



PRISE

Pathways to resilience
in semi-arid economies

PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE IN SEMI-ARID ECONOMIES

Semi-arid areas are often economically marginalised and therefore lag behind other areas in terms of economic development, making them particularly vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change. Pathways to Resilience in Semi-arid Economies (PRISE) is a 5-year research programme focused on minimising the risks and maximising the opportunities that climate change presents for the economic development of semi-arid lands. Working in six countries—Burkina Faso, Senegal, Kenya, Tanzania, Pakistan and Tajikistan—PRISE research seeks to inform the investment and policy decisions of governments, businesses and trade bodies to help create climate-resilient, equitable, economic development in semi-arid regions. To achieve this, PRISE adopts an innovative demand and policy-led approach by identifying the decisions people need to make now about investment choices and development options.

Semi-arid lands and climate change

Globally, one billion people live in semi-arid areas. These are intermediate zones between deserts and less dry areas with fragile water and soil resources. They are regarded as especially vulnerable to climate change due to desertification, increased risk from droughts and floods, and the low capacity of their populations to adapt. These factors, plus poor access to infrastructure, basic services, credit and markets, mean that the livelihoods of most people in these areas are precarious. Poverty reduction and economic development should strengthen the ability of people to respond to climate risk, but it is important to know which development pathways will be most effective, both in the short term and the long term.

PRISE's objectives

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 semi-arid regions. It does so by deepening their understanding of the threats and opportunities that semi-arid economies face in relation to climate change, and by generating new knowledge about ways in which economic development in semi-arid regions can be made more equitable and resilient to climate change.

Key questions

1

What strategies will enable semi-arid regions to grow in a way that is inclusive and resilient to climate shocks and stresses?

2

How do climate risks compound other environmental, social and economic stress factors in semi-arid regions, and how can these risks be managed?

3

How does climate resilient development differ from traditional development as a strategy for poverty alleviation?

4

How should adaptation be integrated into economic development policies?

5

What are the new opportunities for, and threats to, markets in semi-arid lands arising from climate change in these areas, and how is the private sector adapting?

2.5 billion



people live in drylands.

Our approach

Ground breaking in its focus, PRISE research adopts a policy- and development-first approach to engaging decision-makers in governments, businesses and trade bodies. Rather than starting with complex climate change projections, this research begins by identifying the decisions people need to make now about investment choices and development options for semi-arid regions. Decision-makers and the research team decide jointly on the research questions and study areas to ensure that the research responds to demand.

The private sector's ability to contribute to poverty reduction and climate resilience in semi-arid lands is not yet well understood. PRISE will work primarily with economic development ministries, business associations, regional economic commissions, and others working to grow businesses, markets and economies in semi-arid lands. The consortium's research has a unique time horizon of the year 2030, which is more relevant than 2050 or 2100 for decision makers wanting to focus on the short-term.

Where we work

PRISE research targets semi-arid areas across six countries in Africa and Asia: Burkina Faso and Senegal in West Africa, Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa, and Pakistan and Tajikistan in Asia.



Consortium members

Overseas Development Institute (UK)
Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment at the London School of Economics and Political Science (UK)

Innovations Environnement Developpement Afrique (Senegal)
Sustainable Development Policy Institute (Pakistan)
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