

What is TSP?

Transformative Scenario Planning (TSP) is an approach that brings concerned stakeholders from different, often conflicting, perspectives together around pressing sets of problems to build stories that illustrate a range of potential futures that could come from taking different paths for dealing with those issues. By doing this, the involved stakeholders learn more about their present situation and about what dynamics in that situation are serving to help or hinder progress toward a more equitably beneficial future.¹

TSP approach in Namibia

On 30th and 31st May 2016 a TSP training workshop was held at Heja Game Lodge near Windhoek. Before the training was convened, the Reos Partners team in consultation with the ASSAR team selected the topic to use as an example in the training.

The topic selected was: The future of food security in Namibia. This topic was selected in light of the current drought being experienced in the country and how this could impact Namibia's food security.

The training was attended by representatives from the following institutions: Uukolonkadhi Traditional Authority; Onesi Constituency office; Omusati Regional Council; Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Sustainable Management of Namibia's Forested Lands Project (NAFOLA); Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Scaling Up Community Resilience to Climate Variability and Climate Change in Northern Namibia (SCORE), Development Bank of Namibia, Namibia Nature Foundation, University of Namibia and University of Cape Town.

Why TSP approach

Sometimes social systems get stuck. There is not enough agreement among leading actors about what is happening or what could or should happen, for the system to be able to move forward. Confusion and conflict impede progress and create the risk of regress.¹

In such contexts, TSP can be useful. This process enables politicians, civil servants, activists, businesspeople, trade unionists, academics, and leaders of other stakeholder groups to work together to construct a shared understanding of what is happening and what could happen in their system, and then to act on the basis of this understanding.

The focus of TSP is the development, dissemination and use of a set of two, three or four scenarios (structured narratives or stories) about what is possible. These scenarios provide a shared framework and language for strategic conversations within and across stakeholder groups about the situation they are part of and what actions they can, must, and will take to address it. TSP thereby offers a way for social systems to get unstuck and to move forward.¹

How Transformative Planning Works

In a transformative scenario planning process, actors transform their problematic situation through transforming themselves. The aim is to assist participants to see the system, and their roles in it, from different angles. The process increases trust between participants and allows more empathy to work more efficiently in a team.¹

Transforming Understanding

The scenario team transform their understandings by seeing the current system, and their role in the current system, with fresh eyes and a shared perspective.²

Transforming Language

Through the scenario process, the scenario team develops a common, shared language. The stories each convey key messages which are expressed by certain words and phrases that the scenario team need to create.²

Transforming Actions

Based on the transformation of understandings, language, relationships and intentions, scenario team members transform their actions and thereby, transform their situation.²

Transforming Relationships

The scenario team transform their relationships with one another by working together as a cross-system team. Team work builds trust, empathy and an ability to work together.²

Transforming Intention

By transforming their understanding and relationships, the scenario team see what they as individuals and potentially as a team can and must be done to tackle the problematic circumstances of the present.²

Steps taken during a TSP process

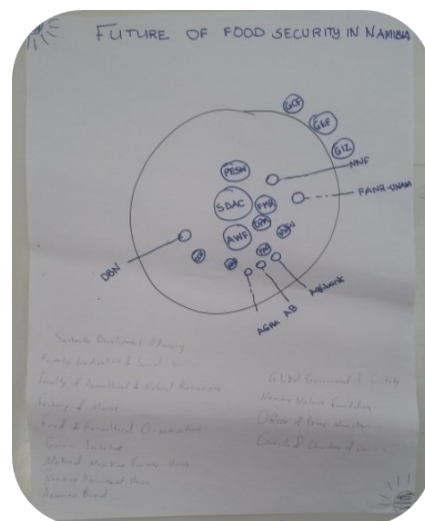
Step 1: Convene a team from across the whole system

Purpose of the step

"The first step in a transformative scenario planning project is to enrol a team of people from across a whole system who want to, and together are able to, influence the future of that system. This system can be a community, a sector, or a country: any social-political-economic whole that is too complex to be grasped or shifted by any one of its parts."²

Outcome of this step

At the training the participants identified the following stakeholders as key to the topic of food security: civil society organisations, the various government ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Resettlement, and the Office of the Prime Minister, the National Planning Commission, local authorities, regional councils, farmers union, green schemes, media and the various educational institutions amongst others.



When convening a TSP process the following should be taken into consideration:

- ◆ The institution that requests for the TSP process should be neutral to the topic being discussed.
- ◆ How the convening question is framed is very important and the question should contribute to creating linkages with issues that (i) are high up on the national agenda, (ii) need a range of views and inputs in order to be resolved, and (iii) are currently unresolved.
- ◆ It is also important to make sure that everyone involved in the process has a voice.
- ◆ It should not only be about getting the right organisation involved but also making sure that the right persons from those organisations come.
- ◆ The institution that requests for the TSP process should also have the space and legitimacy to convene the TSP process.

¹ Colleen Magner, Reos Partners

² Kahane, A. 2012. Transformative Scenario Planning: Working Together to Change the Future. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

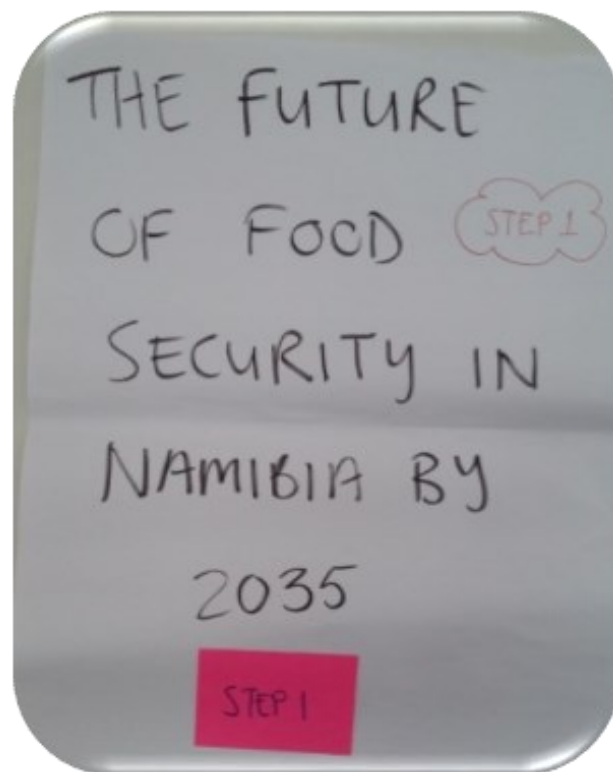
STEP 2. Observe what is happening

Purpose of the step

"The second step of a transformative scenario planning project is for the scenario team to build up a rough shared understanding of what is happening in the system of which they are part and which they want to influence. They come to this work with differing positions in and perspectives on the system, and so this process requires them to go beyond their established views and to see with fresh eyes. It requires them to see not just their part of the system but more of the whole system. It requires them to open up and inquire and learn."²

Outcome of this step

At the training the participants were told about the four ways of listening and talking - downloading, debating, dialoguing and presencing. Of these, dialoguing and presencing are incorporated into the TSP process. For the next exercise the participants paired up with someone as different as possible to themselves. In a dialogue exercise they had to interview each other about what they were most uncertain about concerning the future of food security in Namibia. Some of these uncertainties included food affordability, rising food costs, water security, water quality and availability, high imports and low exports, droughts and floods, high costs of water as well as the economic losses experienced by the sector in relation to the impacts of climate change.



STEP 3. Construct stories about what could happen

Purpose of this step

"The third step in the transformative scenario planning project is for the team to construct a useful set of scenarios about what could happen in and around their system. To be useful, the scenarios must be relevant, challenging, plausible, and clear. Useful scenarios open up and enable movement in the thinking and acting of actors across the system."²

Outcome of this step

At the training a deductive method was used for constructing stories. The first step towards story construction was to brainstorm social, technological, economic, environmental, cultural and political driving forces in the system

Next the most impactful and unpredictable driving forces were selected. From the proposed driving forces each person had one vote for the highest impact and most unpredictable driving force. The driving forces should also be potentially influenced by scenario team members. Two independent driving forces were then chosen to base the stories on. It is important to note that the 2 driving forces enable stories that are useful i.e. relevant, challenging, plausible and clear. The two drivers that were decided on at the training were the availability of water and the level of food imports. The four stories therefore are based on high and low water availability and levels of food imports. The first step used to tell the stories was for four groups to construct lego models of the situation for food security in Namibia in 2035 for the four scenarios. Then the stories were told starting from the present to 2035 using newspaper headlines considering social, technological, economic, environmental and political (STEEP) aspects of the situation. In this way the events that happened at different times to get to the end state in 2035 were clearly represented. In both the lego and newspaper headline exercises the three other groups were given a chance to provide feedback to the other teams.



² Kahane, A. 2012. Transformative Scenario Planning: Working Together to Change the Future. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Scenario 1

Low water availability and high levels of food imports in 2035



In this story there is a sharp rise in food prices in 2016 affecting mostly the poor and marginalised. At the same time there are water crisis talks hosted in Windhoek and the President calls on Namibians to use water more efficiently.

By 2020 there are large capital investments in alternative water infrastructure and funds are secured from the Green Climate Fund to invest in water technology. By 2025 the cost of water has risen, farmers bear the brunt of the drought and the country is forced to increase food imports.

In 2030 Namibia explores alternative sources of food imports and in 2035 the president helps the poor access food. In addition water technology provides a source of alternative water for the country.

This is a story where there is enough food available because of secure food imports, food being made accessible to the poor and significant investment in technology in a water stressed environment.



Scenario 2

High water availability and high levels of food imports in 2035



In this story there are water shortages in 2016 resulting in industries that are in dire straits, job losses, high unemployment, low purchasing power and limited local crop production. As a response there is a strong initiative towards the rehabilitation of dams and reservoirs as well as the implementation of the conservation agriculture programme and integrated water resource management policy.

In 2020 SADC food banks are established and are functional. In 2025 foreign investment is secured for the construction of water desalination plants, the Okavango river is diverted and water efficiency is a priority consideration for development planning.

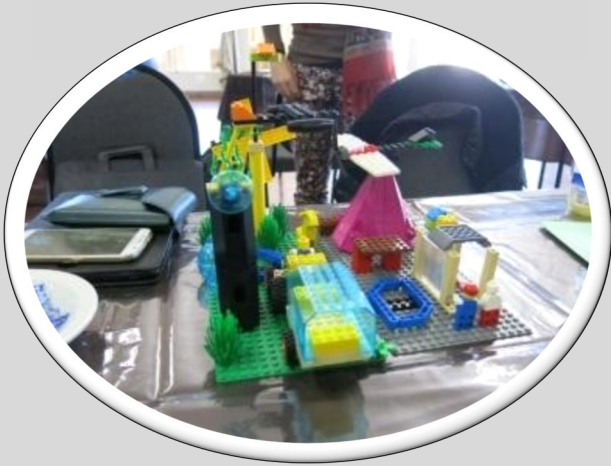
Then between 2030 and 2035 the Government of the Republic of Namibia secures water availability from Ohangwena aquifers in a sustainable manner and Namibia becomes food self-sufficient which results in South African farmers suffering economic losses.

In this story the country has abundant water available and farming successfully provides for the nation through the use of improved farming methods. Even though food imports are an option the team developed a story without the need for food imports.



Scenario 3

High water availability and low levels of food imports in 2035



In this story the Capital projects are put on hold in 2016. Funds are then redirected to innovative technologies. In 2020 the Ministry of Agriculture buys the Areva desalination plant and water prices increase which lead to revolts over the high costs.

In 2025 the government implements solidarity tax and the dividends from industry are increased. In 2030 there is investment in renewable energy and after this there are negotiations for shared water resources. The Eastern water carrier is then expanded and by 2035 crop production using irrigation from Neckartal, Naute and Hardap dams.

This is a story where there is sufficient water available due to use of existing water sources and technology. However, food imports are not secure so crop production in the country needs to be increased.



Scenario 4

Low water availability and low levels of food imports in 2035

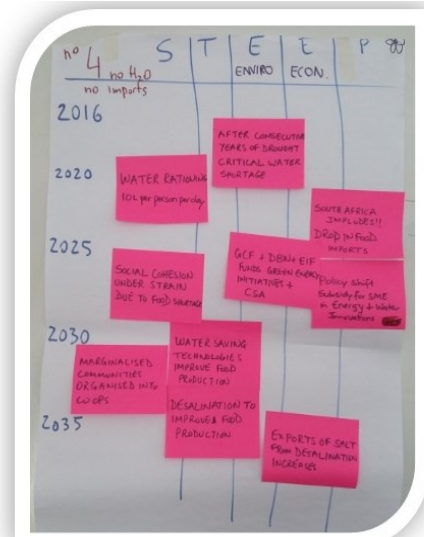


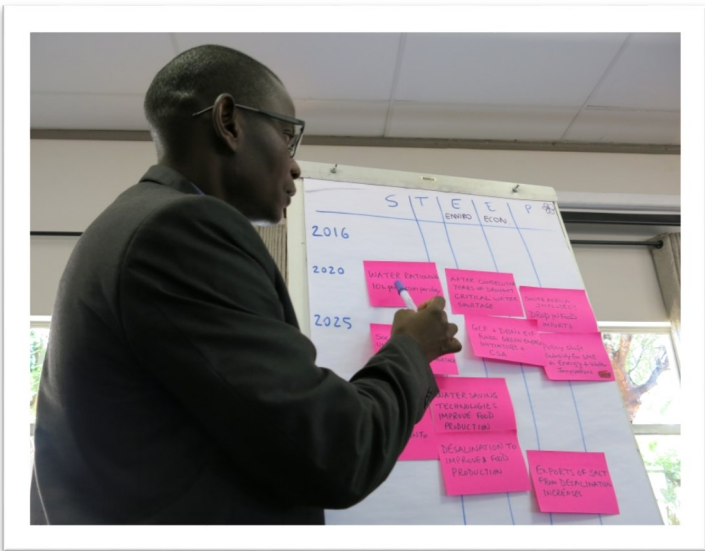
In this story water shortages are being experienced in 2016 due to consecutive years of drought. By 2020 there is water rationing restricting residents to 10 liters per day. Then the political and drought situation in South Africa intensifies and food imports to Namibia are decreased.

By 2025 there are food shortages and an increase in social cohesion under the strain. At the same time the Green Climate Fund, Development Bank of Namibia and Environmental Investment Fund finance green energy initiatives and climate smart agriculture. There is also a national policy shift and subsidies are provided to small and medium enterprises for energy and water innovations.

In 2030 marginalised communities are organised into cooperatives and water saving technologies improve food production. By 2035 there is desalination to improve food production and increased exports of salt from the desalination plants.

In this scenario there is limited water available and investment in technology is needed to provide sufficient water for domestic use and increased food production.





STEP 4. Discover what can and must be done

Purpose of the step

"The fourth step of a transformative scenario planning project is for the team to see what their scenarios tell them about what they can and must do. These conclusions may be about actions that they need to take to adapt to things they cannot influence, or about actions to influence things they can. These conclusions may be about actions that they need to take jointly or separately. In this step, the team crystallizes their intentions."²

Outcome of this step

At the training it was explained that step four involves going through the options in the scenarios and looking at them from adaptive and transformative stances. The adaptive stance includes monitoring for early warnings, thinking about what could be done to survive and thrive in particular circumstances, finding ways to respond quickly and thinking about the roles different institutions would play. The transformative stance considers what impact we want to have, our role in what is happening and what could happen and the actions that could be taken to influence the system.

STEP 5. Act to transform the system

Purpose of the step

"In the fifth and final step of a transformative scenario planning project, the members of the team act, with one another and with others from across the system, to transform the problematic situation. These actions can take any number of forms: campaigns, meetings, movements, publications, projects, initiatives, institutions, or legislation; private or public; short-term or long-term. The activities of this step, more than those of the previous steps, will therefore generally not be able to be foreseen or planned in advance. These activities will furthermore not necessarily be organized by or seen as part of the scenario project as such."²

Outcome of the step

At the training some examples were given of what has come out of TSP scenarios elsewhere in the world e.g. the Mont Fleur Scenarios in South Africa in 1992 that had a role in shaping the future of the country through different political entities working together to explore the different paths the country could take in the future.

Way forward for TSP in Namibia

After the TSP process was explained and experienced in brief at the training using the example of food security the potential for TSP in Namibia was discussed. The future of water security and the future of urban housing were highlighted as being two of the most important issues in the country.

It was clear from the exercises and discussions during the training on TSP that the use of scenario building brought up lots of ideas of interventions that could be implemented to improve the situation of food security in Namibia. The process of scenario building made participants think out of the box and consider possibilities that they wouldn't usually think of. It was also a process of learning from each other and getting a better understanding of the issue under discussion. One of the participants commented "there is power in collective planning".

TSP provides an opportunity to see how we can do things better. During the training participants thought about enhancing ongoing processes, jumpstarting initiatives that worked in the past that are no longer active and initiating new processes to make things work better.

ASSAR is planning on running a two workshop condensed TSP process in Omusati region in 2017 with key stakeholders in the region. The process will most likely be convened around the issue of access to water and is supported by the governor's office. Ideally relevant, influential and knowledgeable people from national and regional government as well as local authorities, NGOs and communities will attend the two workshops.

As part of the ASSAR research project we want to increase the likelihood of ideas coming out of the TSP process becoming actions. To do this we plan to co-produce a funding proposal to submit to funders to enable the implementation of activities on the ground. Through the TSP process clarity on the most relevant interventions will be provided and appropriate content will become available to enrich proposal.

² Kahane, A. 2012. Transformative Scenario Planning: Working Together to Change the Future. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

TSP training participants at Heja Lodge in Windhoek



Back row from left to right: John Mfune, Chandapiwa Molefe, Uzamo Kaura, Martha Naanda, Sion Shifa, Titus Kanyeke, Petrus Uushona, Cecil Togarepi, Phillipus Kashima, Salma Hegga, Louise Gammage and Andrew Malherbe **Middle row:** Margaret Angula and Irene Kunamwene **Front row:** Dian Spear, Viviane Kinyaga, Malakia Shoombe, Admire Nyamwanza, Modathir Zaroug, Gina Ziervogel, Bernadette Shalumbu and Colleen Magner

FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.assar.uct.ac.za

The **Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions (ASSAR)** project investigates the root causes of vulnerability and researches solutions to proactively spur widespread, effective and sustained adaptation that can positively affect socio-economic development. Working with a diverse set of stakeholders across multiple governance scales in 7 countries in Africa and Asia, ASSAR is examining vulnerability through an interdisciplinary and gender-sensitive lens, focusing on both climate- and non-climatic stressors.

By strengthening our understanding of the processes and factors that impede adaptation and maintain vulnerability, ASSAR aims to transform climate adaptation policy and practice in ways that promote the long-term well-being and resilience of the people, local organisations and governments of semi-arid regions.



PART OF:



This work was carried out under the Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAA), with financial support from the UK Government's Department for International Development (DfID) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. The views expressed in this work are those of the creators and do not necessarily represent those of DfID and IDRC or its Board of Governors.

Photos: Lucia Scodanibbio

