

Countries along the Nile River are uniting in a groundbreaking initiative to improve early warning systems for floods and droughts, aiming to protect millions from increasingly unpredictable climate shocks.

Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and Rwanda are partnering through the *Water at the Heart of Climate Action* project to boost their capacity for hydrometeorological monitoring and impact-based forecasting. The effort supports the broader global *Early Warnings for All* initiative, launched by the United Nations to ensure everyone is protected by climate alerts by 2027.

“It’s not just early warnings for all — it’s early warnings with all,” said Ramesh Tripathi, flood management officer at the World Meteorological Organization, during a recent regional workshop in Addis Ababa attended by more than 40 representatives from the five countries.

Climate change has turned water into a wild card, delivering devastating floods or prolonged droughts with little warning across the Nile Basin, where lives and livelihoods are tightly tied to the river. The new regional effort, supported by the Government of the Netherlands, aims to build a unified system that combines satellite data, river-level sensors, national weather models and community knowledge into real-time, actionable forecasts.

The goal is not only to predict the weather but to forecast its consequences. In Ethiopia, the national meteorological institute is working to identify how rainfall might impact bridges, health clinics or entire communities. In Sudan, monitoring river levels is a priority, while South Sudan focuses on mapping flood-prone areas. Uganda and Rwanda bring their own national insights, including dam operations and population data, to create a more comprehensive basin-wide system.

“This isn’t about rewriting the Nile’s story but reading it better — together,” said one delegate.

The project promises to move beyond traditional forecasts like “rain is coming” to more specific alerts, such as “Juba’s market may flood by Tuesday,” helping communities act in time to avoid disaster. It’s an approach known as *impact-based forecasting*, and it’s at the heart of the region’s new strategy.



The Nile knows no borders, and neither should the warnings that protect its people.

For decades, countries monitored water patterns in isolation. Now, through cross-border collaboration involving Red Cross societies, UN agencies, and national governments, a shared vision is taking shape.

While other regions face hurricanes and wildfires, the Nile Basin's climate challenge is largely hydrological. As the planet warms, this river system — vital to over 250 million people — may either become a source of catastrophe or a beacon of resilience.

With stronger data, shared systems, and regional trust, these nations are betting on the latter.