

Is Carbon gender neutral? Adaptation mitigation gendered linkages in the dry forest context of Burkina Faso

Climate change and variability appears most likely to negatively affect poor people, particularly women. Tendencies to widen existing gender inequalities as well as divergences in the adaptive strategies of men and women have been observed.

The interaction between vulnerability and adaptive capacity over time is shaped by flows of power, information and assets between actors as well as the interaction of different determinant of identity. Vulnerability and adaptive capacity vary according to size and type of hazard risk but also according to where the community or individuals are socially situated within wider socio-ecological systems including gender, class and ethnicity. Furthermore, vulnerability and adaptive capacity have a dynamic nature as changes affecting them at one scale can have profound and hidden implications for other scales (Pelling, 2010). Hence, without taking into account underlying issues of vulnerability mitigation interventions based on management and use of natural resources, can oversee and even amplifies the root causes of vulnerability.

Several studies have shown that an efficient way to better address adverse impacts of climate change will be to integrate the synergies and trade-offs between adaptation and mitigation (Locatelli et al, 2011; Locatelli et al. 2010).

In Burkina Faso forest products, are key supplements to the diets and income of rural women. The importance of forest and trees in food security is coupled with its role as a safety net in times of scarcity. Studies show that the contribution of NTFP's, including shea butter represents 16-27% of women's income, which is mostly invested to ensure food security in food scarce seasons (Lamien and Vognan, 2004). Mitigation projects are therefore likely to affect women's livelihoods and their adaptive capacity by affecting the supply of and the access to forest and tree ecosystem services. This paper aims to better explore the gendered trade-offs and synergies between adaptation needs and mitigation efforts. Using quantitative and qualitative approaches including participatory focus group discussions, household surveys and carbon stock assessment of the most common land uses, we analyse the synergies between adaptation and mitigation in two geographical zones of Burkina Faso: The Central-West and the Centre (Centre and Central Plateau). The results show that compared to land uses with formal restricted access, community forestry and well managed Shea butter parkland show promising mitigation and adaptation gender outcomes.

Gender sensitive analysis of mitigation and adaptation linkages is needed to understand the dynamics and interaction of divergent adaptive strategies and mitigation measures. Societal and political change at broader scales is needed to realize potential benefits for women in the long term.

Keywords: Gender, Climate Change, Adaptation and mitigation synergies, Burkina Faso