

ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE OR NON-CLIMATIC STRESSORS IN SEMI-ARID REGIONS? EVIDENCE OF GENDER DIFFERENTIATION IN THREE AGRARIAN DISTRICTS OF GHANA

Gender inequality in decision-making and land access in semi-arid Ghana shapes the way different vulnerable groups respond to climate change and other external stressors.

KEY IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Efforts to improve adaptation to future climate change at local levels must give attention to the nexus of both climatic and non-climatic stressors, gender, differential vulnerabilities, and other subjectivities that produce a particular adaptation practice in a given place.

The National Land Policy of 1999, therefore, requires significant revisions to overcome local cultural barriers, to guarantee women ownership, and create pastoral corridors.

Future research needs to quantify and assess the impacts and effectiveness of current adaptation practices on multidimensional poverty (MPI), women empowerment in agriculture (WEAI), and food security (i.e., FSC, HFIAS, HHS, Coping) before these practices can be upscaled in policy or development programmes.

KEY FINDINGS

Current adaptation strategies generally focus on social networking to diversify adaptation, migration, agriculture, and livelihood and farming systems. Nonetheless, it is difficult to determine whether these current strategies are driven by changing climates, or are a result of pre-existing social deprivation in semi-arid areas.

Decision-making processes, land access, and the patriarchal local customs and institutions that shape adaptation responses of different vulnerable social groups, are not gender neutral. In most cases, inequality is not only necessarily between men and women but between different social groups and ethnic backgrounds.

WHAT WAS DONE, AND WHAT WAS NOVEL?

Recognising that the current binary analysis of 'men and women' does not reflect the contemporary understandings of gender, we took a broader view to include diverse social groups such as those distinguishable by physical ability, livelihood, age, and social class.

Working in the semi-arid areas of Ghana, we assessed how these groups are currently dealing with climate variability, as well as the inequalities that emerge in their efforts to adapt. We consider how people could potentially adapt to climate change in the future.



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