

Understanding gender dimensions in climate information awareness and uptake by entrepreneurs in South Africa

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Project Background

- **Women entrepreneurs face unique vulnerabilities to climate change:** They experience "triple differential vulnerability," including business exposure to climate effects, frontline household climate risk management, and barriers like limited access to land, finance, and education.
- **Gender gaps in climate information access and use:** Women often lack the tools, skills, and representation needed to access, interpret, and use climate information effectively, limiting their ability to adapt and build resilience.
- **Bridging gender gaps strengthens climate resilience:** Understanding the needs of both climate information providers and women end-users enables co-learning and the development of inclusive solutions for equitable, climate-resilient development.

Project Background

- Project designed by consortium: GRI/LSE, Kulima, UCT, UP, & SAWS; Funded by LSE International Science Partnership Fund (Jul 2024-Mar 2025)
- Initially, 3 main research questions:
 - To what extent and how is gender mainstreamed into the building, accessibility, and dissemination of climate information in Africa?
 - How do, and how might, women entrepreneurs in Africa use climate data to navigate adaptation and business decision-making?
 - What factors shape gender differences in the ability to interpret and use climate information and how might climate information use and utility be enhanced for women entrepreneurs in the context of adaptation?

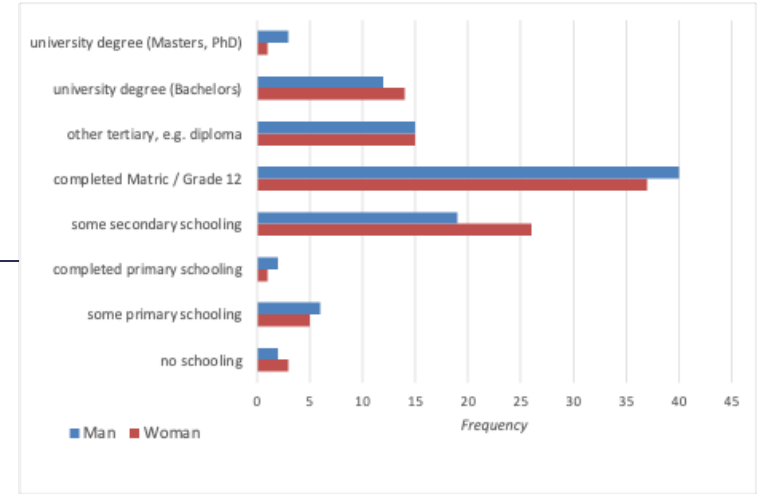
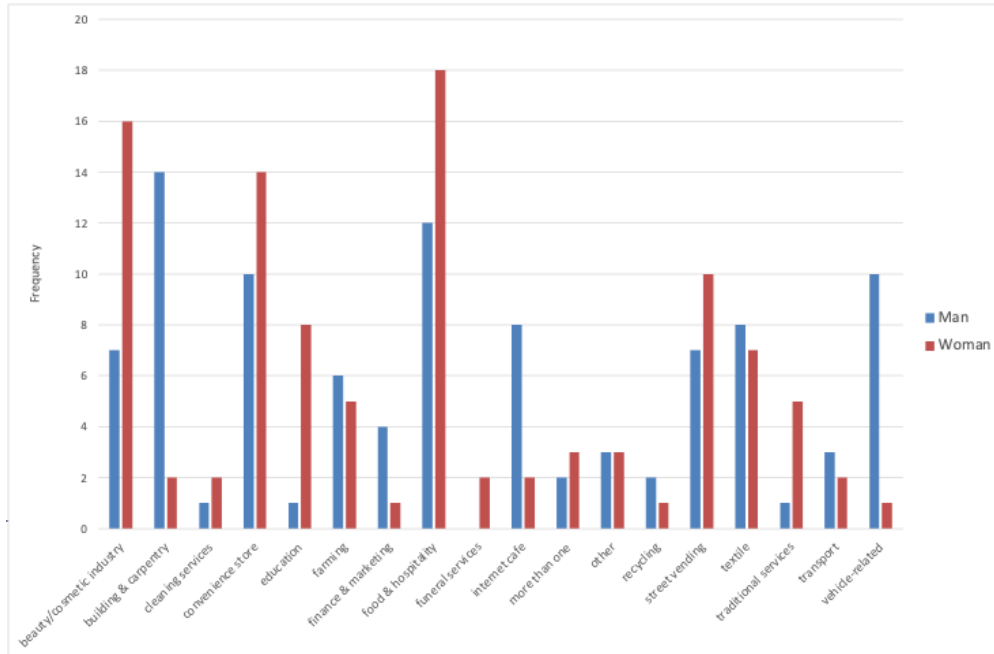
Research Methodology

- Survey protocol developed by team to engage men and women entrepreneurs in South Africa
- 37 closed and open-ended questions, incl.: nature of entrepreneurship, impacts of extreme weather events, coping strategies, use of climate information, utility of climate information for business purposes.
- Implemented in Nov-Dec 2024 by 11 enumerators/ residents of Katlehong and 7 Masters & PhD students at the Universities of Pretoria and Witwatersrand
- Collected via Microsoft Forms template under LSE research ethics guidelines
- Follow-up with 19 persons in semi-structured interviews



Research Findings: Summary Review of Respondents

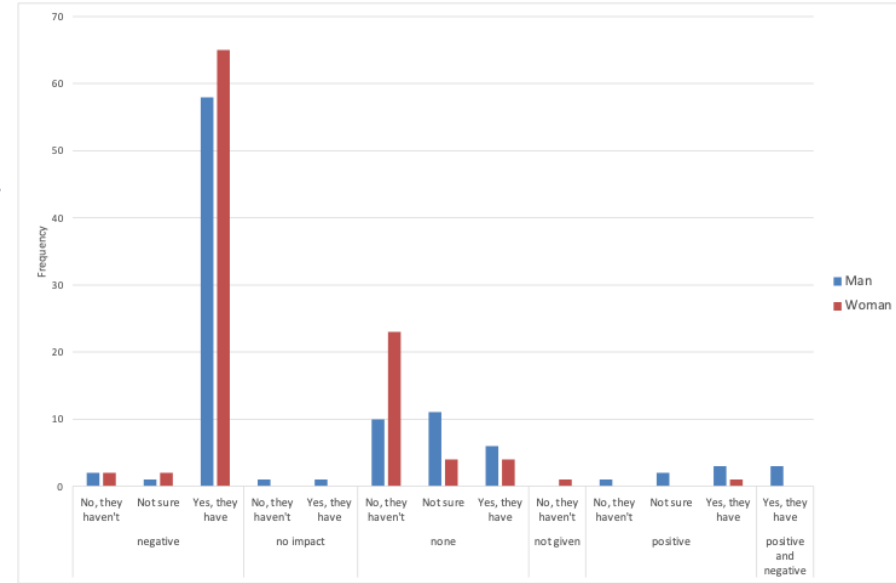
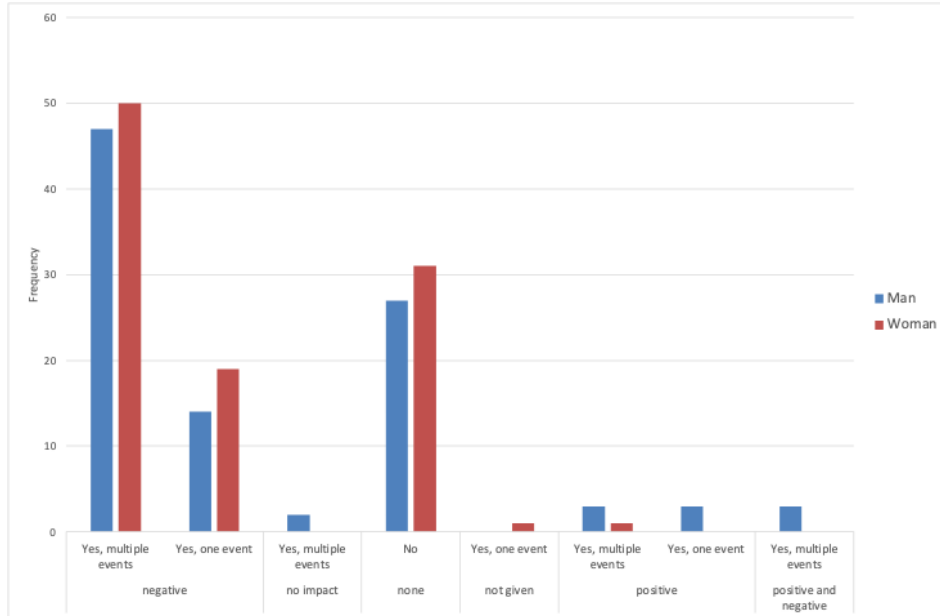
- Survey completed by 202 persons
 - 99 men, 102 women, 1 prefer not to say
- Most (181 persons) live and work in Gauteng
- Majority finished secondary school & higher



- **Women biz:** beauty/cosmetics; food/hospitality; convenience store; education; street vending
- **Men biz:** building/carpentry; vehicle-related; internet/tech; farming; textile

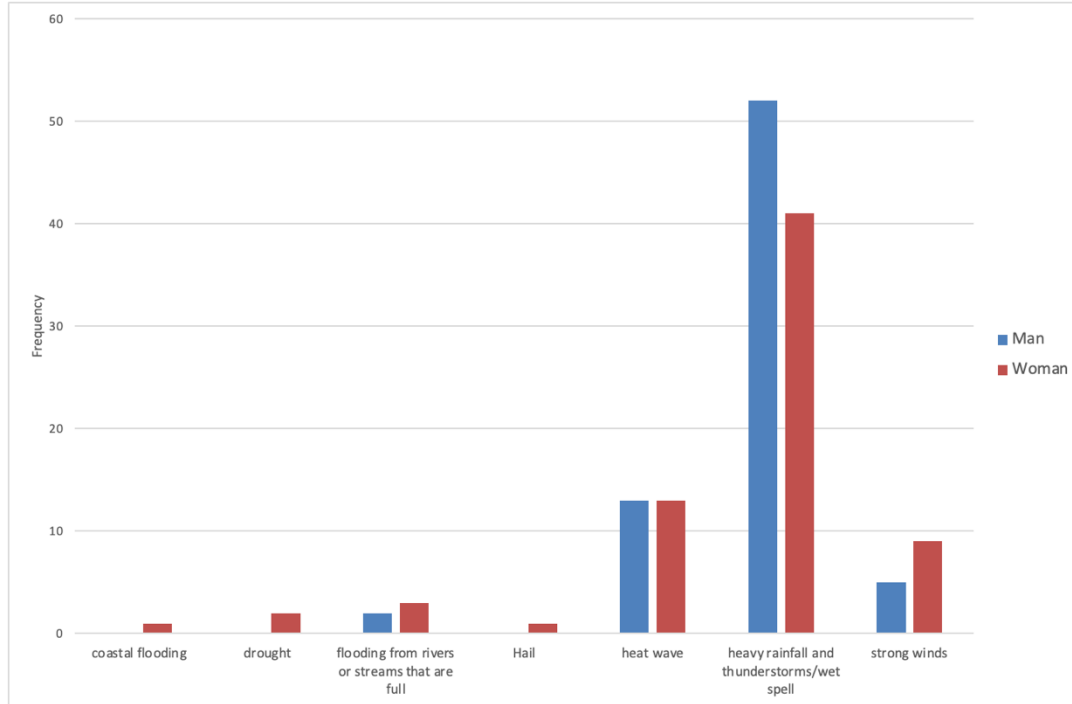
Research Findings: Impacts of Extreme Weather Events

- 141 report EWE affected business **location**
 - Mostly negative impacts**
- More women than men said no EWE effect



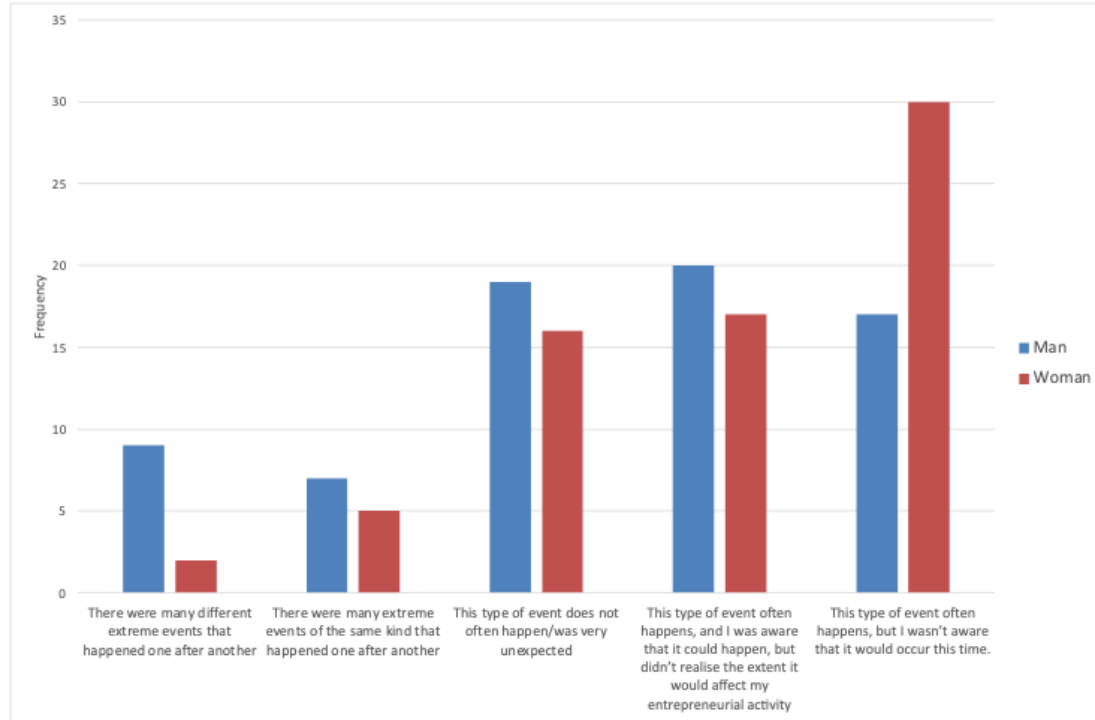
- 143 report that EWE affected **their businesses**, often more than once
- More men than women report **positive** impacts from EWE impact

Research Findings: Impacts of Extreme Weather Events



- More men than women report being affected by EWE, especially by heavy rainfall and thunderstorms/wet spell
- More women report impact by strong winds, flooding and drought

Research Findings: Impacts of Extreme Weather Events



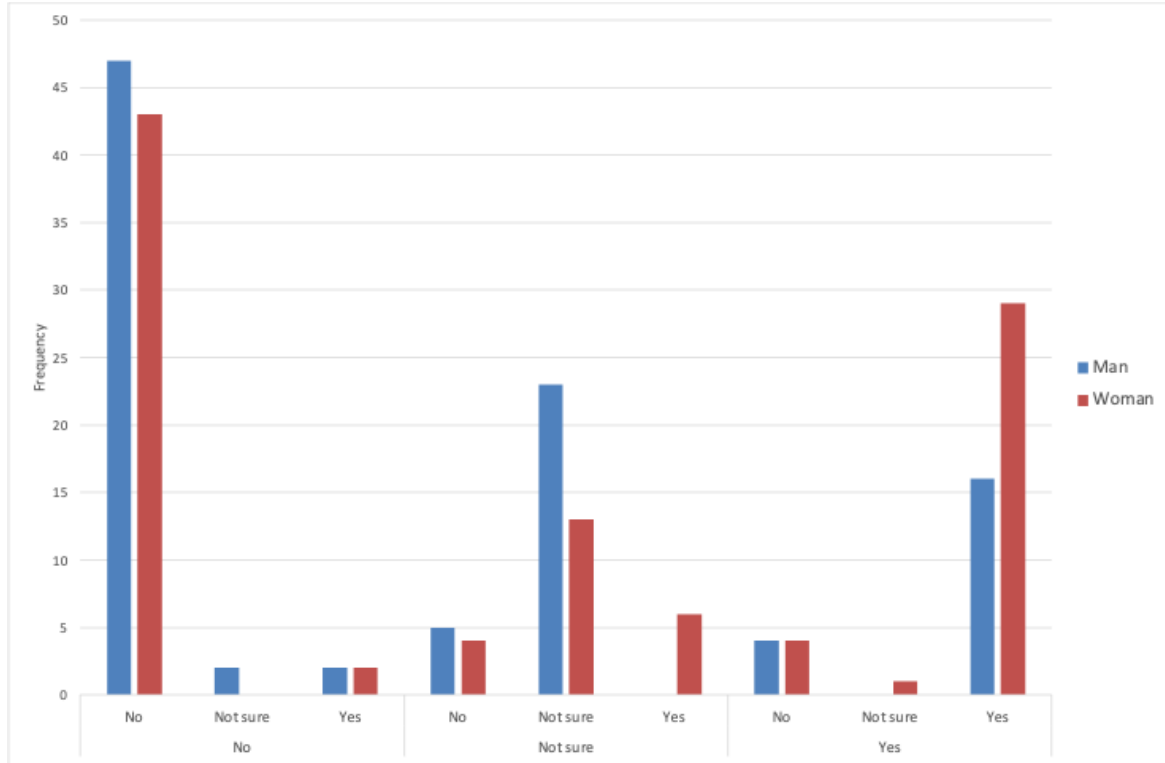
- **More women reported being unaware of impending event**
- Men impacted due to unexpected nature or compound effects

Coping Strategies:

- More women report using family support, or did nothing
- Men tended to use own savings, other resources

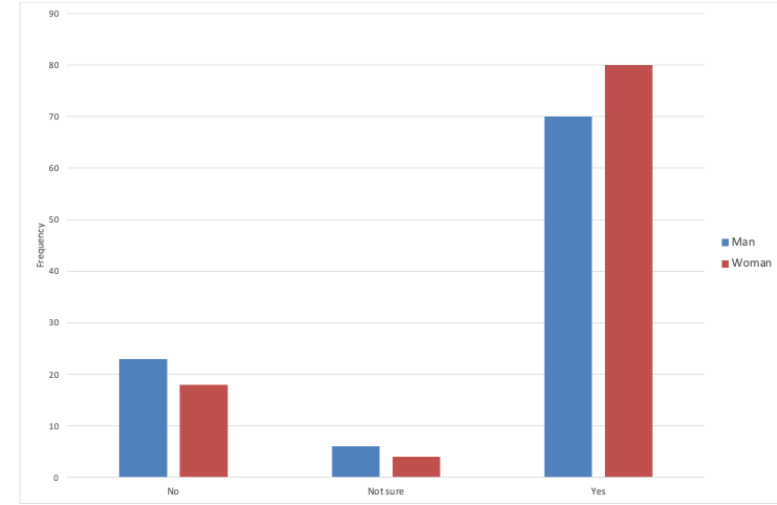
Research Findings: Does gender matter?

- **Majority said no!**
- More women than men felt that gender *does* have an influence on the ability to access business resources to prepare for and respond to impacts of EWEs
 - Stat sig difference

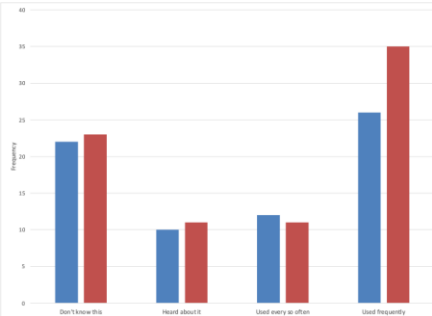


Research Findings: Use of Climate Information

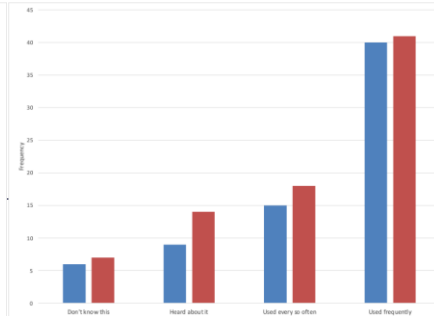
- Majority (151) use CI for decision-making
 - More women than men (not stat sig)
- More women use nowcasts & daily forecasts
 - Daily forecasts seem broadly used
- More men signal frequent use of seasonal forecasts and climate projections
 - Majority don't know/only heard about it



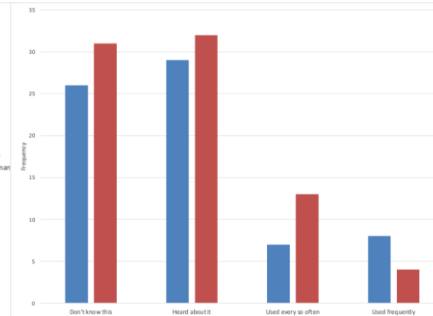
Nowcasts



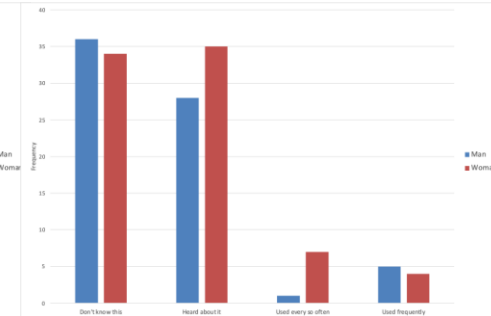
Daily Forecasts



Seasonal Forecasts

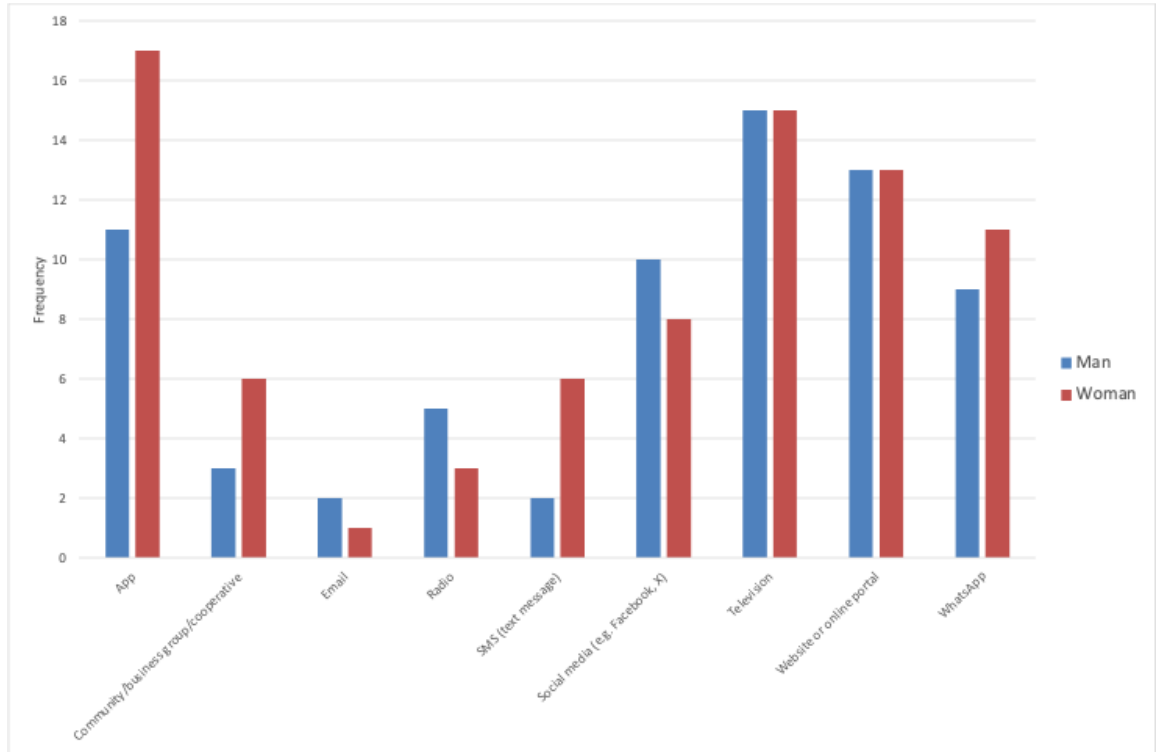


Climate Projections

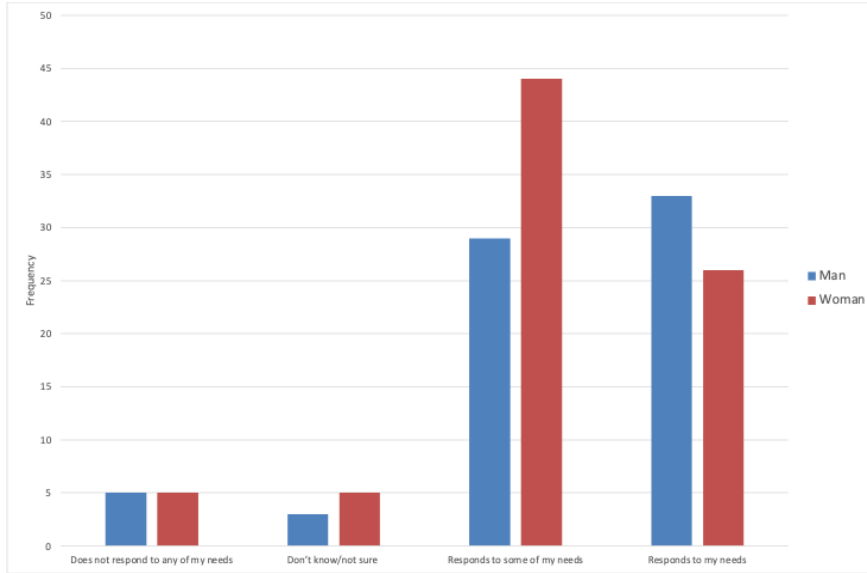


Research Findings: Preferred way of receiving CI

- Gender differences of preferred ways of CI delivery
- Women prefer apps, WhatsApp, SMS/text, communities
- Men prefer email, radio and social media
- Similar preference for websites and TV

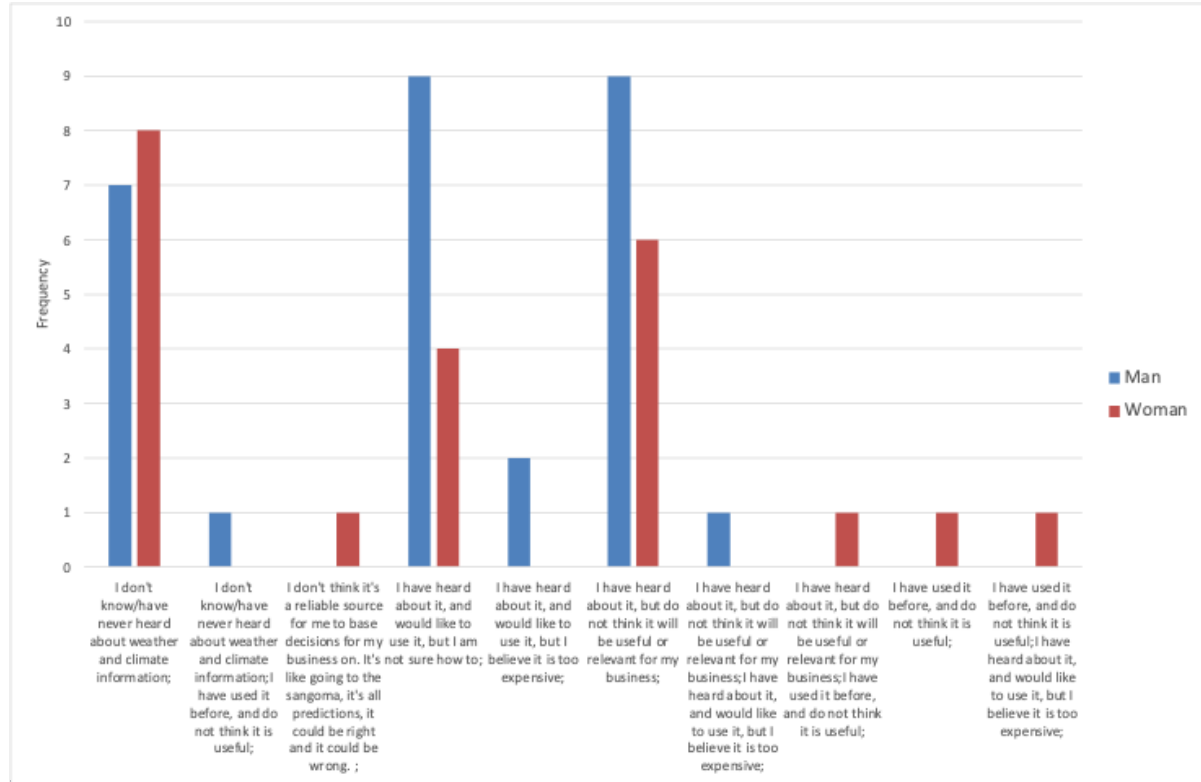


Research Findings: Other CI notes



- Generally, people find that CI responds to their needs; men feel more satisfied
- Majority receive CI from SAWS
- Majority say that they do not pay for CI

Research Findings: Why don't you use it?



- 51 people did not use CI
 - 29 men, 22 women
- 15 didn't know about CI
- Men felt that they weren't sure how to use it; didn't feel it would be relevant for their business; cost
- Women noted concerns about usefulness.
 - *I don't think it's a reliable source for me to base decisions for my business on. It's like going to the sangoma, it's all predictions, it could be right and it could be wrong.*

Summary and Next Steps

- Review of key findings
 - No obvious perception of gender as a barrier to prepare for risks
 - Likely relationship between gender, job category and impacts
 - e.g., more men report risk awareness, plan ahead, adapt using CI
 - Secondary effect of gender, e.g., women's security during/after events
 - No obvious gender difference in use of climate information
 - Likely difference of use of short vs longer term forecasts
 - Use of CI delivery medium helpful to review
 - Discussion on broader awareness of climate information
 - Role of collectives and suitable groups to share how to use CI?
- Policy report in July 2025; potential for further research and follow-up?



Thanks!

Questions?

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