



Gender dynamics in a changing climate:
how gender and adaptive capacity affect resilience



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Top cover image: Member of a farmer field school in Mozambique. Credit: Ausi Petrelius/2009

Bottom cover image: Women's group farm in Kugri Ghana. Credit: Fiona Percy/CARE-ALP 2011

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Dry season gardening in Tariganga, Ghana. Credit Nicola Ward/ALP-CARE 2015

Gender, climate change and adaptive capacity are intricately linked. Poor and marginalised women and men face multiple and complex challenges. Climate change further exacerbates these challenges and threatens to erode development gains made to date. Unequal distribution of resources and power imbalances are both the root cause of poverty and also impact on a person's capacity to adapt.

There are many different factors which shape inequality across gender, ethnic, cultural or religious groups and therefore also determine the different ways in which climate change impacts on individuals, households and communities. Differences in access to information, control over resources and ability to innovate in response to climate challenges determine a person, household or community's ability to adapt. Furthermore, their different roles give women and men different knowledge, priorities and concerns in relation to climate change.

Adaptation interventions are often based on the belief that women's role in the home makes them critical agents of change and, thus, a focus for adaptation interventions. But many women do not have decision-making power within the home or over all household resources, let alone over valued livelihood resources and may not be able to keep or manage their own earnings. Even in some female-headed households, social stigma may prevent many women from being treated as economic or social equals, despite their sole management of their livelihoods. These barriers tend not to be addressed by climate change adaptation programmes, which can inadvertently entrench gender inequality and even increase women's workloads.

A changing climate can require women and men to take on different roles and responsibilities; and adaptation interventions can do the same. Impacts on household livelihoods, asset base, human and animal health and intra-household relations are driving some households and communities to change their lifestyles and roles, and these changes have different impacts on women and men. Coping strategies that used to help communities manage an already unpredictable climate are becoming unviable.

At the same time, men and women are taking on new roles and responsibilities, and are starting to work together in different ways to manage change. Some women and men have aspirations for a different future for themselves and their communities, and this can be an important driver of change. Changes in livelihoods strategies - with innovations and risks inherent within them - create new spaces for women and men to engage differently, which in turn shifts expectations and perceptions of their roles. Despite these changes, access to productive assets and networks remains uneven, and household workloads and decision-making power have not shifted to respond to this change. This can lead to increased burdens of work for women, without a shift in control or influence.

This learning brief synthesises lessons drawn from CARE's Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa (ALP), which has been supporting vulnerable communities in sub-Saharan Africa to adapt to the impacts of climate change since 2010. It is based on evidence and practical experience in implementing community based adaptation (CBA), about gender dynamics and the ways in which CBA can increase adaptive capacity and promote gender equality. It identifies the factors shaping gender dynamics and adaptive capacity and gives examples of how to integrate gender into CBA approaches as well as outlining knowledge gaps and recommendations for policy and practice.

Recommendations for policy and practice

- Tackle the gender dimensions of livelihoods: they are context-specific and addressing them in appropriate ways demands context-specific action. Gender-sensitive analysis, policy and planning is critical to this.
- Include gender equality in climate change policy goals and strategies.
- National and sub-national adaptation planning needs to be led by affected communities, and be based on an understanding of the gendered nature of climate change impacts as well as adaptation initiatives themselves so as not to further entrench inequality. Gender-equitable participatory actions will bring more gender balance into initiatives.
- Some of the fundamental challenges women face cannot be resolved through a single CBA programme. Action is needed by other organisations and across government departments and through advocacy to address the entrenched drivers of gender inequality and poverty.
- Strengthen interdepartmental work between women's departments and climate change departments.
- Close the gap between policy and implementation where adequate policies do exist that focus on addressing gender equality.
- Power imbalance and access to decision-making in the home, community and country must be recognised and addressed in the global response.
- Approach efforts to address adaptive capacity and gender equality not as an issue for women alone, but as an issue that is critical for the advancement of everyone in society; it is an indispensable part of achieving social justice.
- Invest in context-specific analysis as it is critical to understand the interconnected factors shaping adaptive capacity in order to design effective and appropriate adaptation action.
- Invest in improving women's economic empowerment in the face of climate change to address the way resources and labour are distributed and valued in the economy.
- Programmes need appropriate timeframes and adequate resources in order to influence social change.
- CBA programme designs should be required to produce gender disaggregated monitoring and to establish monitoring and evaluation of changes in gender dynamics.
- Investing in understanding and measuring the gendered impacts of climate change beyond economic loss is important for making all types of loss and damage visible and to ensure it is accounted for, so as to build an evidence base of the human impact of climate change.



1. INTRODUCTION

Animal watering in Kouggou Dakoro, Niger Credit: Marie Monimart/ALP-CARE 2012.

Since 2010, CARE's Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa (ALP) has been working in 40 communities in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Niger. The aim of the programme is to increase the capacity of vulnerable households to adapt to climate change.

An integral and crucial element of this work is addressing women's unequal position in society, which affects the ability to change livelihoods and household lifestyles in response to the effects of climate change. Research has shown it is essential to understand the dynamics of gender and climate change in particular environmental and socio-political contexts in order to effectively build adaptive capacity.¹

Addressing the unequal impacts of climate change on different groups has been a focus of ALP from the beginning. The communities we work with, whose lives depend on natural resources, are particularly vulnerable to increasing climate-related hazards and to subtle changes in temperatures and rainfall patterns. These changes, and the associated uncertainty inherent in them, make adaptation a priority for these communities.

In order to address the interrelated challenges of increasing adaptive capacity and addressing gender inequality, ALP promotes community-based adaptation (CBA) approaches and actions. Addressing gender inequality has provided valuable insights into gender dynamics and drivers of change. It has also provided lessons about the value of participatory processes and how to move towards an approach to CBA that works towards transforming gender dynamics. ALP focuses on developing and applying innovative models and practical tools for CBA, and integrating these into development policies and programmes. It has strengthened the voices of local communities and civil societies – contributing to global knowledge of CBA and working to improve adaptive capacity and redress gender inequities.



Ahmed Rage from Nanighi, Kenya, stood in his flooded farm. Credit: Stanley Mutuma/ CARE-ALP 2013

About this learning brief

This learning brief synthesises learning about gender dynamics and the role of CBA in increasing adaptive capacity and promoting gender equality. It identifies common themes between the communities we work with, reflects on the links between gender and adaptive capacity, and gives examples of how to integrate gender into CBA. It is based on the practical experience of designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating CBA activities in ALP. It draws on the experience and knowledge gathered from CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analyses (CVCAs), gender studies, learning events, and discussions with communities and programme staff.

This brief can be read alongside other closely related ALP publications, please see further reading section for more information.

We hope that the key messages from this brief will influence the development of programmes aimed at reducing climate vulnerability as well as government plans, policies and funding for CBA. The brief includes a discussion of knowledge gaps and recommendations for climate change adaptation programming, for national governments and for global policymakers.

NOTE: All examples, case studies, statistics and other references to communities and the women and men living in them relate to those communities in which ALP worked between 2010 and 2015.



2. THE LINKS BETWEEN GENDER, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Mariam Chaibou of Maigochi village in Niger with two of the four goats she has received through ALP's small ruminants scheme. Agnes Otzelberger/ALP-CARE, 2015.

Poor and marginalised women and men face multiple and complex challenges – with insecure livelihoods, conflict, natural disasters and the degradation of natural resources exacerbating and reinforcing poverty and marginalisation. Climate change is now undermining already fragile ecosystems and livelihoods, and changing natural disaster patterns – leading to competition for and conflicts over resources, and jeopardising development gains.

Unequal distribution of resources and power imbalances in the home and the community are at the root of poverty and marginalisation for women and men. The capacity to adapt to climate change and the changing dynamics between women and men interact and overlap because both are shaped by the distribution of resources and power between different social groups.

Gender dynamics

Improved gender analysis and gender mainstreaming have led to greater understanding of gender inequality in relation to climate change. However, much gender-related research and many projects, recommendations and policies are based on generalised perceptions of gender dynamics and gender stereotypes.

Women's and men's roles, aspirations, access to and control over resources, and influence over decision-making play a strong role in determining social power relations, usually to the detriment of girls' and women's life chances. These dynamics change over time – women and men have many different roles in their lives, including as spouses, siblings, co-workers and parents. In each role, women and men may act together or separately depending on their own concerns.² Interventions to address gender inequality must be based on a nuanced picture of these complex gender relations and the drivers of change to avoid creating greater inequality, or even conflict, between social groups.

Climate change

Climate change affects different communities, households and individuals in different ways. The ability to act in response to, and in anticipation of, climate change (understood as a person's adaptive capacity) involves having:

- access to and use of information and services
- control over assets
- access to institutions and entitlements to key resources
- the ability to innovate in response to evolving challenges and opportunities
- flexibility and foresight in planning and decision-making.³

It is often said that women are more vulnerable to climate change impacts than men are. But gender dynamics may not be discussed in planning processes as practitioners assume they know what the problem is – ie, the vulnerability of women – and addressing fundamental power imbalances is not necessarily on the agenda.⁴ Adaptation interventions are often based on the belief that women's role in the home makes them critical agents of change and, thus, a focus for adaptation interventions. But many women do not have decision-making power within the home or over all household resources, and may not be able to keep or manage their own earnings. Even in some female-headed households, social stigma may prevent women from being treated as economic or social equals, despite their sole management of their livelihoods.

Adaptive capacity

Women's often-limited sphere of influence over adaptation decisions, and their widespread lack of power over valued livelihoods resources, need to be not only known and recognised, but actively addressed by development initiatives. This can inadvertently entrench gender inequality and even increase women's workloads.

ALP promotes the rights and responsibilities of women and men in their different social roles and situations in community-based adaptation activities. It places significant emphasis on understanding and addressing the gendered differences of adaptive capacity, exposing gender issues that exacerbate vulnerability. We promote community-based adaptation (CBA), a participatory approach that seeks community-led responses to climate change. It enables the most vulnerable socio-economic groups to take practical action to adapt to climate change and raise their voices in local, national and international planning and policymaking processes.

Effective CBA is built on an understanding of the dynamics of risk and change in communities; it addresses immediate priorities, while also building capacity for longer-term adaptation. An essential part of CBA is a context-specific analysis, and CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA) is an important part of CARE's approach to CBA. A gender-sensitive CVCA ensures women's and men's participation and also asks questions about gender issues in relation to climate vulnerability and adaptive capacity. We encourage CBA planning that advances gender equality and women's empowerment.

Long-term transformations in gender dynamics, and supporting vulnerable communities to tackle the challenge of climate change adaptation, take immense effort. Most organisations engaged in this work, including CARE, are in the early stages of bringing these two complex issues together. In attempting to fill the gaps in knowledge of gender dynamics and effective CBA, particular efforts have been made to better understand the interconnected factors shaping gender inequality and adaptive capacity, the drivers of change in gender dynamics and adaptive capacity, and the role of CBA in addressing gender inequality and adaptive capacity. These key topics are the focus of the following sections.

Gender equality, or equality between women and men, refers to the equal enjoyment by women, girls, boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards.

Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male.

Women's empowerment involves awareness-raising, building of self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources, and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality.

Empowerment comes from within; women empower themselves.

CARE Gender Policy



3. EMERGING ISSUES

Climate change is putting increasing pressure on women's domestic and livelihoods duties in Mozambique. Credit: Silene Bila/ALP-CARE, 2013.

This section summarises the factors shaping gender dynamics and adaptive capacity specific to the communities in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Niger where ALP is working. Similarities and differences between communities are highlighted along with how these translate into different experiences of climate change and appropriate climate change adaptation.

The nature of inequality

Gender inequality does not mean that all women are disempowered everywhere, in every way, or all of the time. Nor does it mean that all men are always in more powerful positions than women. In reality, men and women as individuals experience a dynamic and unique status in different contexts. And it is this real situation that must be understood through gender analysis and which CBA must respond to, rather than assuming that resources and support should necessarily omit all men or favour all women in a particular community.

While there are overall patterns of inequality not all women or men will conform to gender norms and expectations, creating further complexities in the gender dynamics of a community. There are examples of women and men crossing traditional lines when making life choices, and potentially facing backlash as a result. For example, couples in East Mamprusi and Garu Tempene Districts of northern Ghana who choose to defy traditional bride price customs must leave the community, or women in Garissa county in north eastern Kenya who sell goods in the market may attract criticism and conflict.

INEQUALITY BASED ON AGE, ECONOMIC STATUS, DISABILITY, ETHNICITY, CULTURE OR RELIGION

Other social inequalities can affect a community's adaptive capacity. Participation in community discussions generally favours older, richer males, with young men excluded from decision-making. Poor or disabled people and those who are less educated are also generally excluded. Gender dynamics also vary based on ethnicity, religion and cultural practices and these can translate into different expectations about women's place in the household and in the community.

The impact of religion and culture on adaptive capacity is not uniform across the communities in which we work. Women in Tuareg and Fulani tribes in Dakoro, Maradi region of southern central Niger reportedly experience fewer barriers to participation and speaking in public than women in the Hausa communities of Dakoro. In Angoche district in Nampula province in northern Mozambique, religion influences the extent of women's economic empowerment. The conservative influences of both Muslim and Catholic faiths negatively affect women's entry into the cash economy, with women requiring their husband's permission to undertake economic activities. In Garissa, Kenya, Somali culture requires women to be accompanied by their husband or a male relative if they want to venture beyond their homestead. This limits their ability to participate in income-generating activities, community decision-making and development opportunities. In contrast, in Ghana, Christianity has been seen as a potential driver of change in relationships between women and men, moving away from traditional restrictive practices.

Kenya and Niger: Different factors shape inequality

According to Somali cultural norms in Kenya, younger men do not participate in public decision-making when older men are present, although very old women can. The expression ‘inan lugtete la daye’ means that a woman who is seen as no longer sexually active has the same rights as men and can participate in public decision-making. Disabled people cannot participate in public decision-making because disability is regarded as a curse. And the poorest people, regardless of gender, do not participate in public decision-making, whereas the rich are the most active in community decision-making.

In communities in Niger, some women have more freedom, mobility and decision-making control than others. Older women, for example, have more freedom to go to market and to participate in meetings and other community events. However, women who are widowed, divorced, young or unmarried are disadvantaged when it comes to control over productive resources, freedom of movement and access to opportunities for education and economic development.

INEQUITABLE ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND ARBITRATION

Arbitration and justice can highlight marginalisation and power at community level and reflect power relations and diverging interests within a community. Across the communities where ALP is working, arbitration remains a largely male domain, with women generally excluded from representation or decision-making, although the precise composition and process of arbitration varies.

Customary law remains a focus for resolving conflict at local level. In Kenya, in any conflict over resources, elders from each side will work together in arbitration and will not involve formal judicial systems. Such customary arbitration often aims to secure reconciliation rather than justice, whereas formal courts often work to uphold the subordinate position of women in society. In cases of domestic violence in Kenya, restorative justice can be sought in informal settings with family, in-laws and khadi (Islamic) courts presided over by elderly men. These elders are simultaneously the custodians of both Islamic and Somali cultures that not only exclude women from participation in decision-making but also subordinate them to men. Thus, restorative justice for women may be difficult to attain. At the same time, aspects of customary law can provide crucial social protection and support. For example, in Mozambique, if a woman divorces her husband, traditional systems of inheritance ensure she has access to the land of her parents, although children and household assets are seen as belonging to men.

Livelihoods reflect gender dynamics

Whether it’s farming, fishing or trade, work generally has a gender dimension, and understanding this provides a starting point for exploring gender dynamics and adaptive capacity. Livelihoods and exposure to climate risks vary with geographic location; and climate risks can affect the resources that are most important for livelihood security, as well as for a household’s subsistence.

Men are typically in charge of livestock or crop production and the cash from sales; women are typically responsible for domestic tasks such as food preparation and fetching water for household use. These roles reflect the expectation that women’s lives will be focused on, if not constrained to, the domestic sphere – and that this work will be unpaid. But these roles differ between communities. For example, women in Dakoro, Niger, are largely excluded from farming and markets, whereas in East Mamprusi, northern Ghana, women are considered to be more business-like and better able to manage money, and therefore they manage the sale of smallholder produce.

Niger: gendered roles and responsibilities

In the Department of Dakoro in Niger, both women and men believe that domestic tasks such as childcare, maintenance of the house and all tasks related to food preparation are the domain of women and cannot be undertaken by men. On the other hand, the expectation is that men will provide all of the household income, so women do not need to engage in economic activity (although they contribute through unpaid work). Girls are often taken out of school at an early age, either to help around the house or to be married, and as a result are less educated than boys. Women are burdened with childbearing and parental responsibilities at a very young age through early marriage. Combined with religious and cultural norms about women’s position in society and inheritance practices, this leads to reduced freedom of movement for women and power imbalances in decision-making, and limits women’s access to and control over livelihood resources.



Women's group savings and loans members trading in Garissa, Kenya. Credit: Tamara Plush/CARE 2011.

WOMEN'S INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES

In communities where ALP works, we found that women are significantly involved in productive activities – although that work is frequently unrecognised and undervalued, even if the work generates household income. While some women have control over money from certain productive activities, that does not signify a departure from traditional male-dominated norms. For example, women undertake livestock care and petty trade in Kenya and agricultural production in Ghana, Mozambique and Niger but it is men who manage the proceeds of these activities. As described by women in Geba and Gelo-sede communities in Mozambique:

“Men control money from sale of products and how it is used. Women can sell fish but the husband controls and makes decisions about money. Women control money from small fish, crabs and clams. Women can control money from sale of birds, men control from sale of larger livestock. Women control proceeds from selling crafts, cookies and pottery. Men control proceeds from selling coal and the crafts and pottery that he produces.”⁵

In Garissa, Kenya, younger women may be tasked with collecting fodder and occasionally with taking small animals to water points. The women of the household are usually in charge of milking cattle, sheep and goats (but not camels). They may also take livestock products such as milk, meat and butter to market. In female-headed households, women are involved in every aspect of livestock rearing. Overall, women contribute much more to livestock production than men seem willing to acknowledge.

In Mozambique, women's income and decision-making is often limited to household maintenance (utensils, clothing and food) whereas men make decisions about the sale of major assets and use of financial resources. Furthermore, despite women's engagement in production, they must still seek permission to access household productive assets and do not have the same level of access to agricultural inputs or livelihoods networks. Further, the overall heavier workloads of women are not recognised, negotiable, or compensated within families or communities.

Responding to climate impacts

Climate-related challenges have different impacts on different livelihoods. The communities across Ghana, Kenya and Niger are affected by droughts, and report that these are occurring more frequently. In Kenya's agro-pastoral zone, the Tana River is used for irrigation, which reduces sensitivity of crop production to rainfall variability, but also means that floods are a significant risk. This is even more the case in East Mamprusi in Ghana, in the Volta River basin where flooding has become a much more common occurrence. In Niger, strong winds, sand storms and erosion are additional concerns and their effects are exacerbated by loss of vegetation cover.

People have always developed strategies for coping with the climate hazards they face. For example, pastoralists in Kenya and Niger have traditionally relied on mobility to manage fluctuations in the availability of water and pasture land. This was complemented by herd splitting and redistribution of livestock to members of the extended family or other community members who had lost animals or sold animals to meet cash needs.



Farmer displaying his millet harvest from improved seeds in Na Allah community, Dakoro, Niger. Credit: CARE/ALP 2011

GENDERED ROLES CREATE GENDERED CLIMATE CONCERNS

Their different livelihood roles mean women and men have different concerns in relation to climate change. For example, women in Angoche district in Mozambique typically have to walk up to 10 kilometres to fetch water, so are more concerned about the effects of erratic rainfall on water availability near the home. Men are predominantly responsible for livestock, so are more concerned with climate change impacts on pasture land and animal health.

ASPIRATIONS EFFECT ADAPTIVE ACTION AND INNOVATION

Social norms are internalised and can influence women's and men's aspirations. How closely an individual's aspirations for the future align with or contradict social norms can limit adaptive capacity, and particularly the desire to seek innovative solutions to new challenges and to take risks.

In Kenya, men envision themselves fulfilling traditional roles in relation to crop cultivation, livestock rearing, and accumulation of income and assets. Women's aspirations focus on their roles as wife and mother. But increasingly young people aspire for a different type of lifestyle from that of the older generation and despite these internalised norms, there are women who strive for more and this aspiration is a valuable driver for CBA initiatives. Women in Kenya voice aspirations to be consulted more in decision-making within the family, and women in Mozambique also wish to have more time for leisure activities. In Ghana, both women and men want to improve their asset base through income-generating activities, community development (infrastructure, social development services) and improved resilience to climate disasters. Such aspirations for a different future support innovation, and can help with adaptation action.

ACCESS TO AND POWER OVER AN ASSET BASE IS NEEDED TO INNOVATE AND TAKE RISKS

Within all the communities in which ALP is working, marriage is an important rite of passage linked to control over productive assets. Married men with children are given highest status, and many communities practise polygamy. Most of the communities are patriarchal, although Saamini in Ghana and Nampula in Mozambique are matrilineal. However, in Nampula, the matrilineal system only confers greater power of the spiritual/ceremonial sort on women, while economic power remains firmly in the hands of men – and they are very averse to sharing it with women.

In most communities, the major productive household assets (such as cattle, camels, ploughs, fishing nets, land and cash crops) are owned and controlled by the male household head; women traditionally control household food crops and

smaller animals (goats, chickens). Ownership of and control over land and cattle also provide cultural capital through offering inheritance and the commonly practised bride price. Commercial exchange and inheritance practices in Kenya and Ghana ensure that men primarily hold these major assets, although some women do own cattle. However, community perceptions can reflect the strong gender bias that it is men who should own these assets. In Kenya, cattle ownership by women currently only applies to female household heads. In Jawani, Ghana, both men and women said that, if asked, a 'good' woman would say the livestock belonged to her husband, even if she was the owner and the community knew she was the owner.

Ghana: Access to assets does not equate to power and control over them

Beyond gaining access to assets like land, there is also a critical need for power and control over those assets. In Saamini in Ghana, local chiefs lead lineage-based settlement clusters and land is held communally. Through this system, members of the same lineage are apportioned pieces of land for their own use, in addition to communal lands. Those who enter the community – migrants or wives of clan members – may request plots of land for personal use but the power remains with the chiefs. When women are able to access land for productive uses, it is typically of a poorer quality – and if they improve the fertility of that land, men often reclaim it for their own farming.

LIMITED INFLUENCE OVER DECISION-MAKING HINDERS ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

An individual's ability to participate in, influence and benefit from decision-making varies within households and between communities. Older men usually take the lead in community decision-making, with women and younger men tending to have a very limited say in decisions, be it within their families or communities. Typically, older men are granted greater authority in community decisions, with men generally having the responsibility for household decision-making. Household dynamics vary, however, and can sometimes contrast with traditional social norms. How these household dynamics are negotiated is difficult to explore but important to address when promoting gender equality and implementing appropriate adaptation activities.

In Mozambique, women may voice opinions in meetings but are not ultimately involved in the decision-making process. In Ghana, there is a woman representative (the Magazia) on the council of traditional leaders, but community members do not see them as having any 'real power'. Somali society has institutionalised women's social exclusion. In Niger and Kenya, despite quotas for representation, women continue to be under-represented in community councils, and only older women in Kenya can contribute to community meetings. Men criticise women who do participate as 'nuisances and un-marriageable due to their in-subservience'. This restriction of women's voices at community level limits their adaptive capacity – limiting their access to information, opportunities to earn money, and power to make decisions to protect themselves and household livelihoods from the negative impacts of climate change. Women's limited access to education and opportunities to build skills and experience further limits their ability and confidence to participate in community-based adaptation, thus limiting the ability of families and communities to realise their potential.

OTHER FACTORS SHAPING ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Widespread illiteracy compounds the challenge of adaptation, with fewer than five literate women in each community, and sometimes none, despite growing demands for education. For example, high rates of illiteracy mean that information about adaptation to climate change disseminated through newspapers or other written forms is not accessible to women. Information disseminated through public gatherings is also out of reach for many women because of restrictions on their participation in mixed gatherings, particularly in the more conservative communities of Niger. In Kenyan communities, women have limited access to information on adaptation strategies because it is mostly disseminated through radio and mobile phones, which are controlled by men.

Gender inequality is also perpetuated through the custom of very early marriage for girls in Niger and the belief that large families are proof of a man's masculinity and a woman's dutiful contribution to society. Poor reproductive health services are a further barrier to women's adaptive capacity, and despite increasing demand for contraception, men often oppose it on religious grounds.



4. THE DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN GENDER DYNAMICS AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Pastoralists in Garissa, northern Kenya are feeling the impacts of climate change. Credit: Tamara Plush/CARE 2011

The communities in which ALP is working are having to respond to a changing climate. Climate-related shocks and changes, and the actions taken to respond, can impact on gender relations. For example, a changing climate can require women and men to take on different roles and responsibilities; and adaptation interventions can do the same. At the same time, gender affects people's capacity to take action to adapt to climate change.

This section documents the way in which climate change impacts are changing gender dynamics and how changing dynamics mean the responses to these impacts are also changing.

Climate change driving lifestyle changes

Climate change is affecting livelihoods and household assets, driving many households and communities to change their lifestyles. Different communities have different concerns, and there are different impacts on women and men.

In pastoral communities in Kenya and Niger, the major concern is the effect of climate shocks on livestock, most notably the impact of drought on the availability of water and pastures, and the resulting consequences for animal health and productivity. In the last 30 years, Niger has experienced recurrent food crises. Periodic droughts are characteristic of the Sahel region, but the interval between drought years has shortened. Now, on average, there is a shortage of rainfall every one in three years. Each successive drought makes it more difficult for households, and herds must travel further to find green pastures. The impacts of climate shocks, such as the droughts of the early 1970s, and especially that of 1984/85, have challenged their mainly pastoral lifestyles. An increasing number of nomadic communities are settling down in the southern parts of Niger to grow crops.

“Before [the drought of 1985/85] we were livestock breeders and farmers were only 10%. They make up 70% now.”

Interview with the Chief of Azagor, Niger, May 2014

In Mozambique, cyclones, flood and drought have affected harvests, and damaged key livelihoods infrastructure like storage facilities and roads to markets. In Ghana, communities have experienced the destruction of homes, poor crop yields and spikes in disease as a result of windstorms, erratic rains, drought and floods. Many young people are turning away from agriculture and migrating to the cities.

“Rainfall has become erratic and destroys rather than enhances our livelihood activities. People in my community are migrating to southern Ghana because they don’t have other options for survival. I have heard CBA will help us solve some of our livelihood challenges and for that reason I support it.”

Aguur Asamari, the Magazia (women’s leader) in Tariganga, Ghana, 2011

Crop farmers in Ghana and Niger are primarily concerned with the effects on crop yields and agricultural land; the sale of firewood or charcoal, consumption of wild foods, and migration for paid labour are common responses to scarcity resulting from erratic rainfall and drought. Livestock are still important, as they contribute to a household’s social status as well as to its income and are viewed as a form of insurance for periods of scarcity. Crop failure or lower yields due to rainfall changes, heat, pests and diseases are a concern in Mozambique.

LIVELIHOODS ARE DIVERSIFYING, INCOMES ARE RISING

Women are driving much of the livelihood diversification across the communities. In addition, savings, income and crop yields are on the rise. For example, women in Kenya are increasing their incomes by accessing new markets for their new milk products through a combination of access to climate information through the Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) process and material support for equipment such as a fridge. They are also coming together to sell their produce to a (male) broker. This saves time travelling to market and can yield better income through collective negotiating power. One particular women’s group in Kenya increased their savings from 9,000 to 37,000 Kshs (\$90 to \$370) within a period of three months. However, a negative consequence was that some men decided to work less because their wives could earn more than they could.



Ndebilla selling her goods in the community market in Garu, Ghana. Credit; Ngaanuma Evelyn/CARE 2011

Kenya: Shifting lifestyles

Pastoralist communities in Kenya are increasingly reliant on crop agriculture for food and income, in addition to animals. There has been an increasing shift from keeping cattle or sheep to keeping camels or goats, both of which are more tolerant of drought. There has been a reduction in the total size of the herds and drought-tolerant crop production is beginning to be embraced, albeit at a slow pace. By reducing livestock herds, climate change is striking at the core of people's lifestyles and culture in Shanta Abaq and Nanighi in Kenya. Many households now live in settled areas and in closer contact with each other. They are coming to terms with changes in their traditional livelihoods and are, out of necessity, trying alternative livelihoods and practices that might not conform to their traditional cultural and religious norms.

A reduced livestock asset base has forced children from some poorer families into child labour to supplement their families' livelihoods. School-aged girls are particularly affected as they are sent out to work as domestic maids, and so miss out on school. In contrast, reduced herd sizes mean that some boys and girls have time to attend school, thus raising literacy levels. Another consequence is that, as herd sizes reduce, men are no longer able to support as many wives and they are increasingly divorcing women as a means of reducing household size and demands. Women who have been divorced then generally have to rely on petty trade or the selling of milk or chat/khat.

MIGRATION

Increasing migration is another driver of change. With more people, mostly men, seeking alternative livelihood options away from home, women have reported both positive and negative shifts. Both girls and boys from Saamini in Ghana are increasingly moving to town for casual labour as a coping mechanism, which increases their vulnerability and adds to the breakdown of the family. As a consequence of migration, some communities are finding it more difficult to access labour through local farming groups, and traditional livelihood networks have weakened. Wives of migrant husbands felt less supported and had greater workloads as a result of their husbands' absence. A number of women also reported facing discrimination as female household heads. At the same time, these women also reported greater confidence, decision-making power and control over their own lives. Though women reported more space to exercise their influence, many said these changes remain limited to household level and they continue to face challenges in accessing information and services or participating effectively in community decision-making.

Changing roles

As climate change impacts are starting to be felt, men and women are forced to take on new roles and responsibilities, and to work together in different ways to manage change. In all the communities that ALP is working with, women's and men's roles in production have shifted. Changes in livelihoods strategies - with innovations and risks inherent within them - create new spaces for women and men to engage differently, which in turn shifts expectations and perceptions of their roles.

In Mozambique, women and men had very specific roles in agriculture, but in recent years these divisions are beginning to blur, as men are now working alongside women in weeding, harvesting and processing agricultural products (traditionally women's roles). In Kenya, men have begun to engage in agriculture and wage labour, in addition to rearing livestock. Climate change-induced water and fuel wood scarcity in Kenya has forced men to participate in their collection, which had been unheard of before as it was seen as a role for girls and women.



Women inspect seedlings in the tree nursery in Na Allah village, Agazor, Niger. Credit: Fiona Percy/CARE 2011

Previously, women and men in Saamini grew different crops, but now both men and women are starting to grow different crops depending on needs and conditions. While ALP interventions have contributed to this, so has the economic stability of certain crops, making them attractive to men to cultivate.

Younger women and men are getting more involved in small business such as transportation, which was previously looked down upon. In Ghana, women are playing a greater role in income generation and some men are beginning to share household duties to accommodate this change.

Men are taking up new roles such as participation in childcare and food preparation. In Northern Ghana, young men are now helping their mothers to fetch water, and husbands are preparing evening meals. Women are the main recipients and managers of micro-finance and are starting small business activities to earn a living. School children, both boys and girls, are respected in the community for their ability to use modern technology to support the household – such as mobile phones to access market prices.

Climatic stresses, population dynamics and changes in land use mean access to land is becoming ever more competitive. In Azagor, a Tuareg community in Niger, both men and women emphasise that in response to climate change there is more work for women in maintaining their family. Women have begun to cultivate fields and are also engaged in traditional or innovative small-scale trade such as selling mobile phone cards and fuel for motorcycles. Men confirmed this:

“Times have changed; women here are doing everything nowadays.”

Azagor, Niger

Kenya: Women and men working collaboratively

In Kenya, women previously sold mostly non-perishable goods (eg, salt, sweets, soap and sugar). Now they have begun to anticipate what will be produced at the end of the season and with support for more organised group savings and loans, they are investing in capital and assets to enable them to engage in value addition activities for milk and meat products. With increased resources and income, their resilience in times of floods and droughts has been strengthened. Men have also begun to work more closely with women. They had previously been separated in their roles, but having more interaction and understanding each other's contribution has helped them to work better together. The community has generally acknowledged that women have skills that can be tapped into, including business, money management and leadership. It has been acknowledged that women can be active agents of change and can complement and build on the work of men.

Perceptions of changing gender roles

As women and men increasingly step into new roles, perceptions of this shift vary. In the communities where ALP is working in Ghana and Niger, women say they receive greater respect and recognition as a result of their contributions to the household. However, this change has not necessarily been consistently empowering, as they have not been given control over assets or influence over decision-making. Women in Mozambique who are taking on new roles in agricultural production continue to rely on men for price information and marketing, which makes them vulnerable to misinformation.

Women whose new roles violate social customs and values may still face backlash through social stigma, violence and marginalisation. For example, in Kenya, some women's entrance into markets has been met with a rise in domestic violence. While women in the marketplace are still viewed with disdain, new roles for women in bringing livestock to water or accessing food aid have now been accepted in the community as appropriate and normal. Men in Jawani in Ghana now view women as successful and knowledgeable farmers, so they support them with land and sometimes labour. In some households, a husband's faith in his wife's abilities has spread to having faith in other activities in which she engages.

“I have learned new things because [in the past] whenever my wife was not with me in the farm, I always got angry, but now, she can even go to Nalerigu, Gambaga, Tamale, Accra for trainings. She comes back with something to support the family. I'm not worried and I equally benefit from it.”

Male beneficiary, East Mamprusi District, Ghana



Reading a rain gauge in Nadowli-Kaleo district, Ghana. ALP-CARE Ghana, 2015.

Ghana: Men have more respect for women

In Ghana, men were often reluctant in the past to make land available to women because they assumed that they were unable to put it to good use. This has been changing, however, as women are able to access credit (through VSLAs), seasonal forecasts and improved seeds. Men are realising that women are now economically and technically able to make good use of land given – although in some communities patriarchal norms still restrict their control over it. Respect for women's roles is shifting in positive ways, and this is reflected in less use of the derogatory language 'poa gandoo' (female giant) to describe an empowered woman. Men are starting to see that an empowered woman is, in fact, of benefit to the household and is to be supported. Women and men participating in VSLAs report that the norm is for household decisions to be made collaboratively now, and they take loans and sell livestock together with trust and respect. All this contributes to greater household resilience and more secure livelihoods.

Through participating in income-generating and savings group activities, many women are able to save and are becoming more financially independent, allowing them to make their own investments in farm inputs and activities. Women also have new opportunities to meet together and build their confidence and unity, are participating and speaking out more in community meetings, and are taking part in decision-making. Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) have led to women and men being more willing to share economic and domestic responsibilities. With these changes, men have become more willing to involve women in community activities, although in some communities deep-seated cultural norms still limit this. These are significant changes, particularly in socially conservative Niger.

VIOLENCE WITHIN HOUSEHOLDS

Changes in patterns of violence can be observed, but are not uniform. A reduction in domestic violence was reported in Hausa groups in Niger, whereas violence within Fulani and Tuareg households is not common. In Ghana, past economic crises at household level fuelled conflicts between women and men. This has declined among VSLA members, as women's engagement in VSLAs has meant that they are no longer under pressure to turn the available grain into a meal (a common source of household conflict) but are now receiving more respect and recognition for their economic contribution to the household.

Kenya: Domestic violence on the increase

Fewer pastures and water sources resulting from recurrent droughts have increased competition over resources, heightening conflict and violence between and among clans, families and individuals. An increase in conflicts within and across communities was reported in Kenya as households compete for increasingly scarce land and water resources. Loss of herds and the subsequent poverty has increased divorce rates because men are choosing to support fewer wives. Domestic violence in these communities is on the increase due to drought-induced poverty, loss of livestock, and the inability of men to fulfil their household provisioning roles. Abuse of drugs, especially miraa or khat, exacerbate this. Because women are mixing more with the opposite sex while conducting petty trade and trade in the markets, they may face backlash because of violating cultural norms.

Access to productive assets and decision-making influence remain uneven

Despite shifts in roles, access to productive assets and networks remain uneven, and household workloads and decision-making power have not always shifted to respond to this change. This can lead to increased burdens of work for women, without a shift in control or influence.

In Dakoro, Niger, climate change is deepening pressures on the environment and on some typically female roles such as collecting water and fuel. Those tasks are starting to require methods that are typically assigned to men, such as using animals and carts for transport. So men are starting to take on those tasks, although responsibility for the task still lies with women. Women in Dakoro are also typically the first in a family to feel food shortages because they feed their husband and children first. They have to work even harder to provide food in times of environmental stress.

Niger: Restrictions on women's freedom of movement

In Niger, there are growing restrictions on women's freedom of movement because of the increased prevalence of a more conservative interpretation of Islam. As a result, women's income-generating activities, such as walking through the community selling doughnuts, are being taken over by jobless or landless men. Reduced mobility means these women are relying more heavily on natural resources that are vulnerable to climate change (such as farm crops and trees) and on unsustainable coping strategies like selling charcoal or firewood. It also reduces their access to the rare off-farm opportunities in the community.

“Women suffer a lot here: you have many children and you must feed them and also your husband. You cannot eat if you see your children hungry. Our situation today is as if we are on top of a mountain that without doubt, we will go down again. We do not ask to always stay at the top of the mountain, we would only wish that we do not descend too low (into food insecurity); otherwise we will not have the strength to climb back. If you could build small bridges between the mountains, it will allow us to more easily climb up the next slope.”

Women's group in Garin Mahamane, Dakoro, Niger, September 2012

In Saamini, in Ghana, food shortages have increased women's workload tremendously due to their involvement in agriculture and other activities such as petty trade, picking shea nuts, and producing shea butter and charcoal for sale. Women work harder than men and provide food for their families, even though cultural barriers limit their access to productive resources.

WOMEN MAKING GAINS IN DECISION-MAKING AND RAISING THEIR VOICES

Across sub-Saharan Africa, women's voices, freedom of movement and participation in public and household decision-making are limited when compared to men. This is starting to change for the better in Kenya, although in Niger it is getting worse, with women's access to public spaces becoming limited due to resurging conservative interpretations of Islam.

In Jawani, Ghana, one female community monitor is leading the community in development advocacy. In the past, her husband was not happy with her role but has become proud and supportive of his wife and sees her as bringing honour to his family. This has significantly demystified the men's perceptions of women in leadership positions and has increased the participation of women from across the community in decision-making. While there have been shifts in women's access to ALP specific decision-making forums, this has not been found to have been replicated consistently in other community forums. This reflects the challenge of transforming power relations in decision-making across all spheres of women's lives.

Kenya: Raising women's voices for change

In Nanighi Village in Garissa, north eastern Kenya, a pastoralist Muslim woman would rarely raise her voice to share opinions in community meetings that include men. Through community-driven digital photo stories facilitated by ALP the women can tell their own stories, which enables them to express themselves more freely. The women were initially reluctant to have the men see their stories but male elders asked the women to show their film. The women decided that not only could their husbands and fellow villagers watch their films, they also wanted their story told more widely – to children in their village, in other villages, to Kenyan policymakers, and to the world at international forums.

"We understand now how sharing our information with the local community helps people understand more about activities for women in this village," said Asha Klas Abdullahi, 29. "The elders who watched have appreciated what we have done, and no one is criticising it. It gives us more confidence to share our stories."

Improved understanding of climate change impacts and local solutions

Improving people's understanding of climate change impacts and local solutions has been an important element of ALP's approach. Communities are starting to see climate change in a new way – not inevitable, temporary or a manifestation of God's will, but as a phenomenon that is here to stay and that can be explained by identifiable causes. Therefore, they are more open to seeing the possibility to act to reduce climate change impacts.

The food crisis of 2011 after the droughts of 2005 and 2009, was terrible. Women in Azagor, Niger dubbed this crisis 'I want to see your limits' because it left them with nothing. ALP has focused on women's participation in all stages of CBA and this has created momentum for women's representation and empowerment at community level, which is appreciated by both women and men. In Azagor, Niger, Touareg women are usually less involved in farming or tree planting but they have shown a collective commitment to the strategies adopted by the community and supported by ALP. They defend their Moringa plantations against pests, they water their kitchen gardens by hand and they have developed their own business ideas such as selling mobile phone credit, using the income from Moringa sales. Though over 95% of women are illiterate, they now appreciate the impacts of climate change on their livelihood systems and practices. In the past they may have said: "It is God's will only..." Now, even in very poor Dakoro communities, there is increased awareness among women and men of climate change, its consequences, and locally appropriate adaptive actions.⁶



Zennou Boukari runs solar mobile phone recharging in Aman Bader village in Niger. Credit: Agnes Otzelberger/CARE 2015

NEW WAYS OF ACCESSING CLIMATE INFORMATION

Across the communities where ALP is working, access to communication technologies has improved following the expansion of cellular services and radio. Communities claim that 'The cell has changed the world.' The potential of mobile technologies to improve women's ability to adapt is important: in Niger mobile phones can empower rural women, compensating for their restricted physical mobility, giving them access to information, and strengthening their social networks. ALP has promoted communication technologies for women through mobile phones and radios, with mobile phones being used to access and share climate information. These women saw mobile phones as a way to take control from men or from the older generation, including mothers-in-law. However, some persistent issues reinforce inequitable access to communication technology, and the information it makes available. Women's lower levels of literacy, their restricted access to technology (like mobile phones and radios) and their workloads limit their ability to make use of these new sources of information.



Receiving rainfall information through mobile phones in Kouggou, Niger.
Credit: Marie Monimart/CARE 2014.

Women are also accessing climate information in more traditional ways. In Kenya, just 20% of women attended ALP Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) workshops, where livelihoods advisories based on the seasonal forecast are shared, but 76% of the women interviewed had nevertheless received the information. A significant number stated that they get the information from the chief. During the community institutional mapping exercise, the women placed the chiefs very near to them, while the men did not. This indicates that it is important to consider many communication channels and who has access to them when promoting the spread of information and to build on the specific communication channels that women use in a community.

Niger: New technologies have created a new income-generating activity for women

In Niger, some women have used savings from the VSLA to buy solar kits for recharging mobile phones. The payments they receive for a mobile phone charging service provide extra family income. The ability to charge mobile phones also means that people can share weather forecasts and early disaster warnings more regularly and easily.

WOMEN'S ASPIRATIONS OFFER GREAT POTENTIAL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Through ALP interventions and other drivers of social change women's aspirations for their future are changing. In Kenya, some young women now hope to marry men engaged in businesses near town centres. These men are seen to have a source of livelihood and the women also stand a better chance of operating small businesses (therefore putting their skills gained through the Business Development Skills trainings into practice). This is seen as different from marrying in a village, where husbands generally lead more sedentary lives and the burden of labour is on the women. In Niger women felt that ALP had 'awakened' them to a different potential future and that this awareness was irreversible. Their aspirations reflect a coherent strategy for risk prevention through empowerment, improved literacy, access to information and communication technology, improved agricultural and farm animal production, reduced workloads, and reduced risks connected with early and frequent childbearing.



5. SEEKING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH CBA

Women from Sinhane in Mozambique learn how to grow improved cassava at farmer field schools. Credit: CARE Mozambique/2011

Valuing and strengthening women's voices, aspirations, access to and control over resources, and influence in decision-making require action in all phases of a community-based adaptation initiative: from analysis to design, from implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

This section outlines key interventions implemented by the communities in which ALP is working that have contributed to addressing gender inequality and adaptive capacity.

Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis

Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA) is a well-established approach for helping communities and practitioners to understand the challenges of climate change so as to identify appropriate adaptation responses for vulnerable people. A crucial task for integrating gender into CBA is to ensure that those engaged in the community-level process have a good understanding of local gender dynamics and inequalities: this requires a gender-sensitive CVCA.

A gender-sensitive CVCA ensures women's and men's participation and also asks questions about gender issues in relation to climate vulnerability and adaptive capacity. It can build a nuanced picture of which adaptation interventions could address both adaptive capacity and gender inequality. If facilitated appropriately, the analysis process itself can be the first step in building the adaptive capacity of local stakeholders.

A CVCA was carried out in the communities in which ALP has been working to draw an initial picture of the local issues and concerns, with a focus on ensuring that the most vulnerable members of those communities were involved. In addition, a gender analysis was undertaken in each community and gender analysis methods were developed that assess aspects of gender against adaptive capacity elements. Wealth ranking was another useful step to identify low-income or otherwise disadvantaged households. Repeating the wealth ranking at various stages of the process can help to track households as they move up, down or stay the same.



Women from Tariganga village in Ghana pay their weekly contributions into the village savings and loans association. Credit: Joseph Ndiritu/CARE 2013.

Community Adaptation Action Plans and Advocacy

Supporting communities to develop Community Adaptation Action Plans (CAAP) enables them to determine their own priorities and well informed adaptation actions, and to communicate these for consideration in local development planning processes. Using CVCA findings, the CAAP enables flexible decision-making through participatory identification of future visions, ways to achieve them including shorter term no-regret options and plans to address underlying causes of vulnerability. Adaptation priorities identified among different livelihood groups, women and men, were assessed for their technical and economic feasibility, their resilience to climate risks and their potential impacts on gender equality (in terms of time, labour, resources and social relations) and the environment. The CAAP initiative gave particularly disadvantaged groups such as women and the elderly a clear pathway to improving their livelihoods through inclusion in community organisations, support for more diversified activities and access to influencing local development plans

Advocacy continues to be required in relation to some of the entrenched drivers of gender inequality and poverty. Some of the fundamental challenges that women face cannot be resolved through a single CBA programme and action needs to be taken by other organisations and by government. For example, widespread illiteracy restricts women's ability to use climate information in their decision-making. Limited access to sexual and reproductive health services, early marriage and frequent childbearing are fundamental barriers to change as they put pressure on women's lives and endanger their health. Low capacities in civil society organisations and limited resources for networking remain a significant challenge, and advocacy is an important tool to address these. Effective advocacy requires capacity-building for grassroots civil society and community-based organisations, and of community influencers and gatekeepers (eg, chiefs, assembly persons, women leaders). Such capacity-building should focus on the basics of advocacy, rights and governance systems, roles, decision-making processes, and services that should be available to all members of a community. Advocacy activities can be included in the CAAP process. Engagement and formal endorsement by national government bodies gives local governments the mandate and access to resources they need to integrate CBA into their planning processes.

Participatory Scenario Planning

Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) is a mechanism for sharing and interpreting climate forecasts. It provides a simple means of collectively understanding and using forecasts to help overcome the challenges of changing climatic patterns such as shorter rainfall seasons, shifting of the times when rains start, and extreme events such as flooding and extended drought periods. PSP has also contributed to some important changes in gender dynamics in combination with other ALP initiatives.

Over the past four years, PSP workshops have been held twice a year in Kenya, and annually in Ghana and Niger, using seasonal climate forecasts from national meteorological services. The workshops have created a space for dialogue between women and men in a community, between communities and local government, and with meteorological staff. In this way, some households in communities where ALP is working have undertaken climate risk analysis for both production

and post-production periods, which has helped to reduce or spread climate risks. As women were engaged in the process, their priorities and adaptation issues were shared in their communities and at higher levels, which avoided adaptation interventions that might have undermined women's adaptive capacity.

Village Savings and Loans Associations

Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) have proven to be an effective platform for women's economic empowerment at community level. VSLAs differ from micro-finance, as they are self-selected, informal savings-led groups that allow members to save flexibly. A group meets each week to deposit money; the accumulated funds are then used to finance small loans. Members can take out loans to invest in small businesses or diversify away from climate-sensitive livelihoods, or they can draw on a social fund to cope with unexpected events. There is a strong representation of women in the VSLAs: for example, in the Ghanaian communities where ALP is working 90% of members are women.

This simple banking system can have a dramatic effect on people's ability to invest in income-generating enterprises and to cope with erratic cash flows. VSLAs give participants more financial security to manage the risks associated with climate uncertainty. They boost women's self-esteem and influence in a community. VSLAs have given women the opportunity to prove they can handle and use money effectively, empowering them economically and socially. Combining VSLAs with institutional capacity-building, appropriate agricultural training, and access to climate information is particularly empowering for women, who are now diversifying into a range of new economic opportunities. Diverse economic opportunities, and the associated greater respect and collaboration with husbands, improve women's adaptive capacity.⁷

Appropriate agricultural training

ALP uses participatory teaching methods that are adapted to adult learning needs, particularly those of women, and these have contributed to greater respect for women's abilities as farmers. One of these appropriate agricultural training interventions is the Farmer Field School (FFS). Farmers regularly visit a Field School where they can experiment with different farming techniques and crop varieties. This allows them to observe and analyse how and why different outcomes are generated, and so be able to make informed decisions about farming techniques. In Jawani, Ghana, many women have learned new agricultural practices from community meetings led by ALP and our local partners. This has resulted in community-wide acceptance that women's farming contributes to improved household food security and increased household incomes.

Community monitors

Community monitors are working with ALP teams in Ghana, Kenya and Niger. Community monitors are selected by the communities and act as focal points for CBA activities, support community weather recording, provide training on different CBA approaches, facilitate community mobilisation, coordinate feedback, and keep records of participation in ALP activity. The monitors enable communities to keep track of adaptation activity in relation to actual climate scenarios and their impacts on livelihoods; this provides useful information on the effectiveness of interventions.

The selection of community monitors is important, and although there are more male than female monitors, women monitors tend to share more with other women than the male monitors do. However, women's lower literacy levels mean they are less able to perform all the tasks of the monitors. But male monitors are becoming champions for gender in their communities and support their female counterparts when illiteracy holds back their recordkeeping.

Innovative communication approaches

The ability to gain knowledge and practise new skills is greatly hindered where literacy levels are low. Therefore, innovative approaches to communicating climate change information are needed. In the communities where we work, community digital story telling has been used by both women and men. The stories provide a local record of adaptation over time for the community and for ALP. By sharing the videos in their own and other communities, discussion across genders and across age groups is stimulated. The stories also provide journalists with media stories and a better understanding of local climate change issues that can be shared nationally and even internationally as an advocacy tool.



6. LESSONS, KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Farmers in Kilimo Biashara project make decisions about what to plant and when using livelihoods advisories based on the seasonal forecast. Credit: Sylvia Miyumo/ALP-CARE 2014)

This section aims to provide guidance for future CBA interventions in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond. It sets out lessons emerging from our work about the factors that shape adaptive capacity and gender inequality and about the drivers of changes in dynamics between men and women. It describes some of the knowledge gaps remaining, and makes recommendations for CBA programmes and policymakers.

Lessons

While gender inequalities exist across all the communities where ALP is working, many drivers of change have been observed. All the communities reported that women's and men's roles in production have shifted. Livelihoods are diversifying – and women are driving much of the diversification. But despite shifts in roles and women's increasing contributions to household incomes, access to productive assets and networks remain uneven, and household workloads and decision-making power have not shifted to respond to these changes. There are often increased burdens of work for women, without a shift in control or decision-making in the household or community. Access to livelihood resources is critical for women's ability to increase production, but if women continue to have unequal control over those resources, and over the income or produce they may generate, gender inequality will remain and women's adaptive capacity will be held back.

- Perceptions of these shifting roles varied between communities. In Ghana and Niger, women say they receive greater respect and recognition as a result of their contributions to the household. There are also examples of men and women working more collaboratively at home and in the community. But for those whose new roles violate traditional gender norms, such as women accessing the market place in Kenya, they may face a backlash through social stigma, violence or marginalisation; some communities have seen an increase in domestic violence.
- Women and men have improved understanding of the consequences of climate change and local solutions, and increasing access to climate information through new technologies. However, there are some persistent issues that reinforce inequitable access to communication technology, and the information that it can give access to. Women's lower literacy levels, their restricted access to technology (like mobile phones and radios) and higher workloads limit their ability to make use of these new sources of information.
- Women's freedom of movement is limited in some communities. While this is beginning to change for the better in Kenya, in Niger it is becoming worse as increasing conservatism in the Islamic faith makes changes of any kind more difficult, leading to more rigid gender roles.

- In Mozambique and Niger, poor access to health services and information have not only made childbirth more risky, but have prevented effective discussions or negotiation on sexual and reproductive rights within households.
- In Kenya, although women are encouraged to participate in government and non-government organisations, those who are more vocal and interact in mixed-gender settings are often criticised for their insubordination, and may face social exclusion or violence. These cases show that interventions involving women and men around particular themes like adaptation, have implications across other aspects of women's lives and must be approached in full knowledge of these relationships.
- Women's aspirations for their future are changing. For example, in communities in Niger women want improved literacy, access to information and communication technology, improved agricultural and farm animal production, reduced workloads and reduced risks connected with early and frequent childbearing. Improvements in each of these areas would contribute to women's adaptive capacity, and as a suite of outcomes would signal a shift in gender relations.

Knowledge gaps

While ALP has learned much about the communities in which it is working, and about the potential of CBA to transform gender relations and increase women's adaptive capacity, some critical knowledge gaps remain.

- **A better understanding of how to support women's and men's aspirations and their ability to take risks and innovate**
The links between gender and adaptive capacity are well established in ALP but more needs to be known about motivating innovation, risk and forward-looking decision-making and the factors that enable or constrain them for different groups. ALP knows more about the asset base and institutions and entitlements than on power and control over those assets and without this power and control women and men will be held back from taking risks and innovating with new technologies and practices. Understanding women and men's aspirations for a different future can be a starting point for change.
- **Going beyond simple gender sensitivity to transforming gender dynamics is challenging and demands a long-term focus**
Listening to men and women separately and disaggregating numbers by gender are becoming established practices and are important parts of understanding the context and the beneficiaries of CBA interventions. It is harder, though, to go beyond these gender-sensitive approaches to action that seeks to transform gender relations. For example, there are good results with respect to women participating in ALP-focused community meetings but participation alone does not necessarily equate to increased voice and power in decision-making – although it is an important step. Transforming gender dynamics demands further work with institutions and government agencies to address deep gender inequalities.
- **How to reach the most marginalised in a community remains a challenge**
Despite improvements in income diversification and assets (including household items and transport), some wealthier households have benefited more than low-income or otherwise disadvantaged households. A deeper understanding of the different wealth groups within a community would allow CBA initiatives to better understand poverty as a driver of vulnerability and give a better picture of how to work with those households less able to take risks and innovate. For example, not all community members participated in VSLAs in Jawani, Ghana, and those in relatively middle- to higher-income wealth groups benefited the most as they can contribute most and withdraw most. The most disadvantaged households were identified as widows and the disabled, and they did not participate in the VSLAs. A further example is use of seasonal forecasts: at the start of ALP in Ghana roughly one in six households used seasonal forecasts but after programme activities this had risen to around three-quarters of all households. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the remaining quarter are the most marginalised households and a different tactic is needed to reach them, such as ensuring they are actively engaged in programme activities. This is also mirrored in the uptake of climate resilient agricultural practices.
- **A better understanding of drivers of gender-based violence and access to justice and arbitration in communities is needed**
Violence against women and women's restricted access to justice and arbitration are important expressions of gender and power in a community. Further systematic mapping and analysis of these issues would give a deeper understanding of power dynamics and how traditional and formal justice systems interact across gender and other social identities.

- **Addressing deep, underlying drivers remains challenging and demands attention and a focus beyond climate change impacts and adaptation**

Across adaptation programming, it is important to consider gender dynamics and the gendered dimensions of adaptive capacity. There is no 'definitive' story on gender and climate change: while the problem is often presented that women are simply more vulnerable than men, there are many stories and experiences of gender relations, power and adaptation. Some of the underlying factors that can shape these may appear to be unrelated to a changing climate. For example adaptation programming may be distinguished from programmes to address sexual and reproductive health rights, low literacy or poor civic participation and voice, but in reality, each of these areas are highly interconnected in an individuals' life and can prevent women from taking full advantage of the adaptation and livelihoods opportunities available.

Recommendations for CBA programmes

- **Strive for participatory processes that will encourage changes in gender dynamics**

Participatory approaches are a powerful tool for understanding individual and institutional aspects governing control over, access to, and use of resources and changes over time. An approach that can transform gender dynamics is needed when unequal life chances, opportunities, power and resources cannot be resolved by merely responding to the different needs of women and men. To strengthen the quality of CBA, we need to explore gender norms and gender dynamics. In most cases going beyond gender-sensitive approaches is needed to effect lasting change. Working with men as well as with women is central to this. CBA initiatives that go beyond counting women, separating women, addressing women through 'special' activities, and treating gender equity as the reversal of women's and men's stereotypical roles will be more effective, and demand deeper engagement with women and men. For lasting transformations in agricultural livelihoods, the structural inequalities and power dynamics that make people vulnerable need to be addressed; it is critical to explore power, relations, voice and influence.

- **Address gender inequality by focusing on issues beyond climate change impacts and adaptation**

Addressing gender inequality has contributed to improved gender relations, such as through more collaborative decision-making in homes and communities and the leading role women have been taking in income diversification. Understanding how gender dynamics overlap and interact demands that we go beyond a tunnel vision of women as an isolated, vulnerable homogenous group and see them as individuals with power and agency. To shift gender inequality, it is necessary to challenge stereotypes and assumptions about women and men in CBA interventions.

- **Commit to long-term engagement with communities**

Gender norms and expectations are rigid and internalised, and changing them takes time. It is important to put the achievements of a single set of activities over a few years into perspective and to try to understand the many drivers of change and to seek long-term engagement.

- **Anticipate and avoid negative consequences**

Changing lifestyles and changing roles may challenge norms and expectations with varying consequences for women and men – eg, increasing violence and other types of reprisal can result. Interventions must not only mobilise groups around a specific theme, but remain responsive to how programming interacts with social expectations, restrictions and opportunities in relation to gender. This is important not only to foster more equal gender relationships, but also to ensure programming does no harm. Seeking long-term systemic change and improved governance are important programme goals which can be achieved by working with those in power and advocating that they address inequality and strengthen adaptive capacity at scale.

- **Understand and seek to address underlying drivers of gender inequality**

Some women's ability to contribute to and benefit from CBA programmes may be greatly hindered by factors indirectly related to a programme's goals. Without addressing these, a programme's effectiveness will be held back – and it may further entrench inequality. In some communities women have limited freedom of movement, and in some areas this is becoming even more limited. The emergence of conservative interpretations of Islam in some places is hindering efforts to improve women's influence over decision-making and access to new livelihood options. Women's illiteracy restricts their ability to participate in traditionally managed community forums and to use climate information to make decisions. Poverty, early marriage and poor access to reproductive health support are fundamental barriers to change, as they put great pressure on women's lives and health.



Women from Dan Maza Idi village discuss climate change impacts and plan adaptation activities in Niger. Credit: Awaiss Yahaya/CARE 2010.

- **Undertake gender-sensitive CVCA, which can lead to a gender-sensitive CBA planning approach**

Integrating gender into participatory analysis of climate vulnerability, such as Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA), is a prerequisite for effective local adaptation planning. It ensures that gender is understood as one of the factors influencing climate vulnerability and adaptive capacity; identifying key gender issues to be addressed through the CBA planning approach. The participatory tools used for CVCA and similar inquiries, such as seasonal calendars, Venn diagrams, hazard maps or vulnerability matrices tend to be very versatile and can be facilitated in ways that draw out gender-specific issues (see references).

- **Create positive synergies between CBA approaches in a community and household**

There were many examples of synergies between the CBA interventions implemented in ALP. Integrating interventions means looking for synergies between CBA strategies, and synergy between short-term investments for quick wins and long-term investments to build capacity and work towards social change. An example of integrated interventions is providing Village Savings and Loans, institutional capacity-building, training and improved access to climate information. These interventions work together to improve women's livelihoods and place in society.

- **Encourage cooperative approaches between women and men to address inequality and create more respectful gender relations**

Women and men in the communities where ALP is working experienced an improvement in gender relations at household level and more collaborative decision-making in households. Work burdens and decision-making within some families were more equitable in some cases and there was more shared decision-making in the home. At community level, changes in practices by community members are leading to greater gender equality across the community as demonstrated by increased respect for different roles of women and men and the collective ownership of CAAPs in Ghana and Niger. In Ghana, women and men are joining VSLAs together to improve credit worthiness – men borrow to support women and vice versa so as to have constant credit and avert the risk of default in uncertain times.

- **Incorporate information communication technologies as a critical driver of change in gender relations and adaptive capacity**

Access to mobile phones, radio and even motorbikes can lead to positive changes for women and their communities. CBA projects must incorporate this critical driver of change from the design stage. Further studies could allow deeper research into how mobile phones and ICT contribute to changes in gender relations and CBA by addressing the crucial differential vulnerability deriving from inequitable access to information.

- **Commit to learning, thereby allowing the programme to invest in analysis, learning by doing, synthesis and dissemination**

Through research partnerships, we can shift focus to action research-based exploration of adaptation options that can lead to learning that will influence practice. Transforming gender dynamics, and supporting vulnerable communities to tackle the challenge of climate change adaptation, are both immense efforts, and immense learning efforts. Learning from the programme is an important part of ALP and this focus has created many resources and lessons.

Recommendations for national policy in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Niger

- Tackle the gender dimensions of livelihoods: they are context-specific and addressing them in appropriate ways demands context-specific action. Gender-sensitive analysis, policy and planning is critical to this.
- Include gender equality in climate change policy goals and strategies.
- National and sub-national adaptation planning needs to be led by affected communities, and be based on an understanding of the gendered nature of climate change impacts as well as adaptation initiatives themselves so as not to further entrench inequality. Gender-equitable participatory actions will bring more gender balance into initiatives.
- Action continues to be needed in relation to some of the entrenched drivers of gender inequality and poverty. Some of the fundamental challenges that women face cannot be resolved through a single CBA programme. Action is needed by other organisations and across government departments.
- Strengthen interdepartmental work between women's departments and climate change departments.

Recommendations for global policymakers

- Close the gap between policy and implementation where adequate policies do exist that focus on addressing gender equality.
- Recognise that global gender inequality does not mean all women are more vulnerable than all men, all of the time. Power imbalance and access to decision-making in the home, community and country must be recognised in the global response.
- Approach efforts to address adaptive capacity and gender equality not as an issue for women alone, but as an issue that is critical for the advancement of everyone in society; it is an indispensable part of achieving social justice.
- Invest in context-specific analysis as it is critical to understand the interconnected factors shaping adaptive capacity in order to design effective and appropriate adaptation action.
- As some of the fundamental challenges that women face cannot be resolved through adaptation alone, advocacy on other critical interrelated issues must also be resourced.
- Invest in improving women's economic empowerment in the face of climate change to address the way resources and labour are distributed and valued in the economy. Efforts such as village savings and loans schemes can be a critical first step towards better economic security and improving gender relations.
- Programmes need appropriate timeframes and adequate resources in order to influence social change.
- CBA programme designs should be required to produce disability and gender disaggregated monitoring and to establish monitoring and evaluation of changes in gender dynamics.
- Invest in action research-based learning and dissemination. Understanding and measuring the gendered impacts of climate change beyond economic loss is important for making all types of loss and damage visible and to ensure it is accounted for, so as to build an evidence base of the human impact of climate change.

Further Reading

More information on ALP's CBA approaches can be accessed at the CARE Climate Change Information Centre and through the links below:

careclimatechange.org/our-work/alp

ALP (2015) Adaptation Planning with Communities: Practitioner Brief 1. http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CBA_Planning_Brief.pdf

ALP (2015). Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity: Synthesis and Lessons from Ghana, Kenya and Niger. http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/CVCA_Synthesis_and_Lessons_from_Ghana_Kenya_and_Niger.pdf

ALP (2014). Facing uncertainty: The value of climate information for adaptation, risk reduction and resilience in Africa. http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/Facing_Uncertainty_ALP_Climate_Communications_Brief.pdf

ALP (2014) Guidelines for producing participatory community digital storytelling videos: <http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CDSTGuidelines.pdf>

ALP (2013). Community Based Adaptation: An empowering approach for climate resilient development and risk reduction. http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/CBA_Brief_nov_13.pdf

ALP (2012). Decision-making for climate resilient livelihoods and risk reduction: A Participatory Scenario Planning approach http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/ALP_PSP_Brief.pdf

ALP (2011). Gender in the Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa. http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/ALP_Gender_2011.pdf

ALP and Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN). Joto Afrika Magazine Special Issues on practical CBA: <http://www.alin.net/Joto%20Afrika>

Issue 9: Why mainstreaming gender into community-based climate change adaptation is a priority.

Issue 11: Community-Based Adaptation: Experiences from Africa.

Issue 12: Climate Communication for Adaptation.

Issue 13: Integrating community-based adaptation into local government planning.

Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA) (2010). Local Adaptive Capacity Framework. <http://community.eldis.org/.59d669a8/research.html>

CARE (2009). Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook. <http://www.careclimatechange.org/cvca>

CARE (2011). Understanding Vulnerability to Climate Change: Insights from Application of CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA) Methodology. www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/CARE_Understanding_Vulnerability.pdf

CARE (2011) The Visioning Approach in Community Watershed Management Planning http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/CARE_docs/CARE_VN_Visioning_Document.pdf

CARE (2015) The Resilience Champions: <http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/The-resilience-champions-report-EN.pdf>

Christian Aid (2010). Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Secure Livelihoods – Toolkit 2: Developing a climate change analysis. http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/Climate-change-adaptation-toolkit-developing-climate-change-analysis-October-2010_tcm15-67268.pdf

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2 Okali, C (2012). Gender Analysis: Engaging with Rural Development and Agricultural Policy Processes. Working Paper 026. Future Agricultures: www.future-agricultures.org

3 The Local Adaptive Capacity (LAC) framework was developed as part of the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA): http://community.eldis.org/.59d669a7/ACCRA_Local_AdaptivePolicy_new.pdf

4 Seema Arora-Jonsson (2011). Virtue and vulnerability: Discourses on women, gender and climate change. In: Global Environmental Change 21 (2011); 744-751.

5 Synthesis Report Shifting gender relations in shifting environments An inquiry into the intersection of gender, climate change and adaptive capacities across rural communities in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Niger unpublished but available on request.

6 Marie Monimart, consultant to ALP mid term review with women in Azagor, Dakoro, Niger September 2012.

7 <http://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/The-resilience-champions-report-EN.pdf>



The Adaptation Learning Program (ALP) for Africa aims to increase the capacity of vulnerable households in sub-Saharan Africa to adapt to climate change and climate variability. Since 2010, ALP has been working with communities, government institutions and civil society organisations in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Niger to ensure that community-based adaptation approaches and actions are integrated in development policies and programmes. This is achieved through the demonstration and dissemination of innovative approaches for CBA, supported by practical tools, methodologies and evidence of impact. ALP is also working to create an enabling environment for CBA by working directly with local and national governments and with civil society to influence national and international policy frameworks and financing mechanisms for adaptation.

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