

RECOMMENDATIONS

IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER ADAPTATION OPTIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AGAINST A BACKDROP OF CHANGING ASPIRATIONS.

NOT ONLY WILL THIS ENCOURAGE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE REASONS WHY PEOPLE ARE ADAPTING OR NOT, IT WILL ALSO HELP FIND ENTRY POINTS INTO POSSIBLE PATHWAYS TO WELLBEING.



WHEN PLANNING RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES:

01

Children and youth should have the right to access affordable education. This is particularly relevant in the present context, where traditional agrarian livelihoods are increasingly at risk and people's aspirations are shifting.

02

Where aspirations are tied to moving out of agriculture-based livelihoods, both young women and men need technical and skills-strengthening support, along with fair access to credit, at low interest rates.

However, people should be made aware of the debt risks associated with loans.

03

Where farming livelihoods are aspired to, government departments, extension workers and practitioners need to support adaptation options that enhance water and land stewardship, and provide access to productive assets and information (e.g. early warning systems).

Through this, farming could be made a more attractive and feasible option for the youth.

04

Finally, we need to recognise and support women's aspirations for autonomy and voice, by working with them - and jointly with men - to challenge social norms and patriarchal traditions that hold them back, and by supporting them to be independent (e.g. with childcare, accessible education, credit).

DREAMING OF A BETTER LIFE: LET'S RECOGNISE AND VALUE PEOPLE'S CHANGING ASPIRATIONS

WE SEE TWO MAIN TRENDS BEHIND CHANGING ASPIRATIONS:



01

There is a search for urban and off-farm employment that is felt to be more promising, particularly by youngsters. But migrating to cities can also come with trade-offs...

02

Climate change is challenging agricultural and livestock-based livelihoods, sometimes forcing people off the land. For some, rural livelihoods remain appealing, especially when they symbolise wealth and status. However, increasing hardships are making this way of life more difficult.



The five-year ASSAR project (Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions, 2014-2018) uses insights from multi-scale, interdisciplinary work to inform and transform climate adaptation policy and practice in ways that promote the long-term wellbeing of the most vulnerable and those with the least agency.

DREAMING OF A BETTER LIFE: LET'S RECOGNISE AND VALUE PEOPLE'S CHANGING ASPIRATIONS

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND ASPIRATIONS - WHAT'S THE LINK?

Policy and decision-making processes are rarely, if at all, designed to consider people's aspirations, or the fact that these are changing. Yet, to enhance present and future wellbeing, adaptation options and risk management strategies need to acknowledge people's changing aspirations and priorities in addition to their climate-related needs.

WHAT ASPIRATIONAL CHANGES ARE WE SEEING?

IMPROVING EDUCATION:

"I DON'T WANT MY SON TO STAND IN THE SUN."

Many aspirations revolve around the education of children. Rural families are investing more in their children's education and would like to see them move out of farming, so they can have a different lifestyle from their parents in the future.



"If you have educated children they send remittances, they uplift their fathers' standard of living and they even spread that help to extended family and relatives. In the past one could rely on farming but that is no longer the case because of drought and high temperatures." (Mbahepa, elderly Dhemba man, Omusati, Namibia)

"We do not want our children to continue in agriculture, that is why we are investing all our money in their schooling. Let them get good salaried jobs, we don't want them to face the same difficulties that we face. We want them to have a better life away from here." (Devamma and Velu, married couple, Tamil Nadu, India)

"I am disappointed that my parents did not let me study and withdrew me from school. Now I am entirely dependent on my husband who can't provide adequately for me, nor do I have the freedom or opportunities I would have had, if I did not marry, and had an education and job instead." (Zahira, married woman, Isiolo, Kenya)

"I want to move to town where I can have a better income. I dream of having a shop in town. Despite having this dream, it is difficult for me to detach myself from our pastoral way of life. . . However, if we could get someone to herd our livestock, it would be nice to live in town." (Hawa, married pastoralist woman, Awash District, Ethiopia)

"I am looking for a job in IT. I do not want to move into farming. I don't have any experience in farming as my parents prefer if I get a proper job." (Satish, young computer science graduate, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India)

"Many of our children, who migrate to towns and cities to study, never come back home. They prefer to stay there because they are paid better and think there is hardship in the village." (Anozie, elderly married man, Lawra District, Ghana)

LIVING THE URBAN LIFESTYLE:

"I WISH TO HAVE A HOUSE CONSTRUCTED WITH MODERN CEMENT AND WALLS."



Many people aspire to move from rural areas to towns and cities, for improved opportunities such as access to schools, better-paying jobs, and more desirable lifestyles. This does not always become reality, though, as livelihood options are often few and difficult to enter. Consequently, many young men who don't find work in the cities can end up in limbo as they find it difficult and humiliating to move back to their villages.

IMPROVING CURRENT AND FUTURE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING IN AGRICULTURE:

"IF I COULD GET A LOAN, I WOULD LIKE TO START MY OWN BUSINESS."



People would like access to loans in order to accumulate enough capital for investment in future security. This includes starting or expanding their own businesses, investing in their children's future careers, or scaling up their farming practices (e.g. by improving water supply for irrigation). However, as loans come with the risk of debt, they can make it even more difficult to overcome poverty.

"In the future, I would like to get a clothing business, buying from Nairobi and selling in Merti. But for this, I will need capital. I would also like my children to have their own businesses one day." (Ayah, married woman, Kambi Odha, Isiolo County, Kenya)

"I want to move into growing cotton and vegetables on land which the Kebele will give me, but I can only do this if I can get credit." (Ali, male pastoralist, Awash Region, Ethiopia)

"There are no money lenders in this area. If I could get a loan, I would like to buy and sell livestock, such as cattle, goats and sheep." (Samwel, young separated male, Kambiodha, Isiolo County, Kenya)

