

## ABSTRACT

Given that vulnerability and climate change are socially constructed and gendered concept (Denton, 2002) and are further shaped by discourses that often suspend and ignore gender issues (MacGregor, 2010). It is important to understand the discourses that frame gender and climate adaptation (Nelson, 2011). In this regard, it is also critical to examine how women and men in localised contexts, experience and respond to changes in climate. Through the use of mixed methods approach, this study attempts to provide an in-depth understanding of processes that shape gendered adaptation to changes in climate within 420 households in the Mt. Elgon region. Empirical data obtained from Manafwa and Kapchorwa districts evidences that perceptions of the changes in climate are gendered, localized and largely in agreement with meteorologically observed trends. Findings also suggest that exposure to climate change impacts is similar for men and women however, their experience of vulnerability differs. Vulnerability to climate change was found to be a contested, contextual and gendered concept with gender roles resulting into different adaptation pathways and decision making processes within households. At the policy level, proposed climate change interventions seldom linked to particular gender tenets. Most policy interventions were found to adopt a gender-neutral approach that ignored the differential characteristics of women and men and thus undermine gendered adaptation. It is concluded that failure to consider the differences between men and women in their attempt to adapt to changes in climate may lead to inappropriate design and implementation of adaptation interventions as policy and practice may not respond appropriately to their needs in specific contexts.

*Key words: Gender, Climate change, Adaptation, Impacts, Policy*