

Call for abstracts:

Impact of Climate Change and Variability on Pastoralist Women in sub-Saharan Africa

Climate change and variability is one of the global development challenges which is expected to have wide-ranging impacts such as rising sea levels, increasing severity of droughts and floods, displacement of huge populations, variability in precipitation, changes in growing seasons, etc. Whilst climate change and variability affect people across the world, certain groups are more vulnerable to climate shocks and likely to experience more severe consequences than others. One of these groups is the pastoralist community especially pastoral women.

An estimated 50 million pastoralists live in sub-Saharan Africa inhabiting arid and semi-arid regions. The literature indicates that livelihoods of pastoral communities are dependent on climate-sensitive resources such as water and pasture. Pastoralists in Africa are also vulnerable people who often suffer repeated, multiple and mutually reinforcing shocks to their families, their settlements and their livelihoods due to famine, drought, floods and other climate change induced disasters. In these communities' women are main actors in agricultural productions and water collections – activities that are susceptible to risks of climate change and variability. Women are not only playing key roles in managing the natural environment but also heavily affected by the outcomes of climate change and variability.

Various studies document the nexus between gender and climate change. A London School of Economics study of disasters in 141 countries shows that gender differences in deaths from natural disasters are directly linked to women's economic and social rights. An Oxfam Report on the 2004 Asia Tsunami raised alarms about the gender dimension of the problem as the majority of those killed and those least able to recover were women. Some reports indicate that women provide up to 90 percent of rural poor people's food and produce 60 - 80 percent of the food in most developing countries, but they are insufficiently represented in decision-making processes on community-based climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. The reports also indicate that women's relative lack of education and access to information on projected climate change impacts, such as rainfall patterns, or effective natural resource management strategies, such as efficient water use, crop diversification or rotational grazing limit their ability to cope with or adapt to the effects of climate variability and change. Other studies, however, indicate that women are the best managers of natural resources because of their closeness to and high dependence on natural resources; their local knowledge systems are also considered important for climate adaptation.

Studies on the link between climate change and variability in sub-Saharan Africa are, however, limited. There are no in-depth country studies or comparative studies that assess the gender dimensions of climate change and variability in sub-Saharan Africa, especially on pastoral communities. No proper examination has been done yet on the important insights

and knowledge that pastoralist women developed on climate change adoption through their experiences in their community and households. Except for case studies from a few countries (Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa), the positive contributions of women on climate change are not yet well recognized, studied and documented; women's intimate knowledge about resource management and adaptation skills are not well researched in eastern and southern Africa.

OSSREA appreciates the need to comprehensively understand the gender dimensions of climate change and variability among pastoral societies by assessing and examining:

- gender-related risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities associated with climate change and variability on pastoralist communities;
- gender differentiated impacts of climate change and variability on pastoral communities;
- level of awareness of pastoralist communities on the occurrence, severity, dynamics and impacts of climate change and variability on pastoral women;
- pastoralist women's historical, traditional and new coping and adaptation mechanisms to climate change and variability and the dynamics;
- success stories and challenges of policies, programs and projects that are designed by national governments to address the negative impacts of climate change and variability on pastoral communities especially women; and
- the role of pastoral women in planning and decision-making on issues of climate change and variability at community and national levels.

OSSREA cordially invites interested researchers to conduct studies on the above and related issues in any of the countries in eastern and southern Africa.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicants should be nationals of countries of Eastern and Southern Africa and should be based in an institution in Eastern and Southern Africa.
- Applicants must hold at least a Masters degree in social science from an accredited institution. Female applicants, qualified in gender studies and have good track record of academic research are encouraged.
- Applications by a team of scholars, especially senior and junior scholars from different disciplines in social sciences, are highly encouraged provided that the authors fulfill the eligibility criteria indicated above.

Applicants are required to submit the following:

- Current curriculum vitae of the applicant(s), including age, gender, educational level, nationality, and a detailed address (P. O. Box, Phone, Fax & E-mail).
- Abstract that includes: (a) Title (b) Background and Problem statement (c) key research questions or hypothesis (d) objectives (s) and (e) methodology.

Selection of papers:

- OSSREA will setup a team of jurors to select the acceptable abstracts. After notification the author(s) will prepare draft articles which will be sent to reviewers. Comments will be communicated to authors who after incorporating them will send their final drafts to OSSREA.
- Articles should be original and include data from primary and secondary sources.
- Applicants who are at present participating in ongoing OSSREA research and book projects are not allowed to submit abstracts for this project.
- Applicants should only submit one abstract either individually or in a group.

Incentives for authors:

- On acceptance of the final draft article, OSSREA will pay the authors a lump sum of US\$ 5000 (five thousand). The accepted article will be edited and published as a chapter in a book.

Deadlines:

- Abstracts should be submitted to OSSREA by e-mail before 22nd August 2011.

Completed applications and inquiries should be addressed to:

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