

Community radio for resilience in the Sahel

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Decentralising Climate Funds

In the Sahel, where people are highly exposed to climate extremes, people have a great need for climate information to adapt their agricultural and pastoral activities. In order to meet this challenge, community radio stations are working to raise awareness about the proper management of natural resources.

Community radio, a true local communication and outreach tool, not only provides information, but is increasingly taking on the role of a key player in development. It also has an institutional memory that makes it a guardian of local knowledge.

This has been the observation of the Decentralising Climate Funds (DCF) project within the BRACED programme, which has been supporting about 10 community radio stations in the regions of Mopti in Mali and Kaffrine in Senegal.

In the areas where these radio stations operate – targeting about 250,000 people – communities face significant climate risks and have very limited access to the information and coping mechanisms that are often included in key reports.

Since community radio is very popular in rural areas, it can provide crop and livestock farmers with quick access to reliable and understandable meteorological information that can help them adapt their practices to absorb climate shocks. In the Kaffrine and Mopti regions, almost everyone has access to radio, either through a radio set or a pre-installed app on a mobile phone.

DCF has facilitated partnerships between the national meteorological services and the radio stations, which now broadcast crucial weather information, including early warnings on extreme events such as strong winds, torrential rains or extreme temperatures.

DCF supports communities in Mali and Senegal to become more resilient to climate change through locally-controlled adaptation funds. Investments in climate adaptation are identified and prioritised by local communities through a participatory process that is inclusive of women.

"The more communities have access to information, the more their opportunities increase, the more they strengthen their ability to cope with climate risks," says Momath Talla Ndao, coordinator of the DCF project at IED Africa (Senegal).

Listeners include crop and livestock farmers, local elected officials, administrative and technical authorities, civil society and beneficiaries of the DCF project.

With the support of the project, community radio stations will have the financial resources to provide project monitoring reports, as well as develop early warning systems on seasonal variability and extend climate information networks to crop and livestock farmers.

Local people will thus learn about the adaptation going on in their surrounding villages and communities.

Programmes more oriented towards women and community listening clubs will also allow the groups most vulnerable to climate extremes to gather together to follow radio programmes and reinforce their confidence in their ability to act.

Community radio is most often hosted in the local language. For example, in Mopti, in northern Mali, the programmes are produced in Bambara or Peulh, among the most widely used local languages, whereas in Senegal they are produced in Wolof. Programmes use clear language that is accessible to farmers.

Based in most cases on local staff who are well informed about the realities of the land, the radio stations operate on the principle of participation. Many of the people involved, such as leaders of villages or families, not only help to run the stations but also host programmes.



BRACED aims to build the resilience of up to 5 million vulnerable people against climate extremes and disasters. It does so through 15 projects working across 13 countries in East Africa, the Sahel and Asia.

The Resilience Exchange collates and synthesises what has been learned about resilience-building across a range of challenging contexts. It is based on evidence from the first two years of implementing the BRACED programme, drawing on project experiences and learning as well as programme-wide research and evaluation.