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Gender, Assets and Climate Risk Management in Kenya

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Abstract

Farmers in Kenya are adapting to climate change but are constrained by lack of accurate information and finances. Apart from socio-economic constraints, other factors may as well hinder farmers from adapting; which include personal values and ability to act collectively. The overall objective of this study is to assess the potential for group based approaches in enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change. The study also assess the gender differentiated adaptation options and the role of group based approaches in risk management especially dealing with shocks and assets accumulations and if adaptation to climate change help in protecting assets from climate shocks. The study uses panel data whereby households interviewed in 2009 were re-visited in 2012. Data collection relied on a mixed-method approach, including household surveys and gender disaggregated participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) in each site. A total of 360 balanced panels are used for the analysis. Preliminary results on shocks on assets using fixed effects model shows that drought and floods have a negative impact on livestock assets. Market shocks have a negative effect on small animals. Membership to community based organisation (CBO) help households in accumulating livestock assets, and this suggests the important of local institutions in dealing with shocks. Findings on gender and climate change adaptation indicate gender differences in crop and livestock production and adaptation. Women are adapting more in crops while men in livestock production. Regarding access to extension, men have high access to extension services and other climate related information than women. Findings suggest that groups are conduits for sharing knowledge, experience and agricultural information and increase the probability for dissemination of information on climate change and the appropriate adaptive responses. The study also finds that social capital increase the likelihood to access agricultural inputs and technical advice, as well linking farmers to output markets and in risk management such as credit access which are essential in adaptation to climate change.

Keywords: Climate change, gender, Kenya, livestock, shocks