

CAN SCENARIO PLANNING CATALYSE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE? EVALUATING A CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY CASE STUDY IN MALI

Participatory scenario planning could be vital for triggering collective transformative change. However, fully realising transformation requires sustained engagement and shared learning opportunities.

WHAT WAS DONE, AND WHAT WAS NOVEL?

The potential of participatory scenario processes to catalyse individual and collective transformation and policy change is emphasised in several theoretical reflections. Participatory scenario processes are believed to enhance systemic understanding, learning, networking, and subsequent changes to practice. However, limited empirical evidence is available to prove these assumptions. Our study evaluated whether these outcomes resulted from a scenario planning exercise we conducted and the extent to which these outcomes can contribute to transformational processes.

While there has been considerable theoretical reflection on the potential outcomes of participatory scenario processes for social change, these have not been fully evaluated, and limited attention has been devoted to testing these assumptions empirically. We aimed to address this gap by testing for empirical evidence of social change resulting from a scenario planning exercise.

KEY FINDINGS

Participatory scenario planning offers various benefits to those who participate, although the extent of these benefits still needs to be examined. We found evidence of change emerging amongst individual participants in a scenario planning exercise in Mali, but there was limited evidence of collective transformation.

We also found that by engaging a broad and diverse range of stakeholders in follow-up activities, scenario exercise can create the space for extensive learning and social networks, which are critical for enhancing adaptive capacity.



KEY IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Scenario processes can stimulate transformative change, but for such transformation to happen, supportive scenario planning exercises should be incorporated as one component of a broader and deliberate stakeholder engagement, learning, and evaluation process.

