



## **Impact-Based Severe Early Weather Warning System in South Africa: Getting the message to the ground level**

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The South African Weather Service is coming to the end of a four year project to develop and test an Impact-Based Severe Weather Warning System for the country. The severe weather warning messages will be evolving from describing what the weather will be to rather describing what the weather will do. This is a paradigm shift as the warnings will no longer be based on meteorological thresholds, but rather on the expected impacts. This project has included the running of pilot phases across the country whereby the warnings have been tested. Public outreach workshops have also been held as well as a media workshop, all to try and reach as many people as possible.

The purpose of this new warning system is to issue warnings that are easy to understand, meaning no longer including any meteorological jargon, so that more people on the ground can understand the potential impact and prepare accordingly. By having the media on board with this new warning system, the South African Weather Service aims at targeting communities that currently face challenges in receiving weather related warnings, by using more local radio stations. The impact-based warnings are also far easier to translate into the eleven official languages in South Africa. This new warning system also requires a much a closer interaction with local disaster management authorities as well, resulting in joint-ownership of the warnings.