

# SEVERE STORMS UPSHOTS: THE AFRICA SOCIAL, ECONOMICAL AND CULTURAL SITUATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the nature of one of major severe storms, the “Thunderstorms” that seasonally affect the West Africa sub-region. With their contrasting characteristic effects that best portray them as “necessary evil” regarding the high degree of economic dislocations to many sectors and their non-occurrence portending a great danger to the region whose economy is agrarian in nature, the good, the bad and even the ugly upshots of these tropical systems on the social, economical and cultural well being of the region were critically appraised. The historical review of thunderstorms cells including their life circle, sustenance and propagation were also discussed.

Having examined the challenges of the conventional methods employed in monitoring and understanding of these systems in such a region characterized by very small pressure changes and sparse data resources, the need for the reduction of the risks associated with their destructive capability on the one hand and maximizing their positive impacts on the other were particularly discussed. In this wise, the following solutions were proffered:

- (a) the effective use of satellite meteorology not only for the monitoring and understanding of the system but also for data acquisition and archiving for research and modeling purposes
- (b) extensive network of ground based conventional observations system whose data is useful to calibrate and validate satellite-based datasets
- (c) transfer of technology that will improve service delivery in terms of the acquisition and dissemination of accurate data and information that will not only trickle down the user communities to erode erroneous socio-cultural beliefs but facilitate better use of research results in policy and decision making and
- (d) gaining of knowledge through improve training and effective capacity building in technological development whose proper applications will help mitigate the harsh effects of the storms rather than completely rely on aids from international donors for their hazardous aftermaths.