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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.

What is VRA?

Vulnerability Risk Assessment (VRA) is a vulnerability assessment methodology that aims to develop a common understanding among a wide range of stakeholders about the main hazards and issues affecting people in a landscape. VRA works across scales: community, local, district and national.

Together, these stakeholders build an understanding of how different groups of people are vulnerable to different types of risks. They then agree on actions that can be taken to enhance social and economic wellbeing, and promote resilient development.

Introduction

On the 24th of July 2018, researchers from the University of Botswana (UB), together with the District Officer of Development in Mahalapye sub-district, held a half-day stakeholder mapping workshop in Mahalapye.

The objectives of the day were to:

- Understand stakeholders and interactions;
- Conduct stakeholder mapping;
- Meet with stakeholders to explain Vulnerability Risk Assessment (VRA) and invite them to participate;
- Meet with stakeholders to understand context;
- Decide on the stakeholders best suited for participation in a VRA workshop planned for the Mahalapye sub-district in the near future.

A total of 28 stakeholders from Mahalapye sub-district attended the workshop. This included stakeholders from council, social and community development and their poverty eradication beneficiaries, consultants, bank representatives, NGOs such as Central Association of the Blind and Disabled, and farmers – both independent farmers and those belonging to farmer associations.

Stakeholder mapping in three steps

The half-day stakeholder mapping workshop started with a brief introduction of the stakeholders in the room, by way of a fun handball game. This was followed by an overview of ASSAR's work in Botswana, presented by Chandapiwa Molefe, a researcher at the University of Botswana. When she presented a slide on future climate models, stakeholders questioned whether climate change really existed and affected Botswana, or whether it was just a case of repetitive drought events. This highlighted the need to share knowledge on climate change and how it is already impacting Botswana.

During her presentation, Molefe also mentioned the Transformative Scenario Planning (TSP) and VRA workshops that have been conducted in Bobirwa sub-district as part of ASSAR's Research-into-Use (RiU) activities in the region.

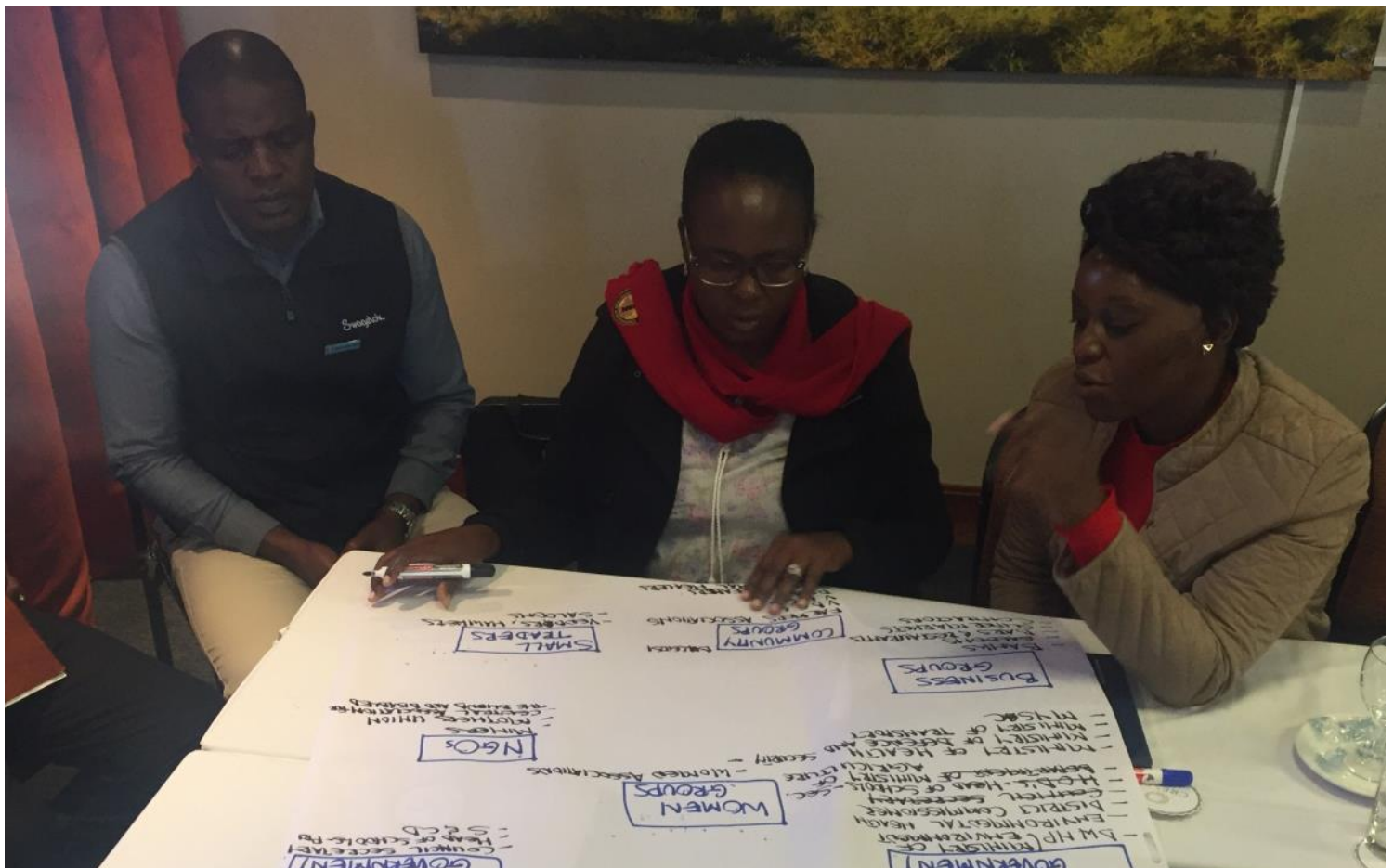
The stakeholder mapping exercise that followed helped to sensitise stakeholders to the need of a national VRA training and workshop, while the interactive discussions that arose from the exercise assisted the ASSAR team in identifying important stakeholders that should be invited, as well as possible hazards and issues that could affect vulnerable groups in Mahalapye sub-district.

To facilitate the process of stakeholder mapping, the Eva Schniffer Net-Map toolbox was implemented. There was no predetermined focus – participants simply listed stakeholders that represent the Mahalapye community and/or social groups broadly.

They did so in three different exercises.

Exercise 1: Identifying stakeholders

Stakeholders were divided into four groups that each used the Net-Map method to identify local stakeholders that make up the collective community in Mahalapye sub-district.



Exercise 2: Creating linkages

In the next exercise, group participants created linkages between the different sectors or groups they outlined. Sectors were then ranked on the basis of being most influential to least influential against a metric of mainly information dissemination and financial power.

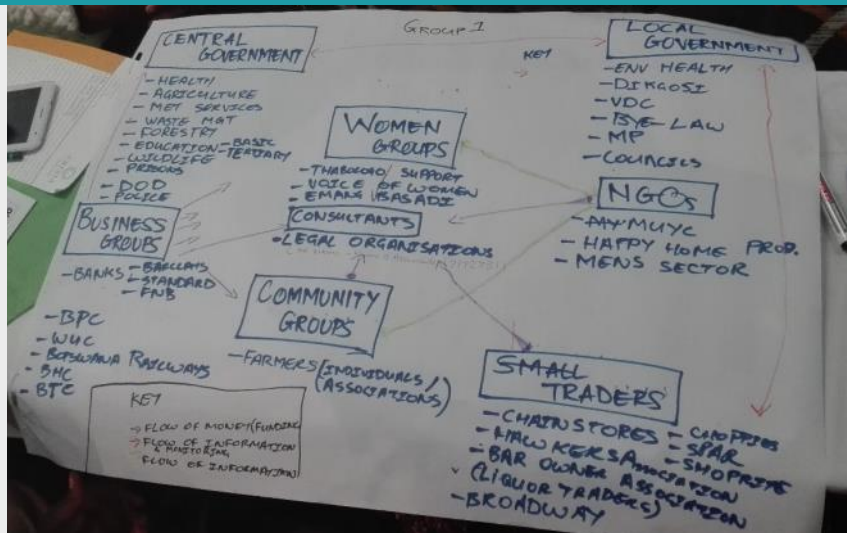
Group 1

Linkages were formed based on three factors, namely:

- the flow of information among different stakeholder groups
- the flow of funding (money) among different stakeholders, and
- the flow of information and monitoring between stakeholders

The central government feeds information to the local government which then

disseminates it to its subdivision departments that inform the local leaders/chiefs and village development community (VDC) members to mention a few. The local government in turn provides feedback to the central government in the form of reporting and monitoring reports. A two-way information system is important between local government and small traders when enquiring on applying for trading licences to partake in their businesses. The local government also provides information on new acts and policies directed at small traders from the central government. The business sector and parastatals also report to the central government on the activities ongoing in their sector. The purple line shows the majority of funds flowing from the business groups, NGOs, women groups, and small traders to the consultant groups such as legal organisations because they are mandatory in preparing their constitution contracts, policies, and advisories to farmers in the sub-district. With emphasis on banks such as Standard Chartered Bank in the business group, they are responsible for financing all the stakeholder groups found in Mahalapye. Community groups at grass root level inform NGOs and local government on possible impactful projects they can implement.

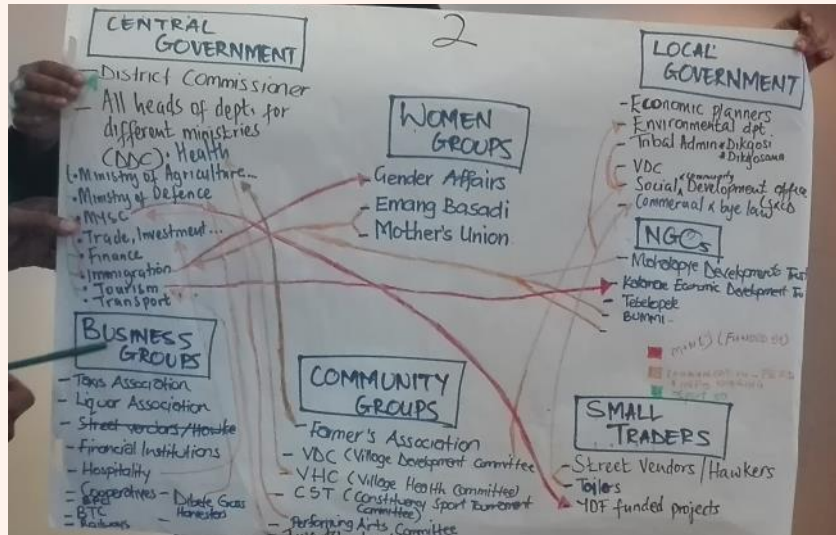


consultants for information which they disseminate to the local government and business sector. Women groups and NGOs ranked lowest, being least influential in disseminating information across other sectors.

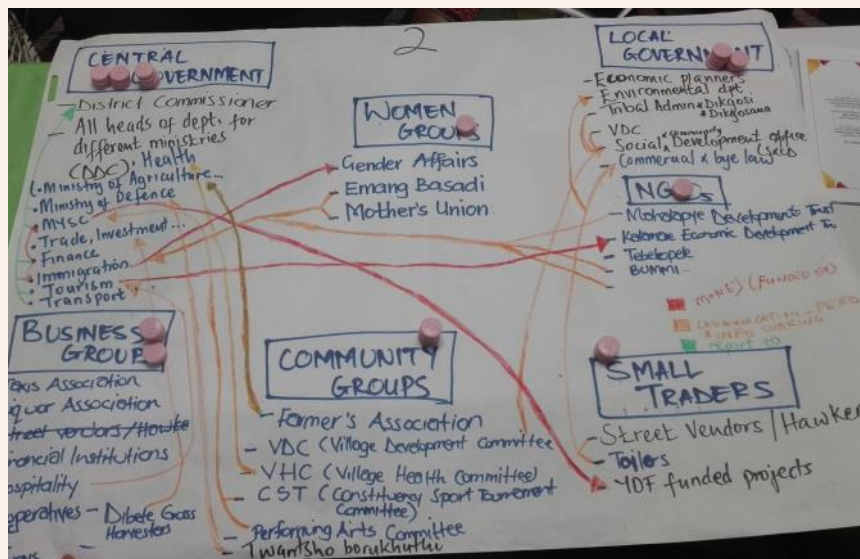
Group 2

Linkages were formed based on three factors, namely:

- financial power
- information sharing, and
- reporting lines



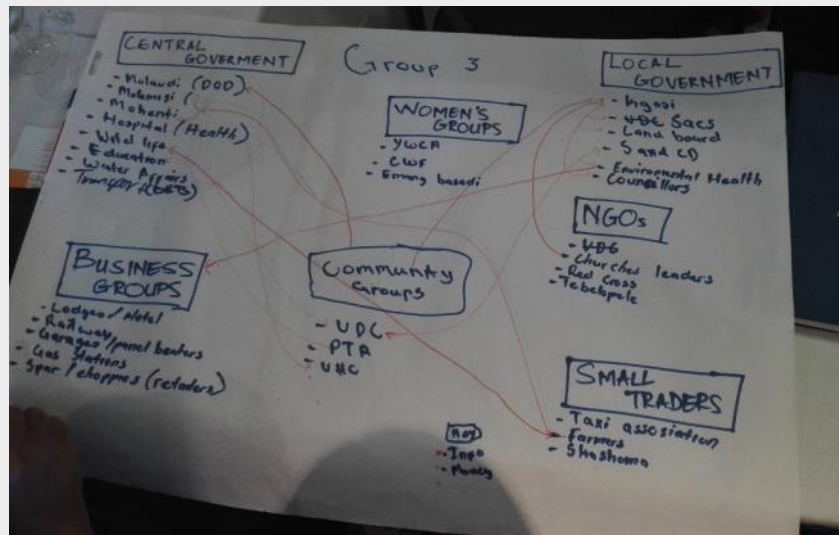
Group 2 ranked central government with 10 sweets, making them the most influential when it comes to financing. Decisions made at central government level can affect the implementation at local government level. The Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture finances many community groups and small traders, while the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs helps to finance gender groups via their Department of Gender Affairs. As a result, the central government has a lot of power as their decisions can affect the implementers. Community groups and small traders are mostly implementers while the resources remain in central government. The local government was ranked the second most influential stakeholder as they have power when it comes to approving licences for small traders and community groups – they decide who can operate. Business groups were ranked third after the local government since they have money and the country's economy is mostly dependant on them. Small traders and community groups may also request funding from the business groups. The women groups and NGOs have very little power or influence as they have to seek for funds from either central government, local government or business groups. However, during the discussion it was noted that the informal sectors (people who usually finance themselves) were not represented under the business groups.



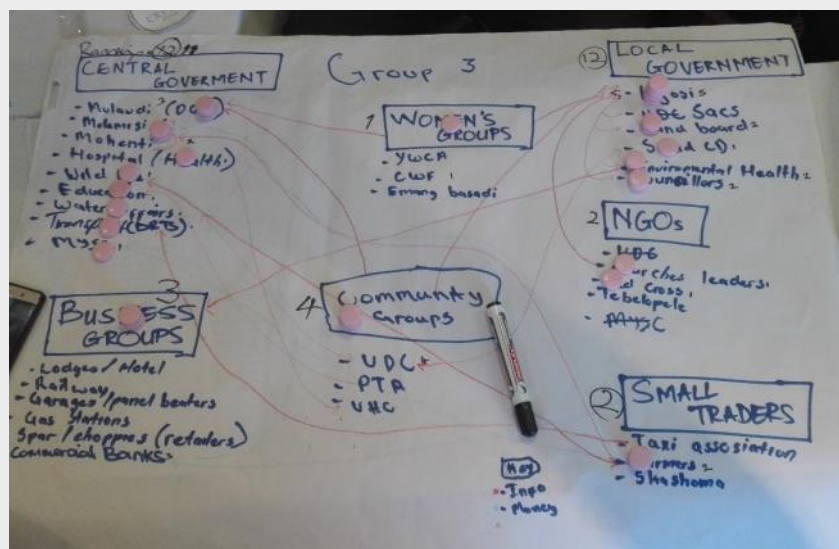
Group 3

Linkages were formed based on two factors, namely:

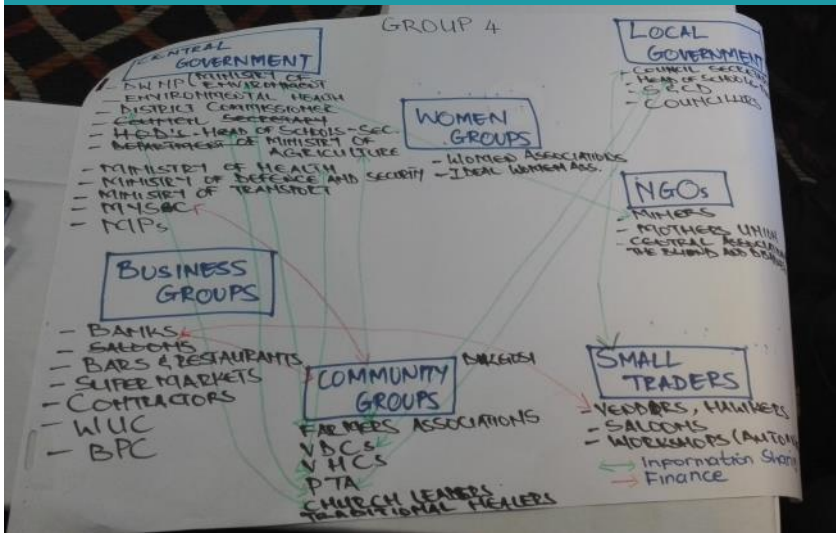
- the flow of information among different stakeholder groups, and
- the flow of funding (money) among different stakeholders



Group 3 identified a general flow and feedback of information across all stakeholder groups, including groups at grassroots level, such as the community and women groups. The grassroots groups are instrumental in informing NGOs, local government and central government on policy making through the adoption of a bottom-up approach. The Ministry of Agriculture under central government is shown to have a flow of funding to small trader farmers through government agriculture initiatives, such as ISPAAD, which offer agriculture incentives at a highly subsidised rate or for free. The local government seeks information from the business sector through consultations on certain topics such as environmental health, which the business group may have expertise on. The local government ranked as the most influential stakeholder highest in terms of information dissemination across all sectors, as they work closely with local communities at grassroots level and are more informed with what is happening on the ground. They also have an allocated budget to help establish community groups through government initiatives such as the poverty eradication scheme. The central government followed as second most influential with the District Commissioner being instrumental in instructing orders to subdivisions, some of which have funding options available to help stakeholders in the community and small trader groups.



Group 4



Linkages were formed based on two factors, namely:

- the dissemination of information, and
- the flow of funding (money) among different stakeholders

When ranking stakeholders, group 4 looked at who is most effective when it come to information dissemination. They identified the central government as the most effective as they have the means and resources. However, at the community level *Dikgosi* (chiefs) are deemed as most influential and effective.

The local government and community groups were ranked with the same amount of influence or power as information goes both ways between the two groups. Business groups, women groups and small traders were ranked the least as they have less power in the sharing of information. The influence they play in society is minimal in, for example, the issue of HIV/AIDS. However, the business groups have the potential to use their financial power while small traders can use their numbers.



Exercise 3: Hazards, issues and justification

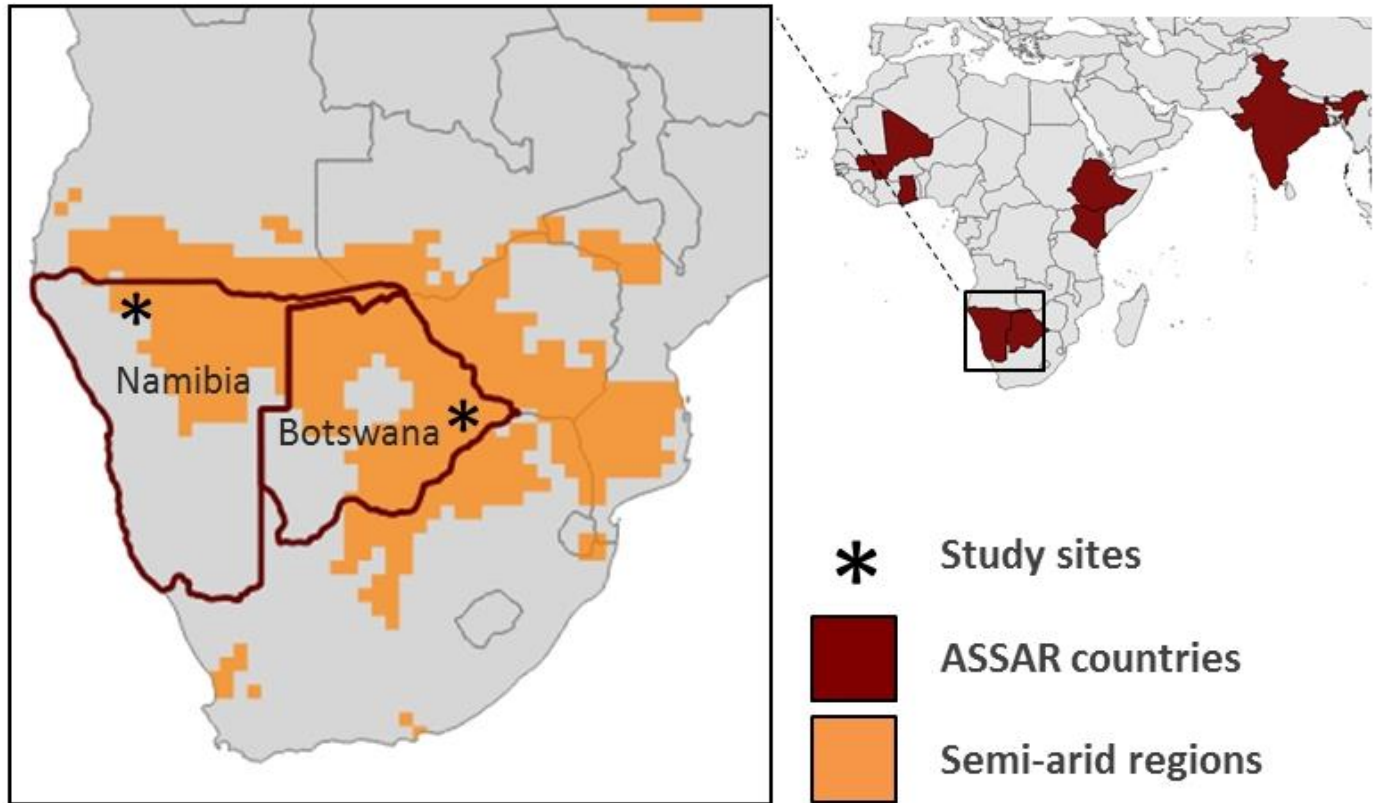
Hazards & Issues	Who? [2.1]	Justification why & how?
① Low rainfall	• Farmers • Individuals • flora & fauna	- low production - spread of diseases - malnutrition
② Theft	• the community & individual	- poverty: Loss of prod - Insecurities
③ Poor waste management	• environment • people, animals	- pollution - spread of disease
④ Alcohol & Drug ab	• youth • families	- affects education - family & marriage - unplanned progra

The four groups proceeded to identify the hazards and issues affecting the Mahalapye social groups. (See the tables on the adjacent page.)

However, due to the meeting running out of time, there was no opportunity to provide feedback to the group.

The meeting was adjourned by deciding that these hazards and issues will be presented during the VRA workshop in August and ranked thereafter.

Group 1			Group 2		
Hazards and issues	Who	Justification	Hazards and issues	Who	Justification
Low rainfall	Farmers Tourism	Low yields, reduced pastures for grazing, low soil moisture content, Low water table, poverty, drought, dry wetlands	Low rainfall	Farmers Individuals Flora & fauna	Low production. Spread of diseases (malnutrition, starvation, people drinking contaminated water as alternative)
Dumpsite	Community	Ground water contamination. The environment can breed mosquitoes and cause malaria, air pollution	Theft	Community and individuals	Poverty: loss of property, insecurities
Unemployment	Community	Theft, Poverty, HIV/ AIDS, low self-esteem & dignity, slow development	Alcohol & Drug abuse	Youth Families	Negatively affects education and health, family and marriage breakdown, unplanned pregnancies
Pollution (Smoke Emission oil& Gas)	Community	Cancer, tuberculosis, asthma	Unemployment	Youth	Social life
HIV/AIDS prevalence rate	Community	Increased deaths. Increase in infants born with HIV. Poor adherence, alcohol Poor adherence, alcohol	HIV/AIDS	Society (Youth, adults)	Negatively affects the economy, more money sent for treatment, Family and marriage breakdowns
Floods	Community	No proper drainage system. Closure of businesses	Poor road networks and maintenance (too many potholes)	Community and individuals	Business affected (transportation of goods) and accidents
Group 3			Group 4		
Hazards and issues	Who	Justification	Hazards and issues	Who	Justification
Drug and alcohol abuse	Youth	Unemployed youth have too much idle time. Hence engage in drug and alcohol abuse	Malaria	People and animals	Higher rains, infections, lack of knowledge about malaria, high cost of care and health, poor/low standard of living
Crime (Theft)	Society	In youth: Unemployment, greed, bank thefts, Cattle and stock theft.	Low/ too much rainfall	Crop producers, livestock keepers, people living on low lying areas	Flooding , disease outbreaks, drought, low crop yields
Floods	Residents	Poor drainage systems, residential areas allocated in flood plains (need for relocation)	HIV & AIDS	Everybody	Lack of knowledge, poor health facility, ignorance, poverty
Drought	Farmers	Low rainfall, hence low or no agricultural produce	Litter & Pollution	Environment (air, water, roads, plants)	Spread of disease, water contamination
Respiratory diseases (asthma etc.)	Community	Vehicle fumes/ emission			
Car Accidents	Community	High temperatures may cause tyre bursts, reckless driving			



ABOUT ASSAR

ASSAR uses insights from multiple-scale, interdisciplinary work to improve the understanding of the barriers, enablers and limits to effective, sustained and widespread climate change adaptation out to the 2030s. Working in seven countries in Africa and South Asia, ASSAR's regional teams research socio-ecological dynamics relating to livelihood transitions, and the access, use and management of land and water. One of four consortia under the Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIIA), ASSAR generates new knowledge of climate change hotspots to influence policy and practice and to change the way researchers and practitioners interact.

For more information, visit www.assar.uct.ac.za or email Chandapiwa Molefe: molefechandapiwa@gmail.com



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