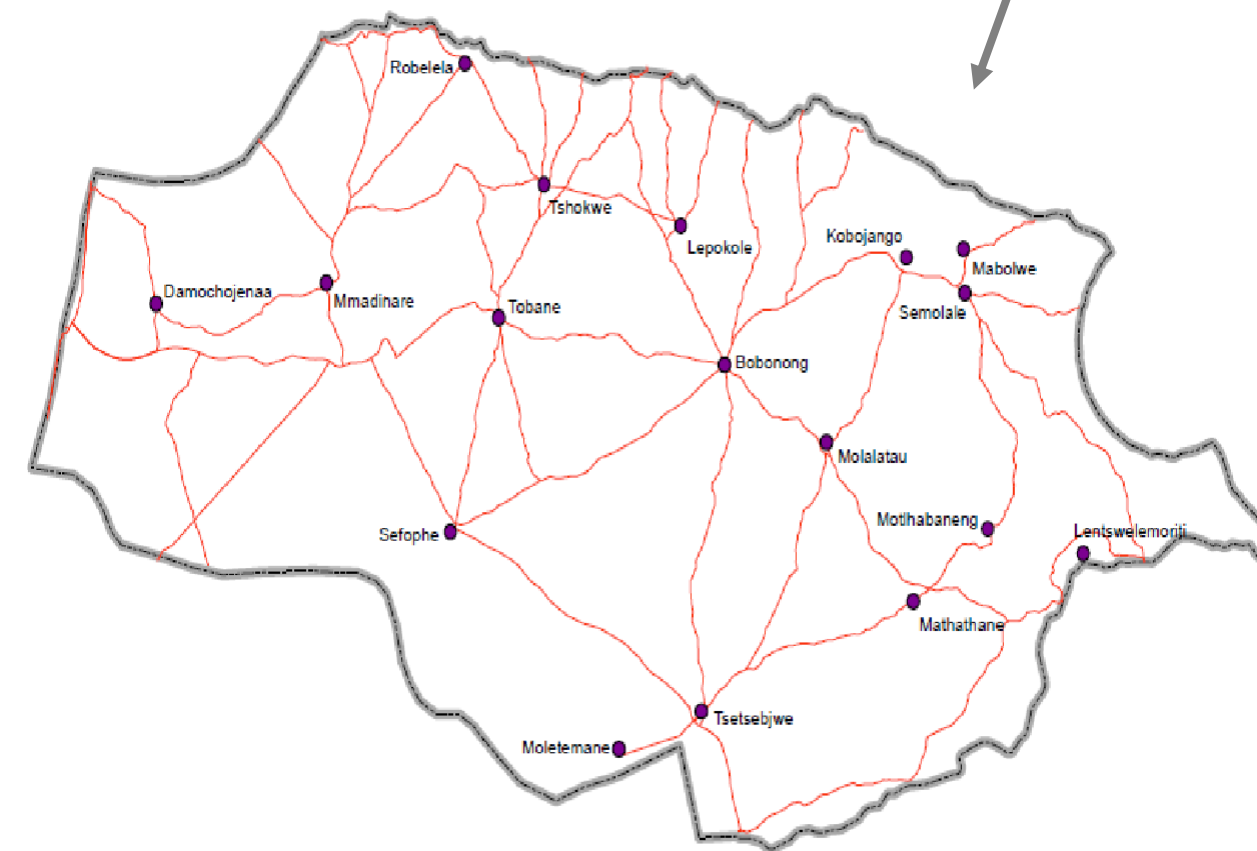
How have the farmers in Bobirwa sub-district dealt with limitations of credibility and scale relevance of seasonal climate forecasts in their decision-making?

# Study Site and Methods

Qualitative data collected from farmers

8 villages in Bobirwa sub-district

Semi-structured interviews



# Results

- 47 farmers interviewed

## Gender

- 22 male and 25 female farmers

## Age

- 68.1% were 56 years and above
- 27.7% in age group of 36-55
- 4.3% youth in the range of 22-35 years

## Farming

- Subsistence



Source: Botswana Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food Security

# How credible are seasonal climate forecasts (SCF) that reach communities in Bobirwa sub-district?

Accessibility: 100% (male & female)

## Credibility

57.4% respondents trust SCF

21.3% partially trust

21.3% mistrust SCF

No major gender differences

SCF perceived to be generally credible

Hence majority (76.6% ) of farmers were users of SCF, 10.6% were partial users.

But credibility is major constraint to uptake by the few (12.8%) non-users of SCF

Reasons for Trusting SCF	Reasons for not Trusting SCF
Correct/Accurate Forecast	Incorrect or Inaccurate Forecast, dry spells & onset
Improved forecast (correct use of technology)	Religious beliefs and Practices
Trained and Supplier of Forecast Information	Seasonal variations not captured
Warns Farmers	Misled on crops to plant
SCF Agrees with Traditional Indicators	Poor Distribution in time Areal coverage too broad

# How relevant are seasonal climate forecasts that reach communities in Bobirwa sub-district?

## Relevance

- SCF timely, 1-month lead time (76.6%)
- Setswana dissemination well understood
- temporal and spatial scale are constraints (64.8% )
- SCF were not scale-relevant to Bobirwa sub-district farmers
- scale limited effective use of SCF by users



Source: Botswana Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food Security

# How have the farmers in Bobirwa sub-district dealt with limitations of credibility and relevance of seasonal climate forecasts in their decision making?

Theme Category	Theme
Local knowledge	Traditional forecasts
	Farming experience
	Religious practices
Scientific Information	MoA Advice
Economic ventures	Diversify livelihoods
	Markets

# Recommendations

- Capacity building to improve spatial and temporal resolution of SCF
- Co-production of SCF between scientists and indigenous knowledge owners as farmers mainly used local knowledge to complement SCF
- Climate proof government programmes to cushion vulnerable groups like non-users of SCF practicing traditional planting and women dependent on arable farming
- Further investigate benefits of use of SCF by farmers



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