

## Research for climate-resilient futures

### 'Research into Use': PRISE's policy and development-first approach

PRISE research adopts a policy and development-first approach to engaging decision-makers in governments, businesses and trade bodies. We begin by identifying decisions that people need to make now about investment choices and development options in semi-arid regions. Decision-makers and research teams jointly decide on research questions and study areas to ensure that research supply responds to demand. Once research outputs are produced, stakeholders – who have already been engaged in the process early on – are more prepared to use the research, as it is relevant to them.

### Stakeholder engagement

Our stakeholders include private sector actors such as small and medium enterprises; the Regional Economic Communities; policy-makers at multiple levels, including those in finance, planning and environmental ministries; researchers; and non-governmental organisations.

Ensuring that our research has an impact and is used by stakeholders is embedded in the PRISE vision. Researchers across all PRISE countries and projects engage continuously with stakeholders through regular engagement workshops, meetings and communications. Through these stakeholder feedback is incorporated into research processes and results.

### How we assess 'Research into Use' – the Outcome Mapping system

The influence of policy-oriented research can be difficult to measure because of its high unpredictability, slow timelines, and incremental and seemingly 'small' steps. The [Outcome Mapping](#) (OM) process PRISE uses aims to highlight and assess changes among key stakeholders and their engagement with PRISE research, how PRISE contributed to these changes, and to inform and improve PRISE stakeholder engagement and 'Research into Use' (RiU) activities. The primary purpose for doing this type of monitoring is to learn what is working and what is not in terms of stakeholder engagement, and how PRISE can promote improved and consistent RiU.

Pathways to Resilience in Semi-Arid Economies (PRISE) is a five-year, multi-country research project that generates new knowledge about how economic development in semi-arid regions can be made more equitable and resilient to climate change. PRISE aims to strengthen the commitment of decision-makers in local and national governments, businesses and trade bodies to rapid, inclusive and resilient development in these regions. It does so by deepening their understanding of the threats and opportunities that semi-arid economies face in relation to climate change.

Where we work: Senegal, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Member organisations: Overseas Development Institute, UK (lead organisation); Grantham Research Institute for Climate Change and the Environment, UK; Innovation Environnement Développement en Afrique, Senegal; Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan.

Country Research Partners: Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia, Tajikistan; University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; Kenya Markets Trust, Kenya; Mountain Societies Research Institute, Kyrgyzstan.

PRISE research projects:

Research area 1: Migration futures in Asia and Africa: climate change and climate-resilient economic development.

Research area 2: Migration, remittances, adaptation and resilience in arid and semi-arid regions of Senegal and Tajikistan.

Research area 3: Harnessing opportunities for climate-resilient economic development in semi-arid lands: adaptation options in key sectors.

Research area 4: Enabling environment for private sector/ multi-stakeholder action to strengthen resilience to climate change.

Research area 5: Property rights, investments and economic development in the context of climate change in semi-arid lands.

Research area 6, Part 1: Cross-boundary multi-scale governance of semi-arid lands: Implications for climate resilience and economic development.

Research area 6, Part 2: Resilience to climate-related shocks and stressors in Kyrgyzstan: developing resilience indicators to predict well-being.

Research area 7: Water governance in semi-arid lands: political and economic insights for the management of variability and extremes in a changing climate.

OM is an actor-oriented approach for planning, monitoring and evaluating development programming that is focused on social transformation. It places actors – and their actions and interactions – at the heart of the project.

### The OM process

The change that PRISE seeks to assess through the OM system is manifested by a set of indicators – called progress markers – at three levels:

- Expect to see: these are initial ‘easier’, immediate changes (e.g. stakeholders responding to invitations to attend PRISE meetings).
- Like to see: these are more active changes by key stakeholders (e.g. policy-makers cooperating with PRISE requests for information about their strategies and plans).
- Love to see: these are deeper, more transformational changes by key stakeholders, (e.g. the Regional Economic Communities specifically seeking out PRISE expertise when drafting strategies).

Using OM and progress markers, PRISE developed a set of tools and processes to design and gather information on these outcomes, or behaviour changes, by key stakeholders. Researchers record progress marker observations into the online system, which is regularly analysed and interpreted by internal project monitoring and evaluation focal points. This knowledge feeds into a report that explains the change, PRISE’s contribution to the change, and key lessons PRISE must consider to inform concrete actions in terms of stakeholder engagement approaches.

### Why this matters

The OM system helps PRISE to:

- identify key stakeholders it should be working with so that research can be targeted and used;
- learn and understand why and how it influences change in its stakeholders;
- analyse change trends within and across projects and countries; and
- understand how it can influence policy uptake to build climate resilience into economic development policy in semi-arid regions

### Impact

“The extent to which micro-level realities have been focused under PRISE is commendable. This on-ground evidence can help promote evidence-based policy making and is of immense importance for devising targeted interventions for climate risk management and adaptation, especially for vulnerable and poor communities.”

Hassan Iqbal, Federal Secretary for the Textile Industry, Pakistan, and PRISE key stakeholder.

Changes in stakeholder behaviour and thinking observed through face-to-face meetings, telephone calls, emails, at workshops, conferences, and field visits are recorded as progress markers in an online OM system. This provides data on the level and nature of the observed change, and allows PRISE to capture quantitative and qualitative information about stakeholder changes, including longer narratives in journal entries.

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Collaborative Adaptation Research  
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