

Summaries

Introduction: Building the Case for Pro-Poor Adaptation

Thomas Tanner and Tom Mitchell

Understanding poverty is central to living in a changing climate. Climate change impacts are unevenly distributed globally and nationally, creating both justice-based and instrumental imperatives for action to adapt human and natural systems (adaptation) in ways that also contribute to poverty reduction. We argue that adaptation will be ineffective if it does not learn from and build upon an understanding of the multidimensional and differentiated nature of poverty. In doing so, this *IDS Bulletin* explores linkages between adaptation and major poverty arenas including chronic poverty, rights and social justice, pro-poor growth, pro-poor urban governance, asset-building and livelihood diversification. Drawing on practical lessons from communities of practice including disaster risk management, social protection, micro-finance, climate insurance, climate science, and adaptation tools, it addresses the conceptual and operational challenges for delivering a pro-poor adaptation agenda at a variety of different scales.

Entrenchment or Enhancement: Could Climate Change Adaptation Help to Reduce Chronic Poverty?

Thomas Tanner and Tom Mitchell

In the context of climate change, the poorest people are commonly seen as having the least capacity to adapt. However to date there has been a limited examination of the dynamic and differentiated nature of poverty. Through bringing together both the chronic poverty and adaptation literature, this article presents a new pro-poor adaptation research agenda underpinned by a more nuanced understanding of poverty. While recognising that poverty reduction efforts are threatened by climate change, this article investigates ways in which proactive adaptation could offer opportunities to create pathways out of chronic poverty through targeted vulnerability reduction and adaptation efforts.

A Right to Adaptation: Securing the Participation of Marginalised Groups

Emily Polack

With awareness of multiple identities and controversies associated with labelling people, this article assesses how policy-oriented reports are building the case for greater recognition and participation of groups often labelled as 'the most vulnerable' to climate change. Similar to how Tanner and Mitchell (this *IDS Bulletin*, 'Entrenchment or Enhancement') have identified opportunities to reduce the poverty of different groupings through climate change adaptation, this article explores the contribution of emerging literature differentiated by gender, ethnicity, age and physical disability to realising concepts of 'climate justice' and 'rights to adaptation'. It considers the rights-based and instrumental approaches being taken by those documenting the experiences, responses and rights of these groups to 'participation' in climate change adaptation at different scales. This analysis is essential to identifying how marginalised groups can influence climate policy in a period of breakneck negotiations, as well as understanding how emerging policy processes can be seized as opportunities for shifting power relations, reducing vulnerabilities and preventing mal-adaptation.

The Gender Dimensions of Poverty and Climate Change Adaptation

Justina Demetriades and Emily Esplen

Drawing on available literature on gender and climate change, this article examines the ways in which interlinkages between gender inequalities and multiple dimensions of poverty impact on the capacity of women and men to adapt to or mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. Cautioning against the tendency to fall back on assumptions of women as a homogenous, subjugated group, the article calls instead for more contextualised research drawing on women's and men's local realities and coping strategies. By developing more nuanced and concrete understandings of how gender-related constraints play out in particular contexts of

environmental stress, we will be able to move away from generalisations to more appropriately inform adaptation policies and programmes of poor and marginalised people's needs and priorities.

The Economic Case for Pro-Poor Adaptation: What do we Know?

Tamsin Vernon

Poor people will naturally adapt to climate change. However in the best case scenario their actions alone may be insufficient and in the worst case they may increase their long-run vulnerability. A government role in supporting pro-poor adaptation is essential if climate change is not to undermine development. This will need to provide both an appropriate enabling environment for effective adaptation and provision of adaptation services, recognising that markets and the private sector can provide an important driver for adaptation, and poverty-focused measures are also likely to be required to address the specific needs of poor people. While these measures provide benefits they also have a cost. Even with additional international support, governments will still have binding budget constraints and will need to prioritise between different adaptation options.

Assets and Adaptation: An Emerging Debate

Martin Prowse and Lucy Scott

This article outlines current perspectives on adaptation and discusses what a pro-poor view of adaptation might look like. It argues that an explicit focus on assets, or the resources which people have available to them, adds a valuable perspective to adaptation debates. It discusses three bodies of literature: on climate risk reduction; on household vulnerability; and finally on asset approaches to poverty reduction. In particular, focusing on assets highlights the agency of poor people in the face of risks, and draws attention to how risk can be an opportunity as well as a threat.

Avoiding Repetition: Time for CBA to Engage with the Livelihoods Literature?

Rachel Sabates-Wheeler, Tom Mitchell and Frank Ellis

The rapid pace at which the climate change agenda is permeating wide-ranging arenas of established development practice and theory leaves little space and time for reflection on the implications this has for learning across agendas and literatures. 'Adaptation' is a term that is increasingly reserved for processes that build the resilience of households, communities and sectors to changes in the climate. But, 'adaptation'

always has, and arguably always should, refer to more than just responses to climate change. Reflections here make the case for climate change enthusiasts to engage with a broader agenda concerning how to enable poor and vulnerable people to move out of poverty and vulnerability. We focus on livelihood diversification as one possible adaptation strategy, and whether diversification as a climate adaptation option looks different from a poverty reduction option.

Creating Less Disastrous Disasters

Maria Carmen Lemos and Emma L. Tompkins

In this article, we explore some of the factors that have led to reductions in risk to climate-related hazards in two very distinct sites: the Cayman Islands in the Caribbean and the state of Ceará in NE Brazil. We find that a range of factors have been critical to reduce risk in both regions. These include: (a) flexible, responsive governance; (b) committed and politically active actors; (c) disaster risk management integrated into other social and economic policy processes; and (d) a long-term commitment to managing risk. The authors argue that reducing risk is an important foundation for building adaptive capacity among the poorest segments of society. The features of good disaster risk reduction can act as markers of good governance that are conducive to the design and implementation of deeper structural reform needed to address the root causes of vulnerability.

Institutional Capacity, Climate Change Adaptation and the Urban Poor

David Dodman and David Satterthwaite

The urban poor frequently live in the most hazardous urban locations – at risk from many environmental hazards and extreme events and vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Reducing this vulnerability requires effective urban governance, involving municipal authorities, national governments, utility providers and civil society organisations. This article considers the role of these stakeholders in combining support for climate change adaptation and improving the social, physical and economic wellbeing of low-income urban residents. In particular, the article argues for the development and application of specific tools, methods and approaches to deliver pro-poor adaptation. Relevant case studies and examples are used to show that climate change adaptation requires solutions based in improved institutional capacity and better urban governance – and that if properly applied, this can help to meet the broader needs of the urban poor.

Evaluating Climate Change: Pro-Poor Perspectives

Merylyn Hedger, Martin Greeley and Jennifer Leavy

As the number and diversity of climate change adaptation interventions (CCA) increases, there is a growing need to evaluate their effectiveness. It is timely therefore to consider how pro-poor perspectives fit into emerging evaluation approaches. This article reviews the current state of evaluation of CCA and identifies opportunities for evaluation processes to focus attention on the achievement of results, which benefit poor and vulnerable households. Both development and climate change adaptation communities urgently need to learn what helps to reduce poverty as efforts on adaptation are scaled up. Evaluation provides an established methodology for systematic assessment of aims and objectives and their achievement. The article reviews the main issues involved in evaluating CCA. It examines what approaches and methods to adaptation evaluation have or could be used at different levels and considers where pro-poor perspectives fit in.

Towards a Science of Adaptation that Prioritises the Poor

Andrew Challinor

In the natural sciences, model-based prediction is used to develop and inform adaptation strategies. The article begins with a brief review of progress in modelling of climate and its impacts. The question is then posed: how useful are these developments likely to be in supporting pro-poor adaptation? Examples from crop and climate prediction are used throughout. A framework for assessing the usefulness of model predictions in informing adaptation is reviewed. New thinking on how such a framework might prioritise the needs of the poor is then presented. Both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches have inadequacies; an issue-based perspective is therefore needed. Finally, the implications of such a perspective for interdisciplinary pro-poor research are discussed. We need to go beyond simply applying existing science, no matter how 'interdisciplinary' the methods. In order to put science at the service of the poor, greater integration across the scientific community is required.

Climate Risk Screening of Development Portfolios and Programmes

Thomas Tanner

Development actors are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of climate-related shocks and stresses on their activities. Accordingly, tools and

methods are emerging to support decision-making to integrate climate adaptation concerns within poverty reduction plans, programmes and projects. These provide information and guidance to help assess risks and prioritise corresponding actions to enhance adaptation and disaster risk reduction. This article examines the use of climate adaptation decision tools for development, placing the range of tools and information platforms within the context of different adaptation approaches. It uses the case study of the ORCHID climate risk screening methodology to highlight the challenges and opportunities of integrating adaptation and disaster risk reduction into development cooperation. The article concludes that a focus on climate science rather than social vulnerability tends to support the conception of 'adaptation as output' rather than of 'adaptation as process', which the article argues is necessary for pro-poor outcomes.

Video-Mediated Approaches for Community-Level Climate Adaptation

Pablo Suarez, Fiona Ching, Gina Ziervogel, Isabelle Lemaire, Diane Turnquest, Janot Mendler de Suarez and Ben Wisner

There is a need to facilitate the dissemination of information and ideas that can accelerate community-based adaptation to climate change. Increasingly affordable communication technologies may allow for extending the benefits of available knowledge to those who most need it. Audiovisual media, when combined with participatory processes for adaptation, offers potentially effective ways to raise awareness, scale-up capacity building, support community-level planning and develop innovative approaches to advocacy and institutional partnerships. Importantly, video-mediated approaches can be designed to tackle the complex poverty-related aspects of adaptation in the work of humanitarian organisations, addressing the heterogeneity of vulnerable communities and giving a voice to the most marginalised members. This article outlines lessons learned from the use of audiovisual tools in health risk management, discusses recent and ongoing video projects by the Red Cross addressing climate change in Argentina, the Bahamas, Indonesia and Malawi, and recommends practical applications for organisations supporting pro-poor adaptation.

‘Adaptive Social Protection’: Synergies for Poverty Reduction

Mark Davies, Bruce Guenther, Jennifer Leavy, Tom Mitchell and Thomas Tanner

Social protection initiatives in the context of agriculture are unlikely to succeed in reducing poverty if they do not consider the multiple risks and both short- and long-term shocks and stresses associated with climate change and natural disaster. By exploring linkages between climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and social protection in the agricultural sector, IDS researchers have developed the concept of ‘adaptive social protection’. Studying adaptive social protection involves examining the role of social protection in strengthening adaptation and for developing more climate-resilient social protection interventions.

Microfinance and Climate Change Adaptation

Anne Hammill, Richard Matthew and Elissa McCarter

Climate change is understood as a threat to which the poor are acutely vulnerable. Microfinance services (MFS) are recognised as tools for helping to reduce the vulnerability of the poor. If this is indeed the case, then the possibility of linking MFS to climate change adaptation deserves careful consideration. MFS can provide poor people with the means to diversify, accumulate and manage the assets needed to become less susceptible to shocks and stresses and/or better able to deal with their impacts. Yet these links may not hold for everybody. MFS typically do not reach the chronically poor, may encourage short-term coping instead (or at the expense) of longer-term vulnerability reduction, or even increase vulnerability. These limitations and risks aside, MFS can still play an important role in vulnerability reduction and climate change adaptation among some of the poor, provided services better match client needs and livelihoods.

Climate Insurance for the Poor: Challenges for Targeting and Participation

Rachele Pierro and Bina Desai

This article looks at weather insurance schemes recently piloted at micro- and macro-level and their potential as tools for social protection. It focuses on

challenges and differences between these two approaches on targeting opportunities and local participation. Key findings are that micro-schemes, where contracts are sold to individuals or small groups, focuses on improving creditworthiness and asset protection for better off farmers. Therefore they are inappropriate for social protection, whereas macro-insurance, through national and multi-country policies, appear to have the potential to improve the sustainability of programmes targeting the most vulnerable part of the population. The conclusions highlight that more research is required to critically analyse current experience and develop solid feasibility studies. Additionally, for the future, more attention needs to be given to the targeting process, local participation and engagement with civil society and also the monitoring of the impact of these schemes on people with varying levels of vulnerability.

Defining a Future Research Agenda on Pro-Poor Adaptation

Tom Mitchell and Thomas Tanner

Drawing on other articles in this *IDS Bulletin* and on exchanges through the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) research network on *poverty and adaptation*, this article presents a series of questions and issues that contribute to a research agenda on pro-poor adaptation. In dividing these into delivery, justice, differentiation, growth and governance, prominent questions emerge on how pro-poor adaptation can reduce both relative and absolute poverty and vulnerability to climate change; how adaptation measures can be differentiated by poverty category, by marginalised group and by livelihood activity; and what institutional and legislative configurations are best placed to deliver pro-poor climate change-resilient development. The article calls for more research on adaptive social protection and on how different adaptation–mitigation stabilisation scenarios increase or decrease the adaptation burden placed on poor and vulnerable groups. It concludes by declaring that any future climate change agreement that forces these groups closer to the limits of adaptation is likely to block pathways out of poverty.