

Info Note

Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management in Tanzania: A Gender Policy Review

Findings from a desk review and two exploratory studies in Kilolo and Lushoto Districts

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Key messages

- The inclusion of gender considerations in agriculture and natural resource management policies is of paramount importance if Tanzania is to create sustainable, inclusive and gender-sensitive interventions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. However, the disharmony existing between the different policies and sectors suggests the need for a planning framework that harmonizes and coordinates gender integration in policies and sectoral plans.
- The policy documents remain silent on the role that gender plays in the different sub-sectors and consequently the proposed actions and strategies also remain gender-blind. In addition, gender is equated to women's issues in most of the documents, presenting a narrow approach to gender and leaving untapped the important role that men could have in closing the gender gap in agriculture and natural resource management.
- Several of the reviewed documents relegate the achievement of these gender considerations to the NGO sector. There is need for an enhanced institutional arrangement and to mainstream gender throughout all sections of the policy documents for an improved performance.
- There is a mismatch between the identified gender constraints that the documents present and the suggested policy solutions, and a lack of clear strategies by which the gender goals present in the policies could be achieved.
- The proposed gender policy interventions do not yet have the potential to dramatically change or address current gender gaps. However, there are opportunities to redress the situation. First, three key national policies are under review (i.e. the National Environment Policy, the National Forest Policy and the Land Policy) and could sufficiently integrate gender. Second, planning for CSA offers a great opportunity to holistically integrate gender across implementation levels.

Introduction

More than twenty years have passed since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, where gender mainstreaming was acknowledged as an indispensable global strategy for achieving gender equality. Since then, Tanzania has undoubtedly made efforts in mainstreaming gender in its national policies and strategies (MCDGC, 2012). However, to date some of its policies and strategies still remain gender blind or have not prioritized gender as an area for immediate action. This insufficient consideration to gender in some policy documents, coupled with limited enforcement of the policies that were drafted as gender sensitive, might hinder progress towards gender equality in the country. With climate change increasingly threatening rural livelihoods in Tanzania (Orindi and Murray 2005; Yanda et al. 2013), the need to incorporate gender considerations in the policies and programs dealing directly and indirectly with climate change issues becomes even more apparent. Indeed, if policies fail to acknowledge the different roles, opportunities, perspectives and challenges that women and men have in the face of climate change, the adaptation and mitigation measures proposed in the policies will likely fail or may even ultimately exacerbate gender inequalities (Ncube et al., 2011).

This Info Note examines the state of gender responsiveness of fourteen agriculture, climate change and natural resource management policy documents and strategy plans in Tanzania. The desk-review focuses on mainland Tanzania, acknowledging that the Zanzibar Archipelago is governed, in some cases, by independent regulations. The study was supplemented by twenty semi-structured interviews with different stakeholders, including policy-makers, NGO representatives and smallholder farmers in Lushoto and Kilolo Districts.

The need to mainstream gender throughout the policy documents

In several of the reviewed policies all gender considerations were consigned into one thematic section, normally in the crosscutting themes chapter of the policy or strategy (see Tables 1 and 2). This “gender section” tends to be overly general, with no clear specific courses of action and, where explicit mention of women are made, their disadvantaged position in the sector is overly emphasized. On the contrary, the differentiated needs, constraints and opportunities of men and other social groupings are normally overlooked. In this sense, gender is equated to women’s issues in most of the documents, presenting a narrow approach to gender and leaving untapped the important role that men could have in closing the gender gap in agriculture and natural resource management. This paring of gender to women’s issues was also prevailing in the discussions held with many of the interview partners. Fewer policies and strategies, however, have mainstreamed gender in several sections, providing a clearer picture of the specific gender challenges that need to be addressed in each of the subsectors (e.g. National Agriculture Policy, 2013).

Matching the identified gender constraints and suggested policy solutions

In most of the reviewed documents there is a substantial mismatch between the identified gender constraints that the documents present and the suggested policy solutions. The proposed courses of action to tackle gender issues remain weak and disconnected from the established problem, even in the more gender-progressive policies. A clear example of this is found in the National Environmental Policy (1997), where even if the need to tackle the root causes for gender inequality is emphasized in the document, the proposed policy actions do not reflect how they would achieve this. The extent to which the Environmental Act of 2004 also takes these gender interventions as legally binding is very restricted, only introducing in the text gender quota systems to ensure women’s participation in environmental governance systems. Many of the reviewed documents lack clear strategies to achieve the gender goals described in the policies. This explains in part why practitioners are unable to implement gender strategies even when gender is included in policy documents. Moreover, the strategies pay little attention to the difficulties that implementing some of these gender sensitive activities in a patriarchal society could have, and to the possible tensions that this could have with traditional and cultural beliefs. This difficulty of changing mindsets in a patriarchal society together with insufficient training on gender issues were highlighted in the interviews as the main difficulties to effective implementation of gender policy and programs.

Table 1: Summary of gender provisions and gender gaps in the reviewed policy documents

National Policy	Gender Provision	Gender Gaps
Land Policy (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide women with rights to inherit and acquire land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not legislate ownership of land between spouses. Leaves inheritance of clan lands to be governed by custom and tradition.
National Environmental Policy (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes women as key players in the management of natural resources. Acknowledges the need of addressing structural causes of poverty and reducing gender-based inequality for environmentally sound development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear strategies to address structural causes of gender inequality (e.g. access to productive resources, education and healthcare) The role that different groups of men have in natural resource management is not directly considered. Except sections 43 and 44, all other policy sections are gender-blind.
Environmental Management Act (2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandates 30% of the members of the Environmental Management Boards to be women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only provisions for quota system - limits the legally-binding gender issues that the National Environmental Policy claims need to be addressed.
National Fisheries Sector Policy and Strategy Statement (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges the lack of appreciation of gender perspectives as one of the main constraints hindering the development of the sector. Regards women’s empowerment as a key step towards an effective eradication of poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All gender considerations confined in one section. Proposed actions and strategies for the different fisheries sub-sectors are gender-blind. Relegates the role and responsibility of “promoting gender roles, women and user community empowerment” to the NGO sector.
National Forest Policy (1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes the need to design gender-sensitive extension forestry programs and the inclusion of women in forestry activities and decision-making processes. Gender mainstreamed throughout the document (not only in selected sections). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of men in forestry management and use of timber resources is not directly acknowledged in the policy. Relegates the roles and responsibilities to “promote gender roles and women empowerment” only to the NGO sector.
National Water Policy (2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender equality is a specific target in the policy, and gender is mainstreamed throughout the document. Emphasizes the special needs of youth and makes specific reference to both men and women in the different sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It does not pay direct attention to structural constraints and their relation to gender inequalities in the water sector.
National Agriculture Policy (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pays attention to youth’s involvement in agriculture and recognizes “gender relations” as a key constraint. Gender is mainstreamed throughout the document. Addresses structural issues by committing to promote gender equitable land tenure governance and calls for the need to collect sex-disaggregated data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear how gender equitable land tenure governance will be promoted. Relegates gender to the responsible ministry, who will also coordinate the gender actions of NGOs. No clarity on the role of other stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock in the mainstreaming of gender.

Table 2: Summary of gender provisions and gender gaps in the reviewed strategic documents

National Strategy	Gender Provision	Gender Gaps
National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges a higher vulnerability of women and children to climate change (e.g. increased time burden due to longer distances needed to fetch water). Some proposed activities include “women groups” as beneficiaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed activities do not seem to directly address the identified gender constraints to climate change. The need for gender responsible activities in climate change adaptation is not emphasized or prioritized.
National Climate Change Strategy (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges gender-differentiated vulnerabilities to climate change. Proposes integration of gender in programs and activities, collection of gender-disaggregated data, greater women involvement in climate change planning and equity in benefit sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks consideration for gender structural constraints (e.g. land tenure) and the effect that this has for effective and gender-equitable climate change adaptation.
National Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender into Climate Change Related Policies, Plans and Strategies (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States the importance of working towards equal participation in decision-making processes, equal access to resources and opportunities and to utilizing the gender-differentiated knowledge, skills and experience in climate change adaptation. Gives clear guidelines on roles and responsibilities of key ministries and institutions for gender mainstreaming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women’s vulnerability to climate change is overly highlighted, overlooking men’s specific vulnerabilities. Men and women presented as a dichotomy and differential vulnerabilities of different types of men and women not adequately taken into consideration.
Guidelines for Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into National Sectoral Policies, Plans and Programmes of Tanzania (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only recommends “gender” to be considered as a cross-cutting issue in all programs and policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The guidelines do not give any indication on how gender should be integrated in climate change sectoral policies, plans and programmes. It does not propose any gender-sensitive intervention for climate change adaptation.
Water Resources Management Strategic Interventions and Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges gender as a key cross-cutting adaptation issue and includes a research output on gender based climate change impacts and adaptation options. Recognizes the need to improve gender responsiveness of climate change adaptation options for water resources management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender is only considered in the crosscutting issues section. No clear indication of the relevance of gender in the different aspects of water resources management.
National Climate Change Communication Strategy (2012-2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a thematic area exclusively focused on gender with five key messages. Acknowledges the importance of indigenous and cultural beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It does not include any gender output or outcome indicators in the monitoring and evaluation plan for the strategy.
Climate Change Adaptation Information Toolkit for Farming Communities (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of gender. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The toolkit is gender blind, not incorporating any gender considerations in any of the sections.

Relegation of gender activities to the NGO sector

Another main gender gap, found in a number of the reviewed policies, is the relegation of gender activities to the NGO sector. This indirectly frees all other stakeholders from responsibility for mainstreaming gender in all their activities (e.g. National Forest Policy, 1998). The fact that not all sector stakeholders are committed to gender equality and to mainstreaming of gender in all their activities and plans calls to question the effectiveness and sustainability that the proposed gender policy activities will have in reality. Furthermore, the fact that the institutional arrangement that the policies propose gives the role of mainstreaming and carrying out gender-sensitive activities to the NGO sector points to a lack of commitment to gender issues by the government and other stakeholders.

The importance of inter-sectoral planning for effective gender implementation

The content of the documents has also shown disharmony among the different policies and strategies, suggesting that the teams that developed the documents never sought to build inclusive strategies and establish common gender plans. In the absence of such coordination, there is possible risk of ambiguity in ministerial responsibilities, missed opportunities to leverage potential synergies and even the pursuit of contradictory approaches to common problems. In the medium and long term, there is need for inter-sectoral planning and for harmonization of the gender approaches proposed in the policies, which could be realized by regular cross-sectoral joint reviews and thematic meetings.

Conclusions and policy implications

The policies and strategies reviewed have shown that increasing attention is being paid to gender issues. However, the identified gender issues have the potential to lead to policy inaction and ineffective policy implementation if there is no serious commitment to gender on the part of the government and all other stakeholders. There is thus need for a revision of the implementation plans and performance measurement strategies to include gender as a mandatory indicator for the evaluation of activities and programs. This should be coupled with awareness campaigns and capacity building activities on gender issues in different sector and subsector offices at all governance levels.

Even as the majority of the reviewed policies can still be considered far from gender transformative—which would imply policies that seek to challenge unequal power relations by tackling the root causes of gender inequality—some of the policies reviewed do acknowledge the need to address the foundational

grounds for gender imbalances. However, the proposed activities and frameworks that these policies suggest do not seem to have the potential to dramatically change or address the current gender gaps in agriculture and natural resource management, and even less so under a changing climate.

Sufficient integration of gender in policy documents, provision of a clear roadmap and tools to address structural issues, and appropriately planning for CSA will be key towards closing the gender gap in agriculture and achieving a gender-just climate change adaptation.

Additionally, the fact that some of the newer reviewed policies call for the need to collect sex-disaggregated data (i.e. National Agricultural Policy of 2013 and the National Climate Change Strategy of 2012) illustrate the commitment that Tanzania has in collecting a comprehensive understanding of the state of gender in agriculture and climate change. However, for this to become a reality, the development of clear budgets together with the enhancement of capacities to collect and analyze sex-disaggregated data becomes fundamental. If collection of sex-disaggregated data is done over time and linked to age, ethnicity and other social divides, this understanding will be broadened and more targeted for the design of effective climate change interventions. The collection of these types of sex-disaggregated data will make future climate change interventions more aware of the different needs and constraints that different types of people have and consequently will make future interventions benefit all members of the household, in every type of household.

Further Reading

- Acosta, M., Ampaire, E., Okolo, W., Twyman, J. (2015). Gender and Climate Change in Uganda: Effects of Policy and Institutional Frameworks. CCAFS Info Note. CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS). Copenhagen, Denmark.
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