



# **Climate Change, Policy & Vulnerability of Tropical Forest Communities in East Africa**

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# Introduction to the study

- Explores the vulnerability to global climate change and CC policies of Ogiek & Batwa in Kenya & Uganda
- Focuses on their understanding of their own vulnerabilities, history, values that inform their lives and livelihoods
- Agency of the Ogiek & Batwa & how they manage their vulnerability at present
- Research used Sen's capability approach to add to current approaches to vulnerability to CC
- Findings from the two case studies inform the emerging body of knowledge on vulnerability to CC in E.A & beyond.

# Research Question

- **How do tropical forest communities perceive, understand and act on their vulnerability to cc and related policies?**

## Related questions

- How is vulnerability in the two communities experienced & understood- influence the communities ability to respond to climate change?
- What role does policy play in defining the vulnerability of these two communities , historically and in the present?
- How do these tropical forest communities exert their agency to respond to these vulnerabilities?

# Thesis Argument

## Climate change & related policies

- Impact on their vulnerability by exacerbating historical injustices
- Deprive indigenous forest people of what they value
- Make them unable to function as full agents who can help themselves and influence society and policy

## Scope of the study

- Study uses the capability approach to provide insights into the analysis of vulnerability to cc of the two cases
- Framework encompasses what communities value, their agency and prior historical processes
- Kenya and Uganda because they are among developing nations noted as vulnerable to cc
  - *high dependency on cc sensitive sectors*
  - *existing developmental challenges*
  - *both belong to EA – which represent a rich field of data for policy comparison*
- Focus on original inhabitants of forested territories

# Gaps in Literature

- Research largely focused on natural resources, sectors & its effect on human development.(adaptation responses not adequate)
- IPCC reports have based their conclusions on research findings from North America, Australia, and the Amazon regions
- Indigenous groups are not homogenous- depends on the specific contexts (drylands, coastal areas, forest, cities)
- Differences in resources that would facilitate recovery from climate change impacts (Canada, USA etc)
- Depends on peoples perceptions to cc (alarmism) –IPs lack sources of information.
- Impacts to CC represent events already past- normalcy & failure to plan for the next occurrence

# Conceptualising vulnerability of the two communities

- First generation approach- impact led, vulnerability as end point(biophysical perspectives)
- Second generation- vulnerable as the starting point ( contextual perspectives & approaches)
- -entitlements
- -resilience
- -security
- capability approach ( functionings and capabilities)
- limiting hence the addition of the historical dimensions of vulnerability

# Historical deprivations of Batwa & Ogiek

- **Case I: Batwa**

- Vulnerability takes a variety of dimensions- landlessness, insecurity, defenselessness, exposure to stress brought about by environmental changes
  - deprivations of land
  - deprivations of control over natural resources
  - deprivations of climate change
  - deprivations of well-being and social identity



## Case 2: The Ogiek

- Deprivations of physical well being
- Deprivations of land and Identity
- Deprivations resulting from lack of access to forest products
- Deprivations of control
- Deprivations of climate change

**What is the difference & similarities between Batwa & Ogiek in historical deprivations?**

# Perceptions & Understanding of Vulnerability of the Batwa to climate change

- Valuing access to the forest & forest products
- Valuing freedom of movement
- Valuing knowledge on whether changes
- Valuing land for security
- Valuing justice
- Valuing participation
  - **Implications on the Batwa agency**
  - choice of livelihood and occupation
  - self empowerment

# Perceptions & Understanding of Vulnerability of the Ogiek to climate change

- Valuing access to forest land
- Valuing justice
- Valuing environmental protection
- Valuing physical & mental health
- Valuing physical protection and security
- Valuing Ogiek Culture
- Implications for Ogiek agency
- - Livelihood changes and effect on agency

# Drawing together the perspectives from the Batwa and Ogiek

- **Vulnerability to CC is linked to particular local circumstances**

  - Value land as a resource

  - Valuing culture

  - Valuing public participation

  - Valuing freedom of movement

  - Valuing justice

- **Historical processes and its contribution to capability deprivation**

  - Deprivations of land, control and its effect on identity

  - Vulnerability and the difference in understanding among generations

  - Effect on knowledge and skills

- **Agency and Resilience**

  - The will to improve

  - Alternative livelihoods and opportunities

  - Public participation

# Conclusion

- **How do tropical forest communities perceive, understand and act on their vulnerability to cc and related policies?**
- Vulnerability to cc by these two forest communities is primarily a social, rather than a biophysical or environmental phenomenon
- Climate change not seen as separate outside the society but part of the way of life and livelihood
- Values tied to past way of life while living in the forest

# Q1: How is vulnerability in the two communities experienced & understood- influence the communities ability to respond to climate change?

- Linked to particular local circumstances and what people value
- Ogiek- deforestation and its impacts, political and environmental problem-
- Batwa- displacement and to relocation from the forest
- Vulnerability understood in relation to institutions that provide structures for access & control of resources
- High dependency on what the two value such as land, a natural resource makes them more vulnerable
- Policy makers related vulnerability of the two to differences in interests and goals
- Different generations understood vulnerability to CC in different ways

## **Q2: What role does policy play in defining the vulnerability of these two communities, historically and in the present?**

- Key historical events that contributed to deprivation
- NCCR, 2009 and Climate change strategy for Uganda emphasis on adaptation and mitigation- Ogiek and Batwa's new forms of livelihood were not most applicable strategies  
(adaptation raised aspirations for the young generation)
- Land policy increased the vulnerability of the two communities
- Opportunities through the new constitution- Kenya as well as for Uganda in empowering vulnerable populations
- First generation approach could miss out the key drivers of vulnerability, resources for adaptation.
- What people value provides valuable information that policy can draw to minimize impacts

### **Q3: How do these tropical forest communities exert their agency to respond to these vulnerabilities?**

- Adapting not to changes in climate but rather to social challenging environment
- Historical , social and physical contexts helped to shape the way they exert their agency
- Accommodating new forms of livelihoods
- Building relationships with neighbours
- Use of indigenous knowledge



## Contribution to theory

- Use and extension of Sen's capability approach ( value and agency) + historical dimension
- Framework allows for generalisation in different contexts- ( multiple dimensions)
- Framework can be applied widely in more forest communities
- Climate change as independent variable can be substituted

# Contribution to policy

- Value dimension
- Ability to influence policy varies because of their different agency
- Climate change policy cannot be based on the individual Batwa and Ogiek understanding of vulnerability but to array of processes

## Further research

- CC policy need to be supported by in-depth, critical and applied research
- Need to expand vulnerability research
- Publishing such findings is one way of feeding such information into the IPCC
- Need to document the on-going experiences of communities that have been relocated from their homes
- Role of intergenerational effects in CC vulnerability research



**THANK YOU**