



INTRODUCTION

- Adapting to climate change is a complex issue that requires close collaboration between a wide range of stakeholders across governance scales.
- Development and implementation of adaptation strategies are usually underpinned in part by relative influence of actors within the adaptation regime. Without giving attention to these unequal power structures and influence between actors, adaptation interventions can create unequal outcomes on the ground.
- This research explores how relative influence of different actors fuels competing interest or decisions made on adaptation by: i) identifying stakeholders relevant for climate change adaptation practices in Namibia, ii) mapping out their relative influence within the network, and iii) assessing the context in which their relative influence of different actor across scales of governance may affect adaptation process.
- A Multilevel Stakeholder Influence Mapping (MSIM) developed by CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) was applied in the Omusati Region, North Central Namibia uncover the underlying power structures in the adaptation regime and provide insights on the relative influence that different stakeholder groups have in relation to adaptation processes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data:

This study draws on individual mapping exercise (adopted from Multi-Stakeholder Influence Mapping (MSIM))* done by the team of ASSAR researchers between 2016 and 2017 in the Omusati Region, Namibia.

The mapping exercise was used to help people visualize and understand the perceived level of influence of actors regarding a particular issue (adaptation practices) across scales of governance.

Respondents:

The mapping exercise was conducted with 10 stakeholders - 5 from the sub-national level (i.e. Omusati Region) and 5 from the local level (i.e. Onesi Constituency) including government officials, international organizations and local community.

Analysis:

The 10 individual MSIM maps produced was digitized to facilitate the production of an influence score for the 70 stakeholders that were identified relevant for climate change adaptation in Namibia.

The influence score was calculated using two principle variables i) frequency or the number of respondents that found that actor 'highly relevant' to the issue on the discussion, and ii) the adjusted ranking or average ranking level at which the actor was placed on the map by respondents (i.e. the higher the ranking level, the higher the perceived influence) (See Figure 2).

Concept driven qualitative analysis using the lens of multi-actor and multiscale governance of adaptation was also adopted.

OMUSATI REGION, NORTH CENTRAL NAMIBIA

- This study was conducted in the Omusati Region, a semi-arid region in North Central Namibia, experiencing increasing pressure from both climatic and non-climatic stressors (i.e. persistent droughts, floods, unpredictable rainfall and periods of extreme temperature).
- Dependency on rain-fed agriculture with limited alternative livelihoods make communities in this area highly sensitive to climate impacts.
- Communities are further vulnerable due to a number of power and influence dynamics that affects their capacity to cope with multiple impacts of climate change.

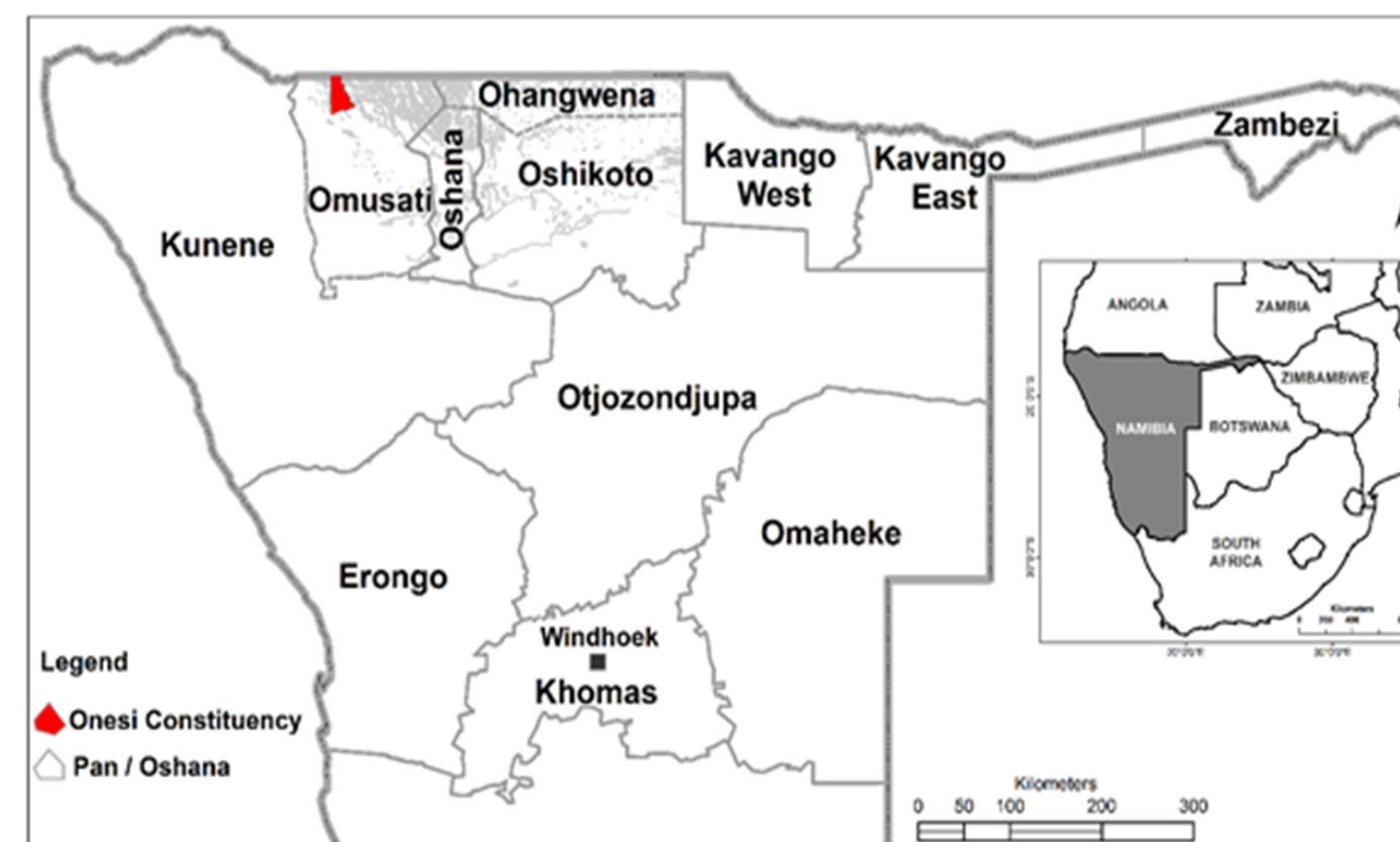


Figure 1: Research area in North Central Namibia



RESULTS

i) Actors from higher levels of government are perceived to be most influential than those at the local level

- The measure of Influence Score suggest that the level of influence in the adaptation process varies significantly among actors across scales of governance (see Figure 2). However, stakeholders from the national level are perceived to be more influential than those at the local level (e.g. Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF), Omusati Regional Council (ORC) and National Planning Commission (NPC) compared to local community and Traditional Authorities (TA)).
- The high levels of influence for OPM, ORC and MAWF reflects the nature of adaptation activities that are implemented in the region: reactive and crisis management mode (e.g. drought relief) where OPM mandates fall.
- MAWF was ranked highly influential next to OPM because most activities implemented at the local level are agriculture-based such as provision of drought tolerant seeds, that directly explains the nature of livelihoods and production systems in the area that is tightly linked to agriculture.

ii) Actors at the lower levels of government tend to be less influential

- Stakeholders at the local level are perceived to be less influential in adaptation practices (e.g. marginalised groups, local community, Agro-Marketing & Trading Agency (AMTA), and Water Point Committee (WPC)).
- "If I have to change the structure I would move local community further up because they have the right to discuss what affects them"* A traditional leader from Onesi
- "Local communities are less influential because they are not making decisions, but they were supposed to be at the top because what the officers do should reflect needs and interest of the local community"* Officer from the constituency office
- The fact that most influence is concentrated at the national level suggest some form of exclusion especially for local-level actors in decision making process and dominance of centralized decision making process.
- Interestingly, perceived levels of influence of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) a sole state agency and custodian of environmental and climate change-related activities in Namibia is low compared to others (See Figure 2). This was linked with a more centralised governance system in the ministry which has limited number of officers at the regional and local levels.
- "MET are centralised, there's no structures at the regional level. Their activities are mostly seen on conservancy/wildlife management"* Officer from MAWF regional level
- "The ministry is dormant [at local level], they are mainly responsible for Environmental Impact Assessment"* DRM Officer at the regional level

iii) Mismatch between perceived influence and ability of actors to implement adaptation responses

- This study's findings indicate significant variability with regard to perceived influence and ability to implement adaptation responses among actors across levels of government.
- Considerable concentration of influence to national level-actors i.e. OPM, NPC, MET, ORC, MAWF, Constituency Development Committee (CDC), Meteorological Office (Met Office), NPC with limited influence for most local-level actors indicate fragmentation between levels of government which stakeholders to implement effective adaptation.
- This is more critical to stakeholders such as local leaders, extension services and Red Cross Society of Namibia which could play a vital role at the local level and are more able to make things happen despite of limited resources.
- The mismatch between perceived influence and ability to implement adaptation responses is more linked with the i) explicitly mandate in coordination of activities related to climate change e.g. drought relief, ii) explicitly power in decision making iii) access to and control of emergency response funds, iv) technical know-how v) direct contact with the actors at the central government or number of followers one have (for example the Governor of Omusati Region).

v) Actors who occupy strategic network positions (broker role) are critical for adaptation

- The findings on bridging actors revealed interesting role played by TA and CDC along with OPM, MAWF, and ORC among others. These actors because of their perceived influence, position in the society, institutional structures or coordination role they have can potentially translate actions across actors and levels governance.
- OPM in particular has established a strong governance structures of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) from the national to the village level. Similarly MAWF has an extensive networks of agriculture extension services up to the local level. CDC on the other hand serve the large community and it's where decision making processes starts while ORC is a coordinating body at the regional level and regional decision making body.
- "TA is more powerful...can talk directly to the President and advice the President on different issues...what gives them power is the line of communication. Most important they have direct link with people in power but also they are in close contact with the people at the local level."* Member of CDC

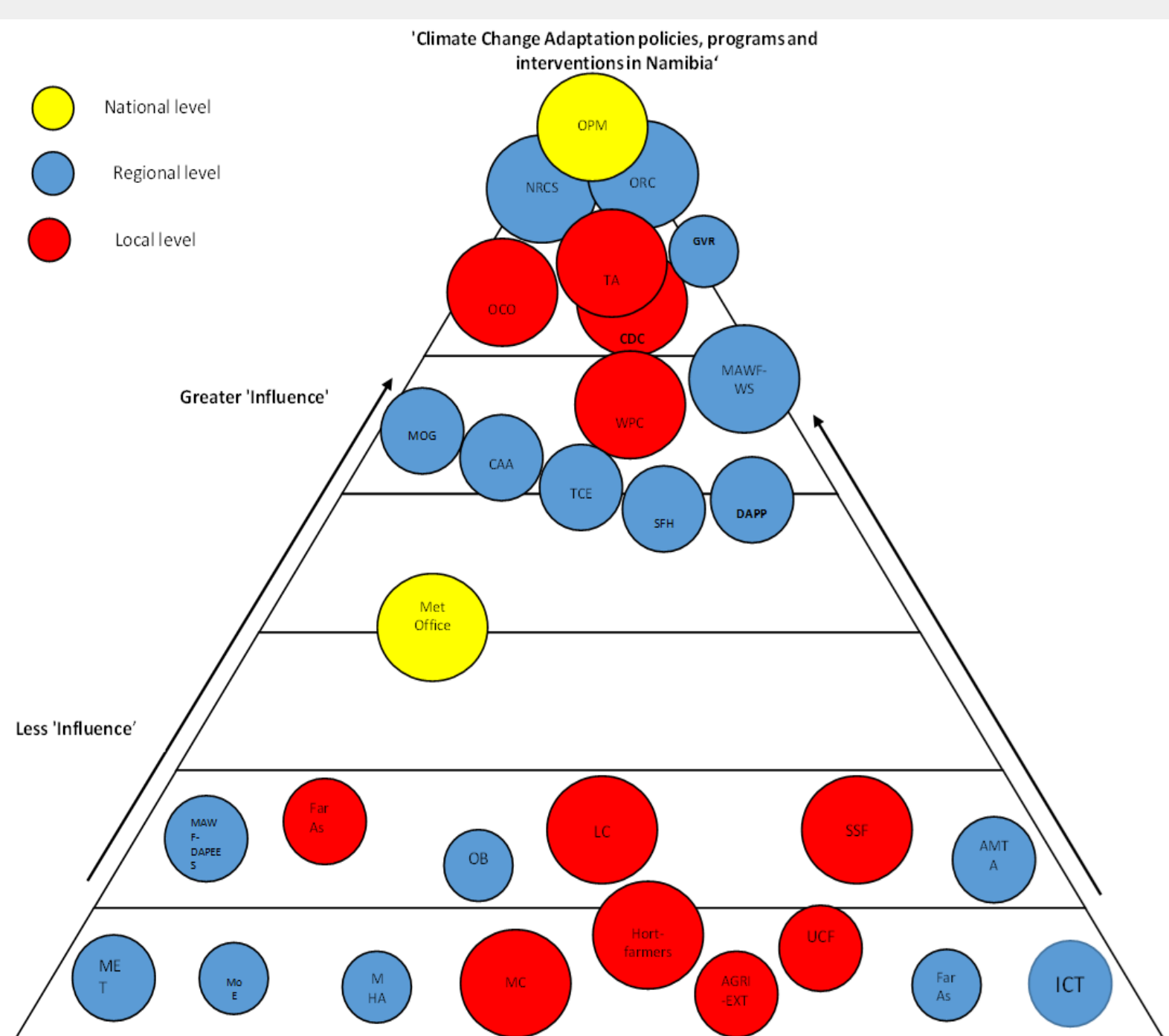


Figure 2: Stakeholder Pyramid showing the score of influence among actors in CCA regime in Namibia

Power and influence is defined as ability to make things happen which can be linked to actors' access to finance, its legitimacy, coordination role to activities related to climate change, opportunities to access emergency response funds and technical knowhow etc.

iv) Mismatch between perceived influence of actors and understanding of community needs

- The findings revealed mismatch between perceived influence of actors and understanding of community needs.
- Existing power relations and internal dynamics can inhibit local actors such as Councilors, TA and Extension Officers who are more aware of community needs to make things happens at the local level.
- These stakeholders were rarely identified as more influential (and hence unable to make things happen). In particular, due to limited influence many activities taking place at the local level may not necessarily address the needs of the people.
- In most cases this may create opportunities for power struggles between actors within the adaptation space.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

- A clear understanding of perceived influence is needed to strengthen adaptation process and address some of the cross-scalar issues and challenges.
- By making power relations and influence more visible, it will be easier for actors to improve social responsibility and influence desirable change at the local level.
- Namibia adaptation regime would benefit from increased participation of local actors including traditional authorities, local government and local community.

CONCLUSION

- There is evidence of lack of decentralization of power and limited influence from the state to regional and local government.
- Over-concentration of power and influence in the hands of a few high-level actors means that most local-level actors have no decision-making power.
- Centralized governance structures and uneven influence distribution between the state, regional and local actors hampers adaptation in Omusati Region.
- Power struggle and unequal influence between levels of government should be embedded in adaptation planning process.
- Active engagement and equal distribution of power between the national, regional and local actors is needed to devise appropriate local strategies.
- Adaptation process is likely to be more successfully when they build on existing (multi-actor) and cross-scalar governance mechanisms/institutions that have power and influence to bridge action across scales of governance (ref. DRM institutional arrangements, Traditional Authorities and Extension services).

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