

# The Climate Message

Exploration  
#212

## Objectives:

- To explore how complex climate messages are transferred
- To explore options for appropriate use of climate messages

**Number of players:** 10-100, recommend to have 5-10 people in 1 group

**Time:** 10 - 15 minutes

**Materials needed:** The climate message on a piece of paper

**Facilitation skill:** ★ Easy exercise, gentle, not too daring or adventurous



## Relevance for climate resilience

Complex climate messages can often cause more confusion than clarity. This light hearted exercise can open the space for an exploration on the effectiveness of seasonal forecasts and how to communicate them effectively without oversimplifying the message.



## Process:

1. Prepare a Climate message on a piece of paper. Ensure that the forecast is relevant and realistic for the area you are working in. You can also use a quote from an actual seasonal forecast. Here is an **example**:  
*Currently we are experiencing a strong ENSO signal- and are in an El Nino phase. There is a 60% chance that there will be less than average rainfall and a 45% chance that the maximum temperatures will be lower than average for the months of November - December - January. The long term forecasts show that there is an increased chance that the central parts of the country might experience drier conditions or even drought conditions.*

Note: when playing with children/youth, limit the message to 2 short sentences.

2. Divide the participants in two (or more) groups. All groups stand or sit in a line (see image 1)
3. Explain the setting: there are different extension officers that have been tasked to share the seasonal climate forecast with the farmers of their area. They hold a meeting with lead farmers and pass on the seasonal forecast message.
3. The first person in the row will be told the forecast (see image 2).
4. Ask the persons to pass on the message considering two rules. It is recommended to be strict:
  - Rule 1: No repeating of the message - only say it once
  - Rule 2: No notes may be taken
5. Once the message reaches the end, ask the last person to write down the message that has reached them. Read the message and share the original message with the group.  
*Alternative:* ask the last person to give advice to the local farmers, based on what they heard.

## Debriefing:

The debriefing is where the shared learning takes place (see image 3). Example questions:

1. Were there differences between different groups' final messages? Why do you think that was?
2. What made it easy, or difficult to communicate a climate message?
3. What does this mean for our practice in using climate messages?

## Acknowledgement:

The Climate Message is based on Chinese Whispers and was introduced by "Indigo".



Images: 1 (top left): facilitator reads message,  
2 (top right): passing the message,  
3 (bottom): debriefing

Images by: Kueng, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, 2016 (Madagascar)

