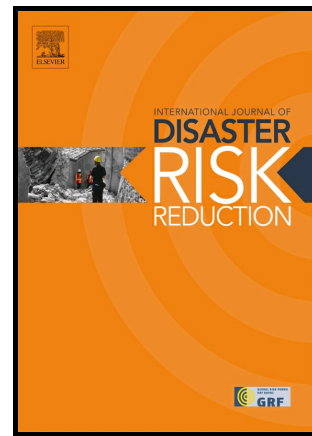


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ASSESSING COMMUNAL FARMERS' PREPAREDNESS TO DROUGHT IN THE UMGUZA DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE.

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Abstract

Recurring drought is a major challenge facing the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe and other countries in Africa. The effect of drought compromise food security in the affected countries. Communal farmers in Ntabazinduna are very vulnerable to drought because they lack preparation, coping and adaptive capacity to drought that is sometimes exacerbated by cultural drawbacks. This study accessed the state of drought preparedness in Ntabazinduna in Umguza district of Zimbabwe by looking at the coping strategies employed by communal farmers as well as policies that influence drought preparedness. Primary data was collected using a survey of 100 farming household and interview with other identified stakeholders. The results indicate that lack of rainfall, high temperatures and poor farming inputs are the major causes of drought in Ntabazinduna. This is further compounded by the lack of response instruments and ineffective drought management institutions. The community's low literacy level and reliance on indigenous knowledge increases susceptibility to drought as they ignore scientific early warning information on radio and television. Ntabazinduna has a drought preparedness plan but failure to involve the community during its preparation resulted in lack of awareness and implementation of the plan. The lack of financial resources limits the farmers' ability to spread drought risks in terms of insurance. It is of utmost importance to establish a drought management committee which will coordinate and implement the drought preparedness plan at community level. The study further challenged communities to diversify

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