Helpdesk Research Report: Climate Change, Empowerment and Accountability
Date: 20.12.2010

Query: How can climate change policy and interventions best work to empower poor and vulnerable individuals and communities and effectively utilise accountability mechanisms to ensure their concerns are addressed?

Enquirer: Climate and Environment Group, DFID

Contents

1. Overview
2. Community-based adaptation, empowerment and accountability
3. Empowering women, children and older people in the context of climate change
   - Women
   - Children and older people
4. Other relevant approaches
   - Accountable climate finance
   - Social policies to support climate change adaptation
5. Tools and guidance
6. Additional information

1. Overview

This helpdesk research looks at how climate change policies and programmes (particularly for adaptation) can best respond to the needs of the most vulnerable. The general consensus appears to be that this requires a combination of: a) greater investment in community-based adaptation, b) more decentralised planning, and c) stronger mechanisms to link community-level decision-making with national and international policy processes. Although strictly speaking beyond the remit of this report, it also includes resources on how to make the global funding architecture for climate change more accountable as well as a small selection of literature which looks at how social policies (namely social protection and risk transfer approaches) can support adaptation.

Community-based adaptation

It is widely recognised that the principal barriers to successful adaption at the community level are institutional and political. The majority of adaptation interventions are currently highly centralised. Yet efforts to integrate climate change into policies and programmes at the national level, even when focused on basic service sectors, are unlikely to meet the needs of the poor and marginalised because they tend to be excluded from the benefits of these services (Ensor, 2009).

Community-based adaptation (CBA) is therefore often seen as the most promising way of empowering vulnerable people and communities to cope with the impacts of climate change (Ensor, 2009; Ensor and Berger, 2009; Reid et al.; 2010 etc.). CBA is an emerging bottom-up approach to climate change adaptation based on the priorities, experiences, knowledge and capacities of local people. It draws on participatory approaches developed in both disaster risk
reduction and community development work. The focus of CBA is on empowering communities to take action themselves based on existing vulnerabilities, coping strategies and decision-making processes.

Community-based action will be ineffective however, unless it is supported by high-level political will and devolved resources and decision making (Oxfam, 2010). Governance processes must therefore be structured to link communities to the relevant decision making institutions and to enable the participation of civil society in identifying priorities, developing adaptation plans and monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness to ensure local interests are being met (Ensor, 2009).

Governance processes must also be structured in a way that empowers community members to manage and benefit from their ecosystem assets. This includes promoting tenure reform for improved resource access and livelihood security, providing market access through regulatory reform to benefit small producers, decentralising authority over natural resources to local levels, providing better access to information, and facilitating community participation, especially of vulnerable groups, in natural resource management (Bapna et al., 2010).

Empowering women, children and older people

Women, children and older people are most susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Yet they can also be the most active agents of change. For example, research shows that women are more likely to take decisions that minimise risk. Thus empowering women in household and community affairs is likely to yield decisions that strengthen adaptive capacity (CARE International, 2010). As a result, there are increasing calls for a more gendered analysis of the impacts of climate change and greater consideration of women’s perspectives in climate change policy and practice (CARE International, 2010; UNDP, 2010; UNISDR, 2008). Climate change interventions should therefore:

- be based on a comprehensive, participatory and gender-sensitive analysis of vulnerability to climate change
- build on the existing knowledge and capacities of men, women, boys and girls
- support men and women to access the resources, rights and opportunities they need to adapt to their changing environment
- institutionalize wide stakeholder involvement with mechanisms to ensure equitable participation of women throughout all stages of the process
- develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and evaluate the processes of stakeholder inclusion and collect gender-disaggregated data to inform programme development
- recognise differential vulnerability within countries, communities and households; and target adaptation strategies accordingly
- develop, deploy and disseminate sustainable technology that is responsive to women and men
- establish coherence among the institutions responsible for climate change, gender, human rights and health policy
- make women’s equality, access to information, economic resources and education a priority.

In the case of children and older people, recommendations include (UNICEF, 2008; Children in a Changing Climate, 2009; HelpAge, 2010 etc.):

- Ensure children’s voices are heard in national and international policy in line with the UNFCCC’s priority for adaptation
- National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and other regional and municipal adaptation plans should incorporate a children’s dimension and coordinate with ministries
such as education, health and youth, as well as give special attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of children of different ages.

- Ensure that children have access to better quality education and raise awareness and build capacity among children to address disaster risk reduction, community risk mapping, and preparedness.
- Develop a platform for shared learning of best practices and lessons learned specific to issues related to intergenerational implications and to the needs and capacities of children.
- Seize opportunities in renewable energy solutions for schools and health centres in rural communities off the grid, and support vocational training and microenterprise opportunities in the energy sector for young people.
- Promote environmental education and social and behavioural change amongst young people.
- Conduct further research on the impacts of climate change - such as access to education, migration, violent conflict and unemployment - on the lives of girls and boys.
- Educate old people on climate change to help them make sense of what they are experiencing and address their exclusion.
- Include old people in the definition of ‘vulnerable groups’, both in the successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol and in the guidelines for the UN’s Adaptation Fund
- Incorporate measures to build old people’s resilience into all climate change programmes (including the NAPAs and any global facility).
- Combine the experiences of old people (who can compare past and present) with scientific research to develop a grounded opinion on climate change effects that can better inform policy.

2. Community-based adaptation, empowerment and accountability

Ensor, J., 2009, ‘Governance for Community Based Adaptation’, Practical Action

This paper discusses a series of measures designed to ensure that adaptation funding supports those most vulnerable to climate change. The focus is on governance processes that are structured to link communities to the relevant decision making institutions and that enable the participation of civil society in identifying priorities, developing adaptation plans and monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness to ensure local interests are being met. It explores models of governance and participation that are known to be effective in other contexts, to identify approaches that national governments could adopt.

A key point made in the paper is that: “national level action to integrate climate change into policies and programmes, even when focused on sectors that are important to the poor such as water, health and agriculture, will not be sufficient to meet their needs. This is because the poor, marginalised or those remote from the focus of policy tend not to receive benefit from services delivered on a national scale: they belong to groups that government actions normally fail to reach.” (p 2)

The paper therefore strongly argues for greater support to community-based adaptation (CBA). CBA aims to enable communities to understand and integrate the concept of climate risk into their livelihood activities in order to cope with and respond to immediate climate variability and long-term climate change. To work, CBA requires an approach that empowers communities, building their capacities and opportunities to play an informed role in decision making. In this context, the paper focuses on how planning, support and decision making institutions can build relationships between those with responsibility to deliver information and resources and those with needs waiting to be met. (i.e. between duty bearers and rights holders) in a way which empowers communities.
The form of governance that is adopted is the key to determining which voices are heard in decision making. Effective governance systems must be in place to enable civil society to engage in planning and monitoring adaptation, ensuring that policy agendas include a focus on the poor and vulnerable and that funding is channelled in a manner that enables appropriate resources to be allocated. National adaptation planning must incorporate local adaptation assessments into district and national strategies, with a specific focus on the poorest and most vulnerable. Civil society should also be involved in monitoring and review, so that a broad spectrum of stakeholders can contribute to assessments of progress towards local adaptive capacity and ensure that governments are kept up to date with the emerging reality of the local impacts of climate change.

The groups that represent civil society will vary depending on the role being played in these governance processes. However, in each case, civil society is defined by those voluntary civic and social groupings that exist in a particular context, including, but not limited to, community-based organisations, local, national and international NGOs, and faith-based organisations. Formal village governance structures that are community-based but linked to government may have a role in village planning processes, while other organisations may be more appropriate even where they are not broadly representative - for example, women’s or farmer groups. National or regional civil society umbrella organisations are also likely to have an important role to play in providing a coherent voice for local organisations in national forums. Throughout, the participation of civil society is essential to secure a voice for groups that are marginalised from political decision making. Constructing processes that are responsive to communities provides a mechanism for distributing financial support while building adaptive capacity.

Recommendations are summarised as follows:

- The need for community-based adaptation and a protected funding stream for its implementation must be recognised by national governments and their negotiating representatives.
- Governance of adaptation must prioritise the most vulnerable communities, be responsive to locally defined needs, maximise community level ownership, and be transparent and accountable at all stages of planning and implementation.
- Adaptation should be planned and monitored via a national stakeholder forum that includes civil society representation and builds from a process of localised participatory planning to ensure the voices of the most vulnerable are heard and acted on.
- Financial, human and technical resources must be prioritised for capacity building, both to support the active participation of government actors or service providers and communities in participatory planning and to ensure all stakeholders, including civil society, are able to maximise their contribution to national adaptation planning and monitoring.


This paper looks at the lessons and challenges emerging from community-based approaches to climate change adaptation including efforts to support poor vulnerable people to influence policy and be heard in key policy arenas.

- Communities find it difficult to access reliable climate data. For example, climate models are often not detailed enough to be of practical use to local communities. Furthermore, where data is available, knowledge is limited by, for example, lack of internet access.
There are different power structures within communities which need to be considered. Women, for example, are particularly affected by the impact of climate change, but their needs and wishes concerning adaptation are unlikely to be heard or acted upon.

Monitoring and evaluation of CBA activities is a challenge. Truly participatory CBA would devolve decision-making to the community level. However, this makes any centralised reporting or evaluation activity more difficult to coordinate.

Whilst CBA is focused on the community level, it cannot be carried out in isolation from other events and activities such as policymaking at the district, national and international levels.

Successful CBA programmes will ensure that communities are able to participate in identifying priorities and in planning, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing adaptation. Policymakers can improve their understanding of the needs and priorities of communities by taking part in 'invited' spaces, such as participatory scenario development workshops.

Development workers need to change professional behaviours and attitudes and learn to become facilitators and co-learners rather than 'teachers' or 'experts'.

There is still much to be done in developing a common understanding and language between the different fields that CBA draws upon (such as disaster relief and climate science), and in sharing experiences and good practice.

Continuing to document CBA processes in an honest and critical way is very important, both to improve practice and to share experience in little-documented areas, such as incorporating climate change adaptation into health policy.

http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3899
[adapted from GSDRC summary: http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3899]

This chapter assesses community-based approaches to climate change adaptation in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It finds that the principal threat to creating communities that can adapt successfully to climate change is institutional and political marginalisation. Governance and policy frameworks must be transformed in order to address exclusion.

The challenge of establishing an enabling policy environment for adapting to climate change is to take the principles and processes of community-based practice and embed them into the policies that govern administrative functions, decision-making and accountability. Adaptation carries enormous financial implications, but its main cost is political. The cost per beneficiary is reduced by the economies of scale that social movements generate.

The policy and practice of governments at all levels will need to change if access to information is to be improved.

Community development systems should be developed as an alternative to costly public service extension systems, with government providing a regulatory role and updating technical skills.

Research institutes must take up the research needs of smallholders on food production, processing and marketing, including disseminating relevant findings and running training courses for local NGOs.

Decision-making should be localised through networks of user groups linked to institutions. Policies would then become more responsive to local knowledge of environmental risks and opportunities.

Advocacy for change can be supported through enhanced relationships between community-based networks and institutions and through facilitated policy discussions.
The UNFCCC and Adaptation Fund Board should make adaptation funds subject to a partnership agreement with civil society stakeholders or NGOs with experience in implementation programmes.


This brief argues that first and foremost, effective climate adaptation requires an enabling environment—one that grants the poor the rights, resources and access they need to sustain and benefit from ecosystems, governments and markets. It argues that the poor, and in particular the resource-dependent rural poor, must be a central concern in any effective adaptation funding effort, and that one of the major pillars of an effective adaptation strategy is support for an enabling environment that allows them to build their resilience through natural resource management.

In particular it notes that: “What the rural, resource-dependent poor fundamentally require are governance practices that empower community members to manage their ecosystem assets, especially in times of change. When the poor are given power over their ecosystem resources and incentives to use their power for long-term stewardship, their capacities for resource management, innovation, and wealth creation can emerge […] The same findings are likely to apply to climate change: granting the poor resource rights, representation in governance processes, participation rights, and fair access to markets can build the resilience of communities and help them to adapt to their changing climate. (p 3)

Priority areas for investment include:

- promoting tenure reform for improved resource access and livelihood security
- providing market access through regulatory reform to benefit small producers
- decentralising authority over natural resources to local levels
- providing access to information
- promoting representative and fair natural resource management and use institutions at the local level
- facilitating community participation, especially of vulnerable groups, in natural resource management
- fostering local support organisations
- communicating success stories
- establishing good governance metrics for adaptation.


This position paper argues that ensuring that sufficient funds are available for adaptation which reaches the most vulnerable people requires: a) massive scale-up of funding for adaptation in line with needs; b) systematic identification and prioritisation of vulnerable communities, populations and people, which take into account gender considerations; c) inclusive and transparent decision-making on the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of adaptation activities, including the active and meaningful participation of vulnerable groups; and d) mechanisms to support community-based adaptation.

Systematic identification and prioritisation of vulnerable communities, populations and people, which take into account gender considerations (see http://www.careclimatechange.org/cvca/CARE_CVCAHandbook.pdf)
It is imperative that the international agreement and framework for adaptation assistance to the developing world ensure that those most at risk and least equipped to manage the consequences are receiving support, either in the form of direct adaptation assistance or broader infrastructure, service and policy reforms that facilitate community-based adaptation efforts. The post-2012 agreement must channel funds to the people who need them most. This requires:

- **Human Vulnerability and Climate Risk Assessments:** Eligible developing country governments seeking international adaptation funding should be assisted to carry out human vulnerability and climate risk assessments and show how priorities in their proposed adaptation plans and budgets derive from and respond to such assessments. Vulnerability assessments should be gender sensitive and involve local stakeholders. Results need to be disseminated widely and applied in conjunction with climate risk assessments.

- **Inclusive and Participatory Assessments and Planning.** Identifying and prioritising the most vulnerable populations and ensuring that resources reach them and meet their needs require the full participation of poor communities and marginalised groups in all stages of adaptation activities.

- **Prioritisation of Most Vulnerable People in National Adaptation Action Plans and Strategies.** Global adaptation funding should support only those national adaptation plans and strategies that demonstrate an inclusive and participatory process of planning and the prioritisation of actions and investments, based on human vulnerability and climate risk assessments.

**Inclusive and transparent decision-making**

For adaptation plans and activities to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people, they must be guaranteed a role in decision-making processes. Many lessons can be taken from developments in the realm of development effectiveness, the experience of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, and elements of existing adaptation funds, such as the Kyoto Protocol’s Adaptation Fund.

- **Resources for inclusive and participatory assessment and planning processes must be provided up front.** Essential to such processes is clear, accessible, timely, accurate and complete information, based on the latest expert assessments of climate change impacts relevant to a given region and any promising experiences and lessons for reducing vulnerability, building resilience and adapting in similar environments.

- **Representatives from vulnerable communities, populations and people and from civil society should be on the Board of any future international adaptation funding regime and have full participation and voting rights.** Board representation should be gender equitable.

- **There should be assurances of representation of most affected groups directly – or, at a minimum, through civil society representatives with clear, strong links to them – on an Adaptation Technical Panel, or any similar institutional arrangement to be agreed upon.**

- **The global monitoring and evaluation system for any future adaptation funding regime must include an independent capacity that can provide external direction and support to annual monitoring processes and more occasional evaluations of the outcomes of developing country adaptation strategies and investments supported by global funding.** Monitoring should include regular assessments of progress made in fulfilling basic civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural human rights through adaptation programmes and policies.

- **As proposed strategies, implementation reports, and requests for grant instalments are submitted by national governments, it will be crucial for space to be provided for civil society to review and comment on the contents – via posting on the web and allowing sufficient time for concerned groups to review and provide feedback – and for such comments to be taken seriously in international level decisions on further assistance.**

- **In disbursing funding to developing countries, any future global adaptation finance regime should support the establishment of a coordinating mechanism within countries (or**
enhancement of comparable existing mechanisms) to represent all relevant stakeholders, build on and coordinate a range of adaptation institutions and resources in country, and spearhead national adaptation planning and monitoring and evaluation.

- Strong consideration should be given to mandating subnational coordinating committees that can connect more easily with and represent local-level realities and perceptions of what can and should be done as part of an effective and appropriate adaptation strategy.
- In proposals for international funding, developing countries should document 1) significant most affected population representation in country coordinating mechanisms, 2) legitimate selection or election processes for such representatives, and 3) effective access to information for affected populations and their meaningful participation in planning and monitoring and evaluation of plan and budget implementation.

Mechanisms to support community-based adaptation

The most effective way to ensure that adaptation funds help the most vulnerable people is through community-based adaptation initiatives which explicitly aim to build their adaptive capacity. In CARE’s view, community-based adaptation involves action not only at the local level, but also the creation of an enabling environment. This requires the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, from vulnerable people, to local governments and civil society organisations, to national-level policymakers in vulnerable countries. The post-2012 agreement must put in place mechanisms to ensure that all of these stakeholders can play appropriate roles, and that the global adaptation effort is focused on appropriate actions to meet the needs of the world’s most vulnerable people.

Gender & Adaptation

Research indicates that when women control household income, it is more likely to be spent on human development. Research also shows that women are more risk averse than men and are more likely, therefore, to take decisions that minimise risk. Empowering women in household and community affairs is, therefore, likely to yield decisions that strengthen adaptive capacity. The post-2012 agreement must ensure the incorporation of gender considerations into vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning processes and programme design. Women’s and men’s active and meaningful participation in prioritising, designing and implementing adaptation activities is essential.

See also:
CARE’s Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa
http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/ALP.pdf

This document outlines CARE International’s recently launched ‘Adaptation Learning Programme (ALP) for Africa’. The overarching goal of the programme is to increase the capacity of vulnerable households in Sub-Saharan Africa to adapt to climate variability and change, by:

- developing and applying innovative approaches to Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) and promoting CBA best practices
- empowering communities and civil society organisations in decision-making on adaptation
- influencing national, regional and international policies and programmes

See also:
CARE, 2009, ‘Making National Adaptation Plans Work for the Poor’, CARE Climate Change
http://www.careclimatechange.org/images/stories/Adaptation/C4D_Case_Study-NAPAs.pdf

Based on analysis of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) processes in Malawi and Niger, this brief puts forth recommendations for how future financial arrangements for adaptation can better support inclusive, transparent national adaptation planning in LDCs, which
recognises differences in human vulnerability and prioritises the needs of most vulnerable populations.


This report draws on case studies from around the world and on Oxfam’s experience working with rural communities. It sets out what is needed to enable people living in poverty to adapt to climate change, and a range of interventions that are available. Oxfam’s approach brings together experience in the areas of livelihoods, natural resource management, and disaster risk reduction, with robust decision making in order to manage uncertainty and risk, and to build adaptive capacity from household to national and global levels.

Of particular relevance is chapter 3.2 (pp 16-27) which argues that empowering communities to manage risk and uncertainty requires both bottom-up and top-down processes. Making a change at the local level requires community-based action supported by high-level political will and devolved resources and decision making.

Climate change impacts, vulnerability, adaptive capacity, and barriers to adaptation are location-specific and will change over time, but the processes needed for adaptation that supports the most vulnerable will be similar. National adaptive capacity is one part of that puzzle. Community design and implementation of adaptation strategies suited to their location is another. A crucial element of both is the role of local level government and services. They must be empowered and resourced to act as intermediaries, linking the bottom-up and top-down processes.


This paper identifies lessons learned from the World Bank’s Development Marketplace 2009 which brought together 346 proposals on how to address adaptation to climate change. Based on these, it recommends that support to community-based adaptation should: exploit its strong local grounding and synergies with development; help connect local initiatives to higher levels; and use complementary approaches to address policy issues.

3. Empowering women, children and older people in the context of climate change

Women


This brief looks at how to incorporate gender-transformative activities in adaptation strategies, by applying CARE’s Women’s Empowerment Framework (http://pqdl.care.org/sii/Pages/Women's%20Empowerment%20SII%20Framework.aspx) to climate change adaptation programmes, addressing the three core dimensions of agency, relations and structures. To achieve this, adaptation interventions must:
be based on a comprehensive, participatory and gender-sensitive analysis of vulnerability to climate change (including the social, economic and political determinants of vulnerability)
recognise differential vulnerability within countries, communities and households; and target adaptation strategies accordingly
build on the existing knowledge and capacities of men, women, boys and girls
aim to empower vulnerable women and girls to build their adaptive capacity
be planned and implemented with the participation of both women and men, including the most vulnerable groups in the community
promote adaptation policies and programmes at local, national and international levels that meet the specific needs of poor women and men
support men and women to access the resources, rights and opportunities they need to adapt to their changing environment
promote gender equality as a long-term goal.

UNFPA/WEDO, 2009, ‘Climate Change Connections, Gender and Population: Resource Kit’
http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=12053
Chapter 2 of this resource kit argues that climate policies that are gender-sensitive are more likely to be effective. P 14 of the guide provides a number of recommendations for policy-makers in this regard:

Design global climate change agreements to:
  o be flexible and responsive to varied national and regional needs
  o include new mechanisms for additional, adequate funding that explicitly addresses the most vulnerable populations and regions

Design and implement climate policies and actions at local, national and international levels to:
  o include monitoring, evaluation and flexibility to allow policy adjustment when needed
  o uphold a participatory and community-based approach
  o institutionalize wide stakeholder involvement with mechanisms to ensure equitable participation of women throughout all stages of the process
  o draw on and value women’s unique knowledge and coping mechanisms
  o develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and evaluate the processes of stakeholder inclusion and responses to their input
  o collect gender-disaggregated data to inform programme development
  o perform gender analysis to understand the different roles of women and men
  o develop climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes that use gender analysis to improve the welfare of women and girls
  o evaluate local and regional population dynamics
  o incorporate climate change objectives into national plans
  o develop, deploy and disseminate sustainable technology that is responsive to women and men

Establish coherence among the institutions responsible for climate change, gender, human rights and health policy.
Build on global goals and commitments and the solid framework of good examples of gender language from existing policies and agreements; don’t start from scratch.
This document provides guidance on mainstreaming gender considerations in community-based adaptation (CBA) initiatives. Of particular relevance is Chapter 5 (pp 19-38). Pp 22-23 identify the following steps appropriate for CBA projects:

- analyse the effects of climate change from both male and female perspectives
- develop and apply gender-sensitive criteria and indicators
- include statistics on women as well as on men when collecting and presenting data
- capitalize on the talents and contributions of both women and men
- set targets for female participation in activities
- make women’s equality, access to information, economic resources and education a priority
- ensure that women are represented in 50% of all decision-making processes
- incorporate a gender perspective when designing and implementing projects
- focus on gender differences in capabilities to cope with climate change adaptation and mitigation, and
- undertake a gender analysis of all budget lines and financial instruments.

Furthermore, gender analysis is a prerequisite for ensuring that CBA projects promote gender equality. Gender analysis can and should be applied throughout the project cycle. Some of the gender analysis tools relevant to CBA projects include: the Moser Framework, the Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) Framework, the Social Relations Approach (SRA) Framework, the Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework, and the Harvard Analytical Framework and People-Oriented Planning.

This publication demonstrates the link between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, while contributing to the ongoing global effort to promote gender equality in socio-economic development.

It highlights initiatives that have successfully used disaster risk reduction as a tool to adapt to climate change and reduce risk and vulnerabilities in various parts of the world. The good practices selected show how disaster risk reduction can be integrated into climate change adaptation initiatives to reduce people’s vulnerabilities to the impact of climate change and weather-related disasters, paying attention in particular to women’s needs and priorities.

The first section emphasises women’s knowledge and capacity as environmental and natural resource managers. It also highlights the importance of land use and management, and alternative livelihood options in the context of climate change.

The second section highlights women’s participation in community decision-making processes, showing the importance of building women’s and girls’ capacity in disaster risk reduction, and demonstrating their potential for leadership. One example is the Tsunami Response Programme, in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands supported by ActionAid (pp 34-38). The project built women’s resilience to disasters through empowering them as participants in community decision-making. This was achieved through a Participatory Vulnerability Analysis that gave women space...
for awareness raising, sharing experiences, skills-training, and forming participatory women’s group and community groups. Eventually, this led to activities identified and implemented by women, such as collectively learning to swim and to fish, and gaining financial and economic management skills. The initiative also increased women’s resilience to weather and climate related hazards such as floods and cyclones.

The third section briefly showcases some specific tools used to mainstream gender into planning and policy development, to assess vulnerability, and to design adaptive strategies.

Oxfam, 2009, ‘Climate Change and Gender Justice’

This online book covers a wide spectrum of climate change related topics from a gender perspective, including: gendered vulnerability; disaster-preparedness and adaptation; mitigation initiatives; and advocacy aimed at influencing climate policies.

http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/Climate_Change_DFID.pdf

This paper discusses links between climate change and gender inequality. It finds that involving women fully in adaptation and mitigation processes will help to redress gender inequality and ensure that the human impacts of climate change are more effectively addressed. Removing obstacles to women's participation requires support for grassroots awareness-raising, confidence building, advocacy and leadership training programmes.

Children and older people

[See also GSDRC summary: http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3900]

This report recommends that children's issues be made central to the international human security agenda and that children themselves be given a larger role to play in influencing and creating policy to address climate change. Empowered children are dynamic and ultimately powerful protagonists for protecting and improving the environment and have a right to be involved not only locally, but also in the current international negotiation process. It offers some recommendations for improving the ways in which climate change and human security policy affect children:

- States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be urged to integrate practical multi-sectoral considerations that bring climate change and environmental degradation into sector-wide approaches and poverty reduction strategies.
- National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and other regional and municipal adaptation plans should incorporate a children’s dimension. Specifically, it is important that NAPAs and other plans be coordinated with ministries such as education, health and youth, as well as give special attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of children of different ages. It is crucial for stakeholders to support governments and encourage municipalities and communities to raise awareness and build capacity among children to address disaster risk reduction, community risk mapping, and preparedness.
Many opportunities exist for the international community to generate support for community empowerment, shared learning between countries and communities and field activities designed for results. A platform for shared learning of best practices and lessons learned specific to issues related to intergenerational implications and to the needs and capacities of children can add value to all stakeholders.

Support is needed for improved energy efficiency and conservation and increased access to clean household energy. There are opportunities in renewable energy solutions for schools and health centres in rural communities off the grid, and support for vocational training and microenterprise opportunities in the energy sector for young people.

United Nations organisations, donors, governments and civil society can work in cooperation and collaboration to reduce and mitigate risk through environmental education and social and behavioural change.

Funds directed to operational research projects in developing countries that are designed with baseline indicators and monitoring guidelines will serve the dual purpose of substantiating anecdotal assumptions regarding the capacities of children under Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, while providing practical support to youth-led activities and increasing community resilience overall.

Further approaches to research on climate change and children should be explored. It is vital to understand the importance of the potential role of longitudinal studies, the identification of economic and social indicators and trends, and opportunities to contribute scientific data to future IPCC and other intergovernmental reports.

Children in a Changing Climate, 2009, 'A Right to Participate: Securing Children’s Role in Climate Change Adaptation'

There remains a major gap in determining what child-sensitive or child-led adaptation looks like, despite a great deal of experience from other fields, sectors and child-centred development approaches. For example, child-centred development agencies are beginning to engage with children on adapting to the impacts of climate change, drawing heavily on experiences of child-led disaster risk reduction work. This publication introduces the policy spaces, the challenges and the case for children’s participation based on their unique experiences, knowledge and capabilities. It presents policy recommendations for addressing the needs of children under climate change. These include:

- Ensuring children’s voices are heard in national and international policy in line with the UNFCCC’s priority for adaptation - to enhance the integration of climate change issues into national, sectoral and donor planning and policies, including through a bottom-up process.
- Strategies for climate change adaptation in developing countries should make use of strategies and tools that have proven to be effective in dealing with the weather-related hazards that will be exacerbated by climate change.
- Adaptation funds should be allocated to reduce the most urgent underlying and growing vulnerabilities to climate change and their use should be informed by successful community-based experiences in vulnerability reduction. There is a pressing need to bring together local knowledge together with scientific expertise on climate impacts to understand adaptation needs and solutions.
- Ensuring that children have access to better quality education is a major priority for the climate change adaptation agenda. Better educated children will have better livelihood opportunities, which is one of the strongest forms of climate insurance.
- All new development projects should examine impacts on boys’ and girls’ adaptive capacity as part of project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Bilateral donor research strategies should prioritise research into the indirect impacts of climate
change, such as access to education, migration, violent conflict and unemployment, upon the lives of girls and boys.

- Effective adaptation to climate change is essentially a matter of better governance – the capacity of government institutions, the state’s efficiency in providing basic services, and the influence of regional and international cooperation. Without open, consultative and effective government, efforts towards climate sensitive development and adaptation cannot take root. Climate change provides a pressing advocacy space through which children can hold their governments to account.


Based on field research in El Salvador and the Philippines, this paper examines how children’s voices are represented and heard in disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy and decision-making spaces, and assesses the level of capacity children have for preventing disasters. It explores three linked areas of enquiry that help to frame the emerging ‘child-centred approach to DRR’. First, it considers a history of youth empowerment through children’s active participation in decision-making forums. Second, it looks at whether the international human rights architecture provides for a child’s right to protection from disasters; and third, it asks whether children can be effective as communicators of risk within their own households and communities.

Walden, D., Hall, N. and Hawrylyshyn, K., 2009, ‘Participation and Protection: Children’s Involvement in Climate Change Debates’, IDS In Focus Policy Briefing
http://www.ids.ac.uk/download.cfm?objectid=FD90E754-F441-69D7-81A3016272679194

This briefing explains how children’s contribution to global climate change decision-making is achievable and can benefit everyone, not just children. It argues that, despite sceptics’ accusations of ‘tokenism’ and adult ‘manipulation’, when they are well-informed about climate change and appropriately supported, children can meaningfully participate in global debates. Organisations that support children’s participation must provide appropriate knowledge and support mechanisms to make this participation effective whilst also addressing concerns of safety and wellbeing.

See also:
Plan, 2009, ‘Children’s Right to be Heard in Global Climate Change Negotiations’, Plan International

See also:
Bartlett, S., 2008, ‘Climate Change and Urban Children Impacts and Implications for Adaptation in Low- and Middle-income Countries’, IIED
http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10556IIED.pdf

HelpAge, 2009, ‘Witness to Climate Change: Learning from Older People’s Experience’, Briefing, HelpAge International
[Adapted from GSDRC summary http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3927]
This paper is based on research with older men and women from Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. It looks at older people's experience and awareness of climate change, and calls for better inclusion of their views in developing adaptive strategies.

The study reveals that old people are excluded from debates on climate change from the grassroots up to policy and international levels. Even where there is a willingness to include older people, a difficulty is that they are not familiar with the language and concepts of 'climate change'. National government and civil society programmes tend to be aimed at younger age groups.

Policy recommendations include the following:

- Educate old people on climate change to help them make sense of what they are experiencing and address their exclusion
- Include old people in the definition of 'vulnerable groups' both in the successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol and in the guidelines for the UN's Adaptation Fund
- Incorporate measures to build old people's resilience into all climate change programmes (including the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) and any global facility)
- Combine the experiences of old people (who can compare past and present) with scientific research to develop a grounded opinion on climate change effects that can better inform policy.

4. Other relevant approaches

**Accountable climate finance**


This paper explores how the set of new proposed climate funds will be collected, distributed, and accounted for at the international level, and the mechanisms needed to ensure that recipient countries manage these funds in ways that are transparent and responsive to the needs and input of the public.


This paper reviews the governance structures and operational procedures of 10 international and national climate finance mechanisms, to evaluate how far they address three core dimensions of legitimacy (power, responsibility and accountability).


This paper discusses how to ensure that the UNFCCC’s Adaptation fund targets those most vulnerable to climate change focussing on direct access, project design and implementation, governance and transparency, and cost-effectiveness and monitoring.

This paper argues that financing instruments and mechanisms committed to climate change activities in mitigation and adaption need to take gender-differentiated impacts into account in funds design and operationalisation as well as concrete project financing. In particular, it notes that, as there is still a lot of reluctance to consider the relevance of gender in making climate financing mechanisms effective contributors to long-term sustainable development, any gender-focused advocacy strategy addressing the issue of financing will have to be multipronged and look for a variety of access points and opportunities.

Mitchell, T., Tanner, T. and Lussier, K., 2007, ‘We Know What We Need. South Asian Women Speak Out on Climate Change Adaptation’ ActionAid
[Adapted from GSDRC summary: http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3916]

This study of women in rural communities in the Ganga river basin shows that they have started to adapt to climate change and can clearly articulate what they need to secure and sustain their livelihoods. However, they need access to resources in order to implement effective strategies and overcome constraints. It therefore argues that, in order to ensure that existing and future adaptation financing is able to support those women most at risk of climate change, proactive and inclusive efforts must prioritise the needs of poor women.

GSDRC Topic Guide on Climate Change Adaptation: Financing Adaptation

This page provides an introduction to the rapidly changing world of adaptation finance, delivered through both the UNFCCC and the proliferation of multilateral and bilateral channels. It looks at sources, delivery, allocation and accountability of climate finance. Key issues include the uncertainty and disagreement on appropriate principles and mechanisms for managing funds, how funding will be generated, and the extent to which it represents ‘new and additional’ resources over and above existing overseas development assistance (ODA) commitments.

Social policy and climate change adaptation

http://www.ids.ac.uk/download.cfm?file=wp345.pdf%20

Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) refers to a series of measures which aims to build resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable people to climate change by combining elements of social protection (SP), disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). This paper provides an initial assessment of the ways in which these elements are being brought together in development policy and practice. It finds that full integration of SP, DRR and CCA is relatively limited although there has been significant progress in combining SP and DRR in the last ten years. It also notes that projects that combine elements of SP, DRR and CCA tend to emphasise broad poverty and vulnerability reduction goals relative to those that do not.
http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=07FAyBQVxCMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Social+Dimensions+of+Climate+Change:+Equity+and+Vulnerability+in+a+Warming+World.&source=bl&ots=0wWZWBDQn6&sig=J3Bn86BGKXdVCZ35E+DR4L-6YY&hl=en&ei=L-klTa20Isw7hAfYuKy6Dw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=empower&f=false

This book aims to amplify the voices of those who are most at risk from climate change and to establish the basis for a research and policy agenda on the social dimensions of climate change.

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALPROTECTION/Resources/Climate_Change_and_SRM_FINAL.pdf?resourceurlname=Climate_Change_and_SRM_FINAL.pdf

This paper presents a conceptual framework to address human vulnerability to climate change drawing upon social risk management and asset-based approaches. It identifies ‘no-regrets’ adaptation interventions, ie actions that generate net social benefits under all future scenarios of climate change and impacts. It also make the case for greater support for community-based adaptation and social protection.


This section of the GSDRC topic guide on climate change adaptation presents a range of social policies (namely social protection and risk transfer approaches) which are increasingly deemed necessary to ensure that sectoral adaptation interventions are made more equitable, and to support poorer households and communities to cope with current and future weather extremes and manage climate risks.

5. Tools and guidance

World Resources Institute: Rapid Institutional Analysis for Adaptation (ARIA)
http://www.wri.org/project/access-initiative/aria

ARIA is a tool for civil-society organizations to aid national governments in responding to climate change. The tool examines four qualities of decision making:

- Comprehensiveness
- Transparency and participation
- Capacity
- Accountability

National coalitions of NGOs focus on identifying gaps in systems for vulnerability and impacts assessment, long-term planning, coordination, information management, and climate risk reduction. Providing tools for civil society organizations to evaluate institutional capacity is a key component of a broader strategy to focus adaptation efforts on the needs of vulnerable populations, the ecosystems they depend on, and the systems of governance which aid in development and resilience.
See also:

This paper presents preliminary findings on the piloting of the WRI’s Rapid Institutional Analysis for Adaptation (ARIA) methodology in Bolivia and Ghana. Overall, it appears that the tool is capable of generating policy-relevant information that can form the basis of future advocacy.

World Resources Institute, 2009, 'The National Adaptive Capacity Framework: Key Institutional Functions for a Changing Climate', Pilot Draft, World Resources Institute

The National Adaptive Capacity framework (NAC) identifies national-level functions that all countries will need to perform to adapt effectively to climate change: assessment, prioritisation, coordination, information management and climate risk reduction. The framework can be used to assess how well functions are being performed and to identify opportunities and priorities for building adaptive capacity and implementing key activities.

IISD, Intercooperation, SEI and IUCN: CRISTAL - Community-based Risk Screening Tool - Adaptation and Livelihoods http://www.cristaltool.org/

The Community-based Risk Screening Tool – Adaptation and Livelihoods (CRiSTAL) is designed to help project planners and managers integrate climate change adaptation and risk reduction into community-level projects.

CARE International - Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook

The CVCA methodology provides a framework for analyzing vulnerability and capacity to adapt to climate change at the community level. It provides a framework for dialogue within communities, as well as between communities and other stakeholders. The results provide a solid foundation for the identification of practical strategies to facilitate community-based adaptation to climate change.

Red Cross/Red Crescent - Climate Guide

This guide contains six thematic modules: Getting started, Dialogues, Communications, Disaster management, community risk reduction and Health and Care. Each module begins with a background section with based on Red Cross/Red Crescent experiences and perspectives, followed by a “how-to” section with specific step-by-step guidance.

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center - Child-oriented Participatory Risk Assessment and Planning (COPRAP) Toolkit
http://www.gdnonline.org/resources/ADPC_CDP_COPRAP_toolkit.pdf

COPRAP is a tool to assess disaster risks and particular strengths and weaknesses of children and the community through participatory means, and to collectively devise risk reduction solutions based on the results of the participatory assessment.
6. Additional information

**Author:**
This report was prepared by Andrew McDevitt, [andrew@gsdrc.org](mailto:andrew@gsdrc.org)

**Contributors:**
Saleemul Huq, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
Aarjan Dixit, World Resources Institute (WRI)
Jonathan Ensor, Practical Action
Kelly Hawrylyshyn, Plan International
Caroline Moser, University of Manchester
Rachel Baird, Christian Aid
Donna Goodman, Earth Child Institute

**About helpdesk research reports:** This helpdesk report is based on 3 days of desk-based research. Helpdesk reports are designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues; and a summary of some of the best literature available. Experts are contacted during the course of the research, and those able to provide input within the short time-frame are acknowledged.

**Need help finding consultants?** If you need to commission more in-depth research, or need help finding and contracting consultants for additional work, please contact [consultants@gsdrc.org](mailto:consultants@gsdrc.org) (further details at [www.gsdrc.org/go.cfm?path=/go/helpdesk/find-a-consultant&](http://www.gsdrc.org/go.cfm?path=/go/helpdesk/find-a-consultant&))