

Presentation

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SEPARATE STREAMS?

Integrating climate change adaptation with water management: learning from the local level in Niger



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Research objectives

- How is the changing climate impacting upon poor people's management of water resources in the semi-arid environment?
- What is the policy context in relation to both water and climate change, and what is the interface between national policy and practice on the ground?



How can climate change adaptation be integrated within the water sector to benefit the most poor and vulnerable people?

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The case-study region

- Tahoua Region of Niger
- Mostly pastoralists and agro-pastoralists
- The area is characterised by:
 - A high degree of climate variability
 - Records of long periods of drought



Increasing vulnerabilities

- **Water availability is diminishing** while water needs are rising.
- Changes to **biodiversity** leading to changes in diet and livelihoods (herd composition).
- **Increase in the distance** travelled for water and in the **time spent** in securing water (usually by women) – up to 7 hours a day.
- Increase in **climate-related sickness**.
- Increase in **social conflict** between transitory herders and local population over availability of surface water and pasture.



Community responses

Water management measures:

- Water harvesting – use of loose stone dykes.
- Increase in groundwater use – deep well construction.

Economic-related responses:

- Income diversification - changing gender roles, additional income-generating activities.
- Changes in stock size and herd composition.
- Alternative food security measures – animal selling, grain banks, farming.



National level perspectives

Current situation:

- Climate risk is not factored into national water resources policy planning → effective integration is essential.
- Series of stand-alone, donor funded projects.

Key barriers/ opportunities:

- Availability and accessibility of climate science information.
- Institutional framework for water – structure and capacity.
- Cross-sectoral harmonisation (linkages between different sectors – land, water, mining, agriculture etc) as well as coordination with climate change institutional structures.



Recommendations

- Integrate climate risk-based approaches, which address climate variability and climate change, within water policy frameworks.
- Target differentiated solutions to water management according to the needs of different groups.
- Ensure that climate risk information, where available, is made widely accessible. Where it does not exist, gaps should be plugged.
- Strengthen local adaptive capacity by supporting localised water resources approaches, and recognise these can play a key role in national water policy planning.
- Empower communities to participate in water resources planning and management.



Looking ahead: *HOW* can climate change adaptation be integrated within the water sector to benefit the poorest people?

Thank you.

