



Climate change awareness and mitigation strategies in rural Mozambique

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- This policy brief presents research addressing the crucial issue of climate change awareness and mitigation strategies among Mozambique's rural populations, focusing on Zambezia province.
- Rural residents have limited awareness of climate change and low trust in local institutions. They show a high willingness to adopt agricultural insurance but a low willingness to pay for insurance coverage.
- The brief presents policy action points such as launching targeted climate education campaigns, developing affordable agricultural insurance products, and strengthening local governance and infrastructure.

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Overview

Policy motivation

This research addresses the crucial issue of climate change awareness and mitigation strategies among rural populations in Mozambique, focusing on Zambezia province. Given that 81% of Mozambique's population relies on agriculture, the increasing frequency of climate-related disasters such as floods, droughts, and cyclones threatens the livelihoods of millions. Understanding the awareness levels and willingness to adopt risk mitigation strategies, such as agricultural insurance, is essential for shaping policies that can enhance resilience and reduce poverty.

Policy impact

The research findings will help guide the development of climate awareness campaigns and policies that promote agricultural insurance and other risk mitigation strategies. These policies are critical for improving the resilience of Mozambique's rural farming communities against climate change.

Audience

This brief is aimed at policymakers within Mozambique's Ministry of Agriculture and other Government bodies dealing with environmental issues and disaster management, as well as international development agencies, NGOs, and financial institutions interested in agricultural insurance and climate resilience in sub-Saharan Africa. We highlight the following key stakeholders to disseminate these results:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Mozambique
- Ministry of Environment, Mozambique
- World Bank Mozambique Office

Policy implications

Limited climate change awareness among rural residents.

Only 30.9% of rural respondents correctly identified climate change as a shift in long-term weather patterns. The majority associated it with increased extreme weather events, which, while relevant, reflects an incomplete understanding of climate risks.

High willingness to adopt agricultural insurance but low willingness to pay.

Approximately 70% of respondents expressed willingness to adopt agricultural insurance, yet the willingness to pay for coverage remains extremely low, averaging 7.87 Mozambican Meticaïs (0.12 USD) per hectare. Affordability is a key barrier to insurance uptake.

Trust in local institutions is low, but family and community networks are strong.

The research highlights low levels of trust in provincial and national governments, which could hinder the uptake of government-led initiatives. However, trust in family and community networks is high, indicating the potential for leveraging community-based approaches.

Implementation action points

1. Launch targeted climate education campaigns.

Policymakers should prioritise the development of public education campaigns that improve rural farmers' understanding of climate change and its long-term impacts, address misconceptions, and promote climate-smart agricultural practices.

- **Constraint:** low literacy rates in rural areas.
- **Solution:** leverage radio campaigns and local community leaders to disseminate information in local languages.

2. Develop affordable agricultural insurance products.

Design low-cost agricultural insurance products tailored to the needs of smallholder farmers, potentially subsidised by the government or development partners.

- **Constraint:** farmers' reluctance to invest in long-term solutions due to uncertainty.
- **Solution:** pilot insurance programs with flexible payment plans and build trust through community-based insurance cooperatives.

3. Strengthen local governance and infrastructure.

Investments in climate-resilient infrastructure (for example, better drainage systems) should be prioritised in areas highly susceptible to flooding and cyclones.

- **Constraint:** limited government resources and low trust in authorities.
- **Solution:** foster partnerships with NGOs and community groups to co-manage infrastructure projects and build trust.

Further reading

- Dechezleprêtre, A. et al. (2022). "International Attitudes Toward Climate Policies."
National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Cole, S. & Xiong, W. (2017). "Agricultural Insurance and Economic Development."
Annual Review of Economics.