

GENDER DIMENSIONS OF CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICES IN SENEGAL AND TANZANIA

WHITNEY M. TURIENTINE



My fieldwork this past summer 2015 took me to both Senegal and Tanzania. In both countries, I worked with the CGIAR's research program on Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Security (CAAFS) to investigate how gender impacted access to climate information services. This summer fieldwork allowed me to complete the required field practicum component of my degree program, Master's in Sustainable Development Practice (MDP).

The two weeks I spent in Senegal directly informed my more in-depth study in northern Tanzania. While in Senegal, I—along with my colleagues from Université Cheikh Anta Diop (Dakar) and Sciences Po (Paris)—travelled to multiple sites within

the country to learn how certain projects and initiatives were looking at food security in the context of climate change in the Sahel. In the capital, Dakar, a meeting with Ousmane Ndiaye at the Senegalese Meteorological Services (ANACIM) proved absolutely essential to understanding how indigenous, climate knowledge and scientific knowledge could be integrated in projects like the one in Tanzania! Visits to farms in Thiès provided even greater insight into how farmers in one of the world's driest regions utilize climate information and myriad agricultural strategies to produce viable yields.

After the two weeks in Senegal, I spent the rest of the summer in and around Arusha, Longido, and Dar es Salaam,

Tanzania. Although I based myself mainly out of Arusha, the bulk of my fieldwork took place in the heart of Maasailand in Longido. I initially had thought that I would be conducting focus groups with pastoralists and agro-pastoralists to identify challenges to accessing climate information via services like SMS, radio, etc. Once I arrived in Longido it was clear that my plans had to change immediately (like most of our initial research plans)! After further discussion with CCAFS partners on the ground, I learned that assessing recent climate trainings for agricultural extension agents from a gendered perspective was a high priority and I began in earnest to track down the extensionists from Longido.

With the help of some of the best four-wheel drivers/interpreters/field assistants, I was able to conduct semi-structured interviews with almost all of the agriculture extension agents in Longido who recently received climate training. These interviews, along with meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Tanzanian Meteorological Agency (TMA), form the basis of my final report that I will be submitting to both CCAFS and the UF MDP program. Already, some of my findings and suggestions from this summer are informing the upcoming climate trainings of extension agents in Tanzania. I was also fortunate enough to present some of this summer's findings at this year's International Conference on Sustainable Development at Columbia University in September.

Whitney Turientine is a second-year MDP student and former FLAS fellow (Swahili, 2013-15). Support for this project provided the Center for African Studies, the Sahel Research Group, the UF International Center, and the MacArthur Foundation.