Title:
Promoting the Participation of Rural Women in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation: A Case Study of AWARE – Uganda

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Eyalama noi noi.
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AfDB:</td>
<td>African development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AWARE:</td>
<td>Action for Women and Awakening in Rural Environment</td>
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<td>AR:</td>
<td>AWARE Respondent</td>
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<td>CBOs:</td>
<td>Community Based Organizations</td>
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<td>CEDAW:</td>
<td>The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>CSA:</td>
<td>Climate Smart Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAHOSCC:</td>
<td>Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change</td>
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<td>ED AWARE:</td>
<td>Executive Director – AWARE Uganda</td>
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<td>FAO:</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
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<td>GC:</td>
<td>General Comment</td>
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<td>GR:</td>
<td>General Recommendation</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBRA:</td>
<td>Human Rights Based Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICCPR:</td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
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<td>ICESCR:</td>
<td>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFAD:</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>IGA:</td>
<td>Income Generating Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPCC:</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
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<td>NAADs:</td>
<td>National Agricultural Advisory services</td>
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<td>NCCP:</td>
<td>National Climate Change Policy of Uganda</td>
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<td>NGOs:</td>
<td>Non-Government Organizations</td>
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<td>OHCHR:</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</td>
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<td>SACCOS:</td>
<td>Savings and Credit Cooperatives</td>
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UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN: United Nations
UNDP: United Nations Development Program
UNGA: United Nations General Assembly
UNSD: United Nations Statistics Division
UWONET: Uganda Women's Network
VSLAs: Village Savings and Loan Associations
PO AWARE: Project officer AWARE
TSMs: Temporal special measures
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1. **CHAPTER ONE**

1.1 **Introduction**

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea levels.\(^1\) As global temperatures continue to raise prompting changes in the weather patterns, so has the discourse on climate change, responses and more recently, its gendered implications. Due to the frequency and magnitude of its impacts to human and non-human objects, it has been referred as one of the greatest challenges to face humanity. Climate change as defined by Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity.\(^2\) However, “extreme likelihood” of human influence on climate system was reported in its fifth assessment report.\(^3\)

Undoubtedly, climate change threatens everyone and all regions and countries alike. However, in context of magnitude and vulnerability therein, differences emerge along regions, gender, status, age, and location, among others. Poor regions, countries and communities more so in the developing parts of the world like Sub-Saharan Africa, expect to bear some of the worst effects of the impact of climate change.\(^4\) This according to Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is because they have more limited adaptive capacities, and are more dependent on climate-sensitive resources.\(^5\) Uganda is no exception with the current observations and manifestations attesting to this. The country has been experiencing increased frequency and magnitude of climate extremes of droughts, floods, landslides and pest infestations,\(^6\) with some of the worst manifestations of drought witnessed in 2016 to 2017. Some of the worst hit areas of the country included already vulnerable regions such as the case study district and other dry cattle corridors. In the case study area for instance due to frequent failures in seasons due to climate extremes, starvation

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and death are known to occur.\textsuperscript{7} Uganda’s vulnerability to climate change mostly stems from her heavy reliance on its natural resource base.\textsuperscript{8} For example, since agriculture, to which majority of the population, depend on relies predominantly on rain, it means that any changes in the climate resulting into floods or droughts, which are the most occurring climate change manifestation in the country, will directly affect them.

For rural communities, particularly whose main source of livelihood is subsistence agriculture with very few alternatives, the felt effects are much worse. That as may be, it should be known that, not everyone in a given community is affected the same way. Kpadonou et al have argued on this view. They contend that, “even though it is acknowledged that poor communities will be most affected by climate change, the magnitude of this vulnerability depends heavily on ecological and socioeconomic characteristics of each community.”\textsuperscript{9} From a gender point of view, studies have shown that climate change is not gender neutral.\textsuperscript{10} Henceforth, women particularly will be disproportionately affected by climate effects,\textsuperscript{11} because of existing structures, such as cultural norms and economic constraints\textsuperscript{12} that perpetuate women domination, subordination and eventually accruing climate vulnerabilities.

Brought to the grass-root level of rural women, it is very likely that they will incur far worse impacts because gender intersects with many aspects including rurality.\textsuperscript{13} Djoudi and Brockhaus take note of this arguing, even among women exist variabilities, which are determined by and depend on factors such as wealth, class, age, and other social and economic categories.\textsuperscript{14} Furthering this argument to a locational perspective, Boruru et al assert that, the geography of a people’s location relative to other people may position them more acutely in harm’s way when climate change ramifications roll out.\textsuperscript{15} These arguments are certainly re-

\textsuperscript{7} The National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and management (2010), p.6.
\textsuperscript{8} Uganda National Climate Change Policy-(NCCP) (2012) p.5; Ministry of Water and Environment-MWE (10/2015); Uganda’s Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), p.3.
\textsuperscript{9} Kpadonou et al (2012), p.182.
\textsuperscript{10} Verner (2012), p.278-279.
flective of experiences of not just rural women in the study area, but also in the rest of the
country and arguably in many sub-Saharan rural communities. In the case of the study area,
where women are predominantly responsible for household tasks of collecting water, wood
fuel collection, food production, procurement and management, it goes without saying that
such culturally ascribed gender roles alongside aspects as mentioned above render them wide-
ly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Although vulnerability as discussed above is not
necessarily the point of this study, a ‘negative argument’, as Glazebrook points out, has poten-
tial to garner attention to climate problems faced by rural women.

That said, it is now an acknowledged fact that women, particularly rural women are
more than just victims of climate change. Rather than succumbing, they have developed the
capacity, ability, knowledge, skills and practices for coping with climate impacts and building
their resilience. The nature of their roles is that, they have a close relation to climate change in
context of their vulnerability to such changes. It is through the interaction of these roles with
climate variabilities that rural women have learnt and developed a wealth of knowledge,
skills, and practices of coping with such impacts through experience. Indeed, as Agarwal
aptly puts it, the experience of constantly being pitted against climate variabilities has enabled
rural women to gain specific experiences that in turn have shaped their knowledge. Such is
the case with rural members of AWARE-Uganda. With their knowledge based practices,
skills, strategies, and capacities, they have been able to adapt to the impacts of climate change
thereby fostering their continued resilience. It is these, which have prompted scholarly
rhetoric as to the potential of rural women as actors and agents in climate change mitigation
and adaptation strategies. For instance, Anderson et al assert that, women are vital agents of
change, holders of valuable knowledge and skills and can be powerful leaders from commun-
ity to global level in adapting to climate change. Nellemann et al equally put forward similar
views, stating that, women are active agents who have developed locally adapted, appropriate
and sustainable coping strategies and responses within the scope of limited access to resources
and disadvantageous gender power relations. These knowledge and expertise can be useful

in climate change mitigation, disaster reduction, and adaptation strategies.\footnote{UN WomenWatch (2009), p.1.} Certainly, in some regions of the world as is the case study, it is no longer about potential rather that they are and can be actors and agents in climate change.\footnote{Dankelman (2010); Mary Robinson Foundation (2015).}

Nonetheless, despite the crucial role they play in the subsistence of their households and rural communities,\footnote{Kongolo and Bamgose (2002), p.79.} their profound knowledges, skills, or their much restated potential as actors and agents in addressing the global climate challenge, rural women and women in general for the most part are largely ignored, marginalized, and excluded from the climate action and strategies at all levels.\footnote{Global Environment Facility (2014/07/1-30/06/2018), p.17.} Skinner also adds that even in cases where women are already playing crucial roles in developing sustainable climate adaptation solutions, their efforts remain largely unrecognized.\footnote{Skinner (2011), p.3.} In Uganda climate change, related policies remain largely neutral and ignore the crucial aspects of embedded systemic structures that perpetuate inequalities.

The continued marginalization of rural women from participating in climate action means that they are constrained from voicing their needs, much less share their wealth of knowledge and practices of coping with climate impacts. Their capacity and potential to be actors and agents in climate change is equally impeded. These attitudes in turn have deleterious ramifications towards the overall objective of enhancing the climate resilience of rural women, their households, and communities at large. Also importantly is that marginalization in itself goes against the principle of equality, as enumerated in several international human rights treaties such as the CEDAW, International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) among others, that Uganda has ratified, as well as the constitution of Ugandan itself.\footnote{Constitution of Uganda (1995) Art 21.}

1.2 Purpose of the study

This study is premised on the assertion that rural women are part of the climate solution. With the NGO AWARE Uganda as a point of departure, the study aims to show that inclusive participation of rural women has the potential to contribute to climate change mitigation and ad-
adaptation strategies, initiatives and actions, as well as enhancing their and their communities’ climate resilience. Their participation is crucial, due to their livelihood roles in rural communities. This in-itself Gupta argues qualifies their participation.\(^{27}\) Through participation they can voice their needs, concerns, share their local knowledge and practices of coping which could potentially be used in and/or inform climate mitigation and adaptation strategies and projects. In addition, participation especially with increased frequency and magnitude of climate change to the point of challenging women’s coping mechanisms is imperative. Through it, rural women can learn new information, acquire knowledge and techniques of mitigating and adapting to climate change, thus enabling them to even better contribute to emission reductions and strengthening their capacities and resilience to climate change impacts.

The underlying assumption that this study develops is that including rural women in mitigation and adaptation strategies, initiatives and activities can contribute to addressing the climate challenge, thereby enhancing their resilience and that of their households and communities to the impacts of climate change.

### 1.3 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this case study are the following:

1. To assess rural women’s knowledge, skills and practices of coping, adaptation and mitigation to climate change.
2. To establish the level of participation of the women in mitigation and adaptation strategies.
3. To assess the implication of including rural women participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and actions.
4. To establish the role of government in promoting women participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation (including policies and legal frameworks).

### 1.4 Defining concepts

Nyong et al defines adaptation as strategies that enable the individual or the community to cope with or adjust to the impacts of the climate in the local areas.\(^{28}\) Adaptation practices and actions strengthen the capacity of societies and ecosystems to cope with and adapt to climate

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change risks and impacts.\textsuperscript{29} Ayers and Forsyth further add that, it is not only focused on anticipating enhanced physical risks associated with increased greenhouse gas concentrations, but also addresses developmental needs such as improving access to livelihoods and productive assets to increase the adaptive capacity of poorer, more vulnerable people.\textsuperscript{30}

While adaptation seeks to lower both current and future effects and risks of climate change, thereby building resilience of communities and individuals, mitigation is a longer-term process that addresses the root causes through reduction and prevention in emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG). Mitigation strategies are therefore activities that help to reduce the sources of greenhouse gases or enhance their sinks.\textsuperscript{31} Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité (CIDSE), defines it as actions taken to prevent or reduce further contributions to the disruption of the climate, particularly by reducing emission levels and stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.\textsuperscript{32} In Uganda, mitigation strategies have mostly taken forms of tree planting, conservation and promotion of clean energy technologies such as energy saving cooking stoves and briquette.

Resilience relates to ability to withstand the negative impacts of a given situation. In the climate context, Tompkins et al have defined it as capacity to cope with climate changes, recover from, and adjust to climate changes without becoming undermined or unable to adapt.\textsuperscript{33} Department for International Development (DFID) defines it as the “ability to anticipate, avoid, plan for, cope with, recover from and adapt to (climate related) shocks and stresses.”\textsuperscript{34}

Local knowledge, sometimes also referred to as indigenous knowledge, is institutionalized local knowledge that has been built and passed on from one generation to the other by word of mouth.\textsuperscript{35} Briggs et al, however, argue that using the term indigenous knowledge may not be particularly appropriate or accurate, because indigenous environmental knowledge is provisional, dynamic and evolutionary, and a key part of this process is the acquisition of

\textsuperscript{29} Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights A/HRC/10/61 para 12.
\textsuperscript{30} Ayers and Forsyth (2009), p.25.
\textsuperscript{31} IPPC-WGIII (2001), p.3.
\textsuperscript{33} Tompkins et al. (2005), p.30.
\textsuperscript{34} DFID cited in Reta et al (2016), p.8.
knowledge from outside the community. In the context of this study, local knowledge means practices or strategies of mitigation and adaptation that rural women of AWARE have used and are utilizing in dealing with the effects of climate change. Local knowledge is an important component for successful and sustainable development projects and for dealing with climate change challenges, because it is relevant in informing and guiding current and future climate change events.

Gender, as defined by CEDAW committee, refers to socially constructed identities, attributes and roles for women and men, and society’s social and cultural meaning for these biological differences resulting in hierarchical relationships between women and men, and in the distribution of power and rights favoring men and disadvantaging women.

1.5 The case study

The case study Action for Women and Awakening in Rural Environment (AWARE-Uganda) is a women’s organization located in the pastoral and semi-arid district of Kabong district, in the sub region of Karamoja. AWARE-Uganda works with rural women to improve their livelihoods. Its aim is to take rural women from their plights by addressing issues of gender imbalance, culture, climate change, rights abuses among others. While the organization is involved in various program activities as noted above, the study will be limited only to its climate change related projects and activities. Here the study looks into her members’ local knowledge and practices of coping and how her members are participating in mitigation and adaptation strategies and activities and the implications of these involvements to the climate challenge and their resilience.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study aims at contributing to scholarly literature on rural women participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation. In comparison to the gender and climate change, the extant literature on rural women participating in climate action is still limited. According to Mary Robinson Foundation, this could be due to the low efforts to engage women participation, and low documentation on their best practice where actions are taking place to enable women’s

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38 CEDAW-GR 28 Para 5.
meaningful participation in climate actions. In addition, the study findings can be used to inform future policy actions and climate initiatives of organizations and institutions engaged in climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

1.7 Methodology

The study applies an interdisciplinary research method. Lyall and Fletcher have stated that grand societal challenges require an interdisciplinary approach to generate innovative solutions. Climate change is arguably such a "grand societal challenge" in that its effects crisscross through all aspects of life such as, economic, social, cultural, political and human rights. Although Benson has raised criticism to the method as to lacking of coherence and sense of purpose, it is nonetheless argued in this study that, the flexibility that the method allows in form of drawing insight, and broader understanding of issues under discussion from two or more disciplines, makes it suitable for this study context. In this study, insights are drawn from legal and social domains because climate change is a social and human rights problem. Reference to legal studies is particularly made to participatory rights considering continued marginalization of rural women. In addition, reference is also made to the implication of climate change on specific rights as shall be discussed in later chapter.

For data collection, a qualitative approach was employed because it is appropriate when exploring for deeper significance ascribed by subjects to the topic under examination. The method is interactive and flexible making it possible to capture experiences, thoughts and perceptions of participants. Twenty-five participants were selected aged from 15 to 84. A semi-structured interview method was used because it has an advantage of combining predetermined set interview questions, while allowing interviewers to divulge deeper on an issue of interest. Individual and one group interview were then carried out with purposively selected AWARE members. Key informants from AWARE included Executive director (ED) AWARE-Uganda and one other officer. The participants were interviewed with the help of two research assistants and one translator. This speeded up the research processes considering the time factor. Interview of members were conducted at both AWARE office and in members’ homes, deep in the villages. This presented an opportunity to observe and confirm par-

39 Mary Robinson Foundation (1st Eds) (11.2015), p.2; See also Skinner (2011).
41 Benson (1982).
42 Lack (2013).
Participant’s responses and AWARE report documents. Other key informants included the district environment officer, one participant each from Action against Hunger (ACF) and Dodoth Agro-pastoralist Development Organization (DADO). Initially, a local council member (LC), a community leader and a community development officer were slotted as potential interviewees, but were later dropped due to logistical and access problems. The selection of NGO participants related to their partnerships with AWARE Uganda. Review of relevant documents of AWARE, district local government, policy and legal documents related to the study was carried out. Literature review was also an essential part of the study for informing and conducting successful field research. Sources included treaties, books, national legal and policy documents, journals, NGO reports and newspaper articles.

1.7.1 Ethical considerations

Prior to the field visit, communication was established with AWARE about the purpose of the research. This was reemphasized to participants before interviews kicked off. Regards picture content in the study; these were given by AWARE and taken by the researcher with full consent of the individuals involved.

1.7.2 Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was used to analyze data. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Although thematic analysis has been subject to criticism, it nonetheless offers a possibility to link the various concepts and opinions of the learners and compare these with the data that has been gathered in different situations at different times during the project. After initial process of sorting, organizing and grouping responses according to questions asked, data was then coded and then grouped according to categories based on common elements. Eventually themes that fulfilled the purpose and aim of the study were captured. Themes are patterns across data sets that are important about the data collected in line with the issue under study. The keyness of theme Braun and Clarke argue, is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures but in terms of whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question. The selection of the final themes took this into account. For example, responses to local knowledge, skills and

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45 Braun and Clarke (2006), p.82.
practices of coping were sorted, organized, coded and further grouped and categorized in the
general theme of “Rural women/Members’ local knowledge and practices of coping with im-
pacts of climate change.”

1.8 Limitations

There was a delayed response from AWARE Uganda which affected the research process in
context of time but research assistants were hired to compensate for lost time. Not all key in-
formants were available at the initial interviews but were on a much later date followed up. It
was also at this time that, errors including cases of missing data found during analysis of the
first collected data were corrected. The problem of language barrier was rectified with re-
cruitment of a translator for the researcher.

1.9 Structure

The first chapter gives an overview of climate change phenomenon and its implications on
different categories of persons. It introduces the issue of rural women continued marginaliza-
tion in climate action and then provides arguments for the need of their inclusion because of
the potential they hold. The second chapter brings out aspects of equality as necessary for
dealing with the climate change. Gender dimensions of climate change are also introduced. A
case is then made for the need for rural women inclusion in climate action with the discussion
directed to their roles, knowledge, and capacities. Reference is made to specific rights in con-
text of how they are affected by climate change. It ends with a discussion on SDGs and role
rural women can play in their achievement. Third chapter provides a discussion on a legally
framed participation arguing that participation is not only a basic entitlement for rural women,
but also instrumental in guaranteeing their inclusion in mitigation and adaptation strategies
and actions. Reference is made to legal guarantees of the right to participation of rural women
in climate action. It ends with a brief discussion of the potential of a human rights based ap-
proach to addressing the climate challenge. Chapter four provides an analysis and interpreta-
tion of the fieldwork findings and chapter five winds up with some conclusions and recom-
mendations.
2. CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Equality: The basis for realizing rural women participatory rights in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR or Declaration). Though not legally binding, the UDHR is an affirmation of faith and fundamental values shared by United Nations (UN) member states and a common standard of achievement for all member states. Article 1 of the Declaration states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” This article echoes the UN Charter, which reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small…[46]

The Declaration and the two International Covenants (the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights), jointly known as the International Bill of Human Rights, have embedded the principle of equality as a fundamental principle of human rights. The principle is also upheld in the CEDAW. According to the convention, discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries…[47]

The right to equality and nondiscrimination as enumerated above therefore constitutes one of the core and fundamental human rights. It is also very essential in the context of women and rural women in particular and their inclusion to participate in climate action. This general principle, is a foundation in which they can situate and claim their right to participate in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and actions. Additionally, through gender equality[48], the effectiveness and success of climate initiatives, activities and policies can be realized. Indeed, Gupta points out that, the effectiveness of climate change mitigation and

[46] UN Charter preamble para 2.
[47] CEDAW preamble para 7
[48] Ruth and Ibarrarán (2009), p.82, state that gender equality does not mean the pursuit of identical outcomes for males and females rather equality in rights, resources and voice
adaptation strategies can only be achieved when women are made equal partners in policy-making at all levels.\textsuperscript{49}

### 2.2 The gender and climate nexus

Much has been written about the intricate linkages between gender and climate change. Gender in societies is a social stratifier that defines gender roles, responsibilities and power relations of men and women in communities. While it is undeniable that both men and women engage in the wellbeing of their families and do in fact partake and partner in some household and community roles and responsibilities, it is often the case that women, especially in developing countries, are ones predominantly responsible in roles of securing food throughout the whole value chain, managing natural resource base like land, water sources and meeting household tasks such as fetching water, fuel, and caring for the sick.\textsuperscript{50}

This division in responsibilities has given rise to climate change experiences and knowledge that are unique to each gender.\textsuperscript{51} The unique experiences and knowledge of women however is often overlooked due to existing gender inequalities.\textsuperscript{52} Gender inequality, Kabeer notes is one of those most pervasive forms of inequality that cuts across all other forms of inequality in society.\textsuperscript{53} These present barriers to women’s equal participation in climate change adaptation and mitigation actions at all levels.\textsuperscript{54} For example, at international levels where high-level decision making of climate change takes place, women are underrepresented.\textsuperscript{55} With the exception of its recent efforts in COP decisions, the climate convention its self makes no reference to women. In Uganda, climate related policies are largely gender blind. Indeed one of the key informants during the field study said that, “Because climate change affects everyone, it is difficult to come up with policies or projects specifically oriented to women.” This is illustrative of the status of reviewed Uganda climate policies. At community level, Gaye et al noted

\textsuperscript{49} Gupta (2015), p.418.
\textsuperscript{52} ICCPR GC No. 28 par 5 notes that, Inequality in the enjoyment by women throughout the world is deeply embedded in tradition, history and culture, including religious attitudes.
\textsuperscript{53} Kabeer (2003), p.50.
\textsuperscript{55} Sershen and Moodley(2014), p.36-37.
that, women face marginalization and exclusion in processes and decisions relating to the use and management of natural resources, including those impacting on climate change.\textsuperscript{56}

All the above, studies indicate; have worked to exacerbate vulnerability of women in the face of climate change. According to Shackleton et al among other scholars, they posit that, the degree at which a person, group of people or communities for that matter, are affected by or are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, is a function of various factors among which include social status in society, gender, gender roles, power, capabilities, access to and control over resources, domestic and traditional law and legal and cultural biases.\textsuperscript{57} The sensitivity of women’s roles to climate shocks and historical disadvantages such as power relations, all combine to make the effects of climate change especially disproportionate.\textsuperscript{58} For instance, climate induced scarcities are associated with increase in workloads and expose women to risks while they work overtime to secure food, water and energy for their families.\textsuperscript{59}

Bearing in mind the fact that climate change effects are indiscriminate, it means that men too are victims.\textsuperscript{60} It is conceivable that the very norms that perpetuate women vulnerability induce similar vulnerabilities to men, but with variance in magnitude. For instance, in societies where men are breadwinners, it is likely that they will also suffer disproportionately from climate change induced stress.

In light of the above, a gender lens in the context of climate change is important, because it proffers objectivity for recognition of gendered impacts, and therein vulnerabilities, experiences, knowledge and experiences of both men and women in the realm of climate change. According to studies, a gender lens is the best-suited framework to analyze the phenomenon of climate change and gender inequality, their close linkage with one another and the differential risk levels between men and women relating to climate change and vulnerability.\textsuperscript{61} It provides insights to a complex understanding of society, one that appreciates the dif-
ferences of opinions and lived experiences of those who constitute these roles in their societies on a daily basis.\(^{62}\) Furthermore, the approach engages both men and women to ensure that their perceptions, interests, needs and priorities are given equal weight in planning and decision-making.\(^ {63}\) In addition, its application in climate change mitigation and adaptation can moderate impacts and secure benefits.\(^ {64}\)

2.3 From a gender critic: Making a case for rural women participation in climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The gender scholarship in climate change has proven to be useful in contributing towards understanding the different gender dimensions of climate change; that is impacts, vulnerabilities, knowledge and potential of men and women in informing and driving climate change policies and response actions in their localities. Notwithstanding, the approach has not been accepted without criticism. Underpinning this criticism is its embodiment of a male-female interaction. The twofold relationship reproduced in gender studies undermines differences and complexities that exist within men and women and does not in fact, take into account factors likely to produce or reproduce vulnerabilities.\(^ {65}\) For that matter, women cannot therefore be assumed to be same, much less have similar experiences or knowledges in climate change or any other scenario.

2.3.1 The need for rural women participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, initiatives and actions.

*Inclusive rural transformation can provide valuable new opportunities for rural women and that empowered women can become agents of change in rural areas. With the right support, women can contribute to and drive rural transformation, changing their own lives and those of their communities.*

Perin Saint Ange

The centrality of rural women in the wellbeing of their households, whether in sub Saharan Africa, or in Uganda, including the rural women of Kabong is indisputable. This position

them to take part and contribute to livelihood strategies adapted to their changing environmental realities. Rural women play key roles in areas relevant for the survival of their families and communities especially in this era of climate change. In food production, rural women in Uganda including in the case study area, are the majority basic food producers and are involved in all the food production processes. This importance of rural women in the livelihoods of their communities has been noted by CEDAW committee. According to it, rural women play a critical role in achieving food security, reducing poverty, malnutrition, hunger, and in promoting rural development. Not only that, they are also responsible for fuel and water collection. For example, a survey study from 45 developing nations showed that women were responsible for collecting water in 64% of households. In the case of Uganda, Anderson et al citing the World Bank write that, of the rural population in Uganda, only 10% had access to pipe water. This means that, the rest of the population depended on open water sources with mostly women in charge of its collection.

In addition to the above and as mentioned earlier, they have also developed a wealth of knowledge, mechanisms and strategies of mitigation and particularly of adapting to climate change. In regards to water, for instance, Figueiredo and Perkins point out that, they possess incomparable knowledge of local ecological and water conditions due to gendered roles and responsibilities. Bhatt cites an example of a women group in the Pratapnagar’s knowledge of planting trees around a water source, and making small ponds above to ensure rejuvenation.

Furthermore, they also have knowledge of seeds. According to African Biodiversity Network et al, rural women in most African farming traditions have always been the primary custodians of seed diversity and related knowledge. In Ethiopian context for instance, Dr. Gebeyehu in his research found that women were by far the most knowledgeable in seeds. This was because they were responsible for selecting the seed from the field or haystack. Not

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66 CEDAW committee GR.34 para 63.
67 Abeke et al (2012), p.34.
only that, they also knew exactly how much seed had to be stored and where, depending on the seeds moisture content or dryness.71

They are also knowledgeable of edible wild foods, such as wild fruits, flowers, roots and vegetables that are eaten as alternatives in periods of scarcity.74 Abeke et al in their study also find that, not only did the rural women have knowledge of wild seeds known to be more resistant to harsh environments, they also had traditional knowledge of food preservation method involving the use of honey to preserve food for lean times.75 Moreover, a study by Phiri et al, also found that rural women knew about drought resistant crops, delayed cropping, minimum tillage, crop rotation, plant diversification and drought resistant animals like goats.76 Senisse et al on the other hand found that the rural women in Apurimac were knowledgeable about seasons, plant and animal behavior that they relied on for weather forecasts.77 Some of this knowledge was mentioned by the participants in this study.

In addition to the above, rural women also have profound knowledge of herbs. A field experience from the community of the Iguiwaz oasis in southern Morocco revealed that the women had advanced expertise in medicinal and aromatic plants that is passed on from mother to daughter.78 The knowledge of herbs is especially crucial in marginalized or remote communities where modern health services are inadequate or unavailable.

The knowledges of rural women, the commission on the Status of Women stated, can be used in climate change mitigation, disaster reduction and adaptation strategies.79

2.4 Linking rural women, climate change and the right to food, water and health

2.4.1 The right to food

The right to food is provided for under ICESCR Art 11 which states that, the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food…….’ According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the human

71 Dr. Fassil Gebeyehu(guest interview) African Biodiversity Network et al, p.43.
77 Commission on the Status of Women, 52nd session p.2.
right to adequate food is of crucial importance for the enjoyment of all rights.80 This right is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, have physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.81 However, climate change extremes of droughts and floods have great impacts on agricultural sector subsequently affecting all four dimensions of food security that is, access, availability, stability and utilization.

The scarcities affect everyone in the affected area’s right to food. However, during the field study, all the respondents were in agreement that women often tended to eat last, less or not at all. One of the fieldwork respondents said that, “when women set out of the village in search for food, they leave what little food there is, if there is, for people at home. They hope that they will get food from where they are going. But it is not always the case. So they end up starving.” This observation is similar to Amsalu and Wana’s view. These authors write that in times of food shortages in the households, women first feed all members of the household and feed themselves if there is any left over. Unfortunately, this has far reaching consequences. For one woman going without food predisposes them to related health problems. This subsequently affects everyone in the household particularly the children and elderly, given the central role rural women play in the subsistence of their families.82 In the study area for instance, it was often the case that children and elderly went without food for days on, when the women set out of the villages in search of food and other household basic needs. Denton also writes that due to increasing scarcity in energy for example, rural women have taken shortcuts in food preparation and having to resort to less nutritive meals in order to compensate for increasing fuel shortages.83

2.4.2 The right to water

The right to water84 is equally severely impacted by climate change. Arguably, water is one of the most important resources that touch most aspects of human life.85 Given the spectrum of

80 ICESCR General Comment (GR) 12, para 1.
81 ICESCR GC No 12 Para 6.
84 See CEDAW(2)(h); ICESCR Art 11&12; GC 15 Para 2 states that “The human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses.”
its coverage, climate change is a cause for worry for all, but especially for areas that already have existing water crises such as Kabong, and for rural women who have the most responsibility for getting water for their families. Climate change affects both availability of fresh water and the frequency of floods and droughts. Prolonged droughts for one will lead to increased evapotranspiration, reduced runoffs and infiltration, lowered water tables and consequently, less availability of fresh water and soil humidity, while floods will bring about contamination, water logging and soil erosion. In either of the incidences, communities predominantly dependent on open water sources are the likely to suffer from shortages in water for drinking, cooking and plant growth, and water for sanitation.

2.4.3 The right to health

The consequences of climate change on the right to health are far reaching and correlated to its impacts on the right to food and water. It gives rise to increase in water-borne diseases such as typhoid, diarrhea, and hepatitis from water contamination affecting all, but especially children and women. Droughts, floods and pest invasions affect soils and crops resulting into crop failure, and therein incidences of hunger, malnutrition in children and death. Periods of scarcities are also associated with increased workloads for women because they have to work overtime to secure food, water and fuel. While these implicate women directly, the impacts on the rest of the household in context of food and water intake especially children when mothers go out for longer hours in search of water, food and firewood are marked. In addition, Brody et al also noted that, walking long distances to fetch water and fuel can expose women and girls to harassment or sexual assault and murder. Among some of the

85 See ICESCR art 11&12; The ICESCR committee, GC.15 Para 3 notes that, the right to water clearly falls within the category of guarantees essential for securing an adequate standard of living, particularly since it is one of the most fundamental conditions for survival.
89 CEDAW art 12; ICESCR art 12(1).
90 ICESCR General Comment 14(3) “the right to health is closely related to and dependent upon the realization of other human rights”.
women interviewed, such was their experience. In Phiri et al study, HIV susceptibility was correlated to climate induced migration.95

2.5 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate change and rural women

On international day of rural women, the UN Secretary–General, Ban Ki moon, said, “Rural women are the backbone of sustainable livelihoods and provide food security for their families and communities. Consequently, they are critical to the success of almost all of the 17 SDGs.”96 Much with a similar view, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane97 stated that “Climate change can’t be solved without empowering women, and global problems can’t be solved without addressing climate change”.

The sustainable development goals represent a new set of global aspirations for the world community that will serve as a basis for the new development agendas of each State, and that they will pursue in cooperation with each other. They consist of 17 goals complete with targets and indicators. In this study, reference is made goal 5 and target 5.198 and goal 13 and target b.99

Rural women, climate change and the post 2015 development agenda are intractably connected. Climate change in its entirety threatens the very aspirations that the Sustainable Development Goals aim to achieve.100 At the same time, gender equality and women’s empowerment are important for sustainable development and climate mitigation.101

Therefore sustainable development goal 5 when rightly implemented has the potential to empower rural women. Not only is achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls important in itself, it also enhances increased and active participation of

96 UN Sec. General Ban Ki moon, International day of rural women (15.10.2015).
97 South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (2011-08-09 08:40:59.0).
98 Goal 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. Target 5.1 in particular aims to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
99 Goal 13 is dedicated to taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Target 13.b aims to 'promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities'.
100 Wedeman and Petruney, p.1.
rural women in climate actions. In addition, through gender equality and empowerment rural women can be enabled to access and own productive resources such as land and finances. With access and ownership of land, rural women can for instance engage in tree planting activities and crop production thus contributing to emission reductions and increased food security and resilience of women and their communities. These, overall lead to realization of the SDGs. According to UNDP “The agency of rural female farmers is essential for enhancing agricultural productivity and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including ensuring food security (SDG 2) and addressing the perils of climate change (SDG 13).”

Therefore, ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, paves way for rural women to effectively participate in climate mitigation and adaptation, contributes to realizing the SDGs and empowerment of rural women. Falling short of this, is a recipe to failure in attainment of the SDGs, failure in success of climate change initiatives and increased marginalization and vulnerability of rural women.

3. CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Introduction

The transcending nature and impacts of climate change on human kind and environment, entails collective efforts of all affected in addressing it. Head has pointed out that, Wicked or complex problems, require the benefit from more intensive and extensive discussion with stakeholders. Unquestionably, climate change is the epitome of ‘wickedness and complexity’ described by Head and as such demands nothing short of intensive, extensive collaborative and participative approach involving all stakeholders rural women included. This is crucial in countering the effects of climate change and attaining the objective of the climate convention. This is because each of the affected categories has the potential to contribute to climate strategies and initiatives. Indeed Few et al have argued that a broad-based inclusion in formulating adaptive strategies has both an ethical as well as a practical value. Without it, meeting the objective of reducing and reversing the impacts of climate change will likely be slow at most.

That said, this chapter provides conceptual definition of participation. and proceeds to presents a discussion and arguments of participation from human rights perspectives, contextualized and applied to the case study in Uganda. It is argued that, framed this way, it entails obligations of duty by government to ensure non-marginalization of rural women in climate action and participatory rights to the women to take part in climate actions. Particular reference is made to specific legal frameworks and guarantees of the right relevant in context of rural women and their participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and activities. These will include the CEDAW, UNFCCC, ICCPR, African Charter and its Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and Uganda’s Constitution of 1995. A brief discussion is also provided in regards to a human rights based approach as a potential tool to guide future climate actions, and meeting the climate convention aspirations.

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104 According to principle 10 of Rio Declaration, ‘Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level’.
3.2 Participation as a concept

Like other buzzwords, participation is a complex concept that eludes definition. According to Michener, the concept suffers from many ambiguities that for the most part go unrecognized. Tosun also notes that participation is multidimensional in its representation of various disciplines and ideologies, thus making it impossible to settle for a singular universal interpretation. Tosun has however argued that the meaning and scope of any kind of participation changes depending upon the aims of the users, and the socio-cultural, political and economic conditions in which it is used.

That said, participation refers to ‘taking part’ by all stakeholders in a given course of action. Often associated with political process, Monshipouri argues that it is far more than that. Breuer views participation as a process by which people are allowed to actively and openly engage in outlining their problems, in making assessments and resolutions concerning societal issues through the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies to achieve a desirable result or change. Others like Gaventa define it as a way in which poor people exercise voice through new forms of deliberation, consultation and/or mobilization designed to inform and to influence larger institutions and policies.

Participation has also been defined both as an end and as a means. As a means, it is seen in context of developing human capabilities and as an end, allows people to realize their full potential and make their best contribution to society. Participation has also been defined in context of levels, degrees or types. According to Arnstein’s ladder of participation, participation takes different forms from non-participation, degree of tokenism all the way to the highest level of a degree of citizen power, which is equated to genuine participation. Wilcox’s ladder on the other hand is constitutive of five interconnected levels of community participation that is,

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1) Information,
2) Consultation,
3) Deciding together,
4) Acting together, and
5) Supporting individual and community initiatives.

While Arnstein’s ladder implies degree of citizen control as the ultimate end of participation or genuine participation, or that more control is always better than less control, Wilcox for his part writes that, “he does not suggest any one stance is better than any other – it is rather a matter of ‘horses for courses’. Different levels are appropriate at different times to meet the expectations of different interests.” To Wilcox, effective participation is most likely when the different interests involved in a project or programme are satisfied with the level at which they are involved.

Drawing on Tosun’s view on participation above, this study, rather than make attempts at definitions, opts for an understanding of participation. Hence forth, participation is understood as when rural women are included in; participate actively and openly in outlining their problems, share their knowledge and skills of coping with other actors, engage in learning and getting new information, knowledges and skills of mitigation, adaptation and resilience, from others and participate in formulating and implementing climate strategies and initiatives in partnership with community members and other actors.

Regardless of divergent interpretations above, all suggest to elements of inclusion, empowerment and voice of those prior marginalized. In this sense, participation is thus revolutionary in its reorientation of actors. It becomes the case that those groups hitherto marginalized cease to be passive or mere objects and beneficiaries but rather a group with agency, capacity and knowledge capable of contributing to and deciding on issues that affect them. As Cohen and Uphoff put it, participation ensures that, they become part and parcel of development process capable of engaging in decision making, planning, designing and implementing development projects, policies and issues that pertain to them in their communities. Participation can therefore be a tool through which rural women become active participants in cli-

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116 Kenny et al (2014), p.1911 have critiqued that, hierarchical models tend to assume that all people want to be involved in the same way, rather than capturing the desired level or type of involvement of different.
117 Wilcox (1994), The guide to effective participation p.4.
119 Cohen and Uphoff (1980) p220-221; See also Duraiappah et al (2005) p4
mate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and actions because it can enable them to
determine their needs, design and implement programs.\textsuperscript{120} Full participation in making socie-
tal choices and decisions, Ahmad and Talib argue is a natural outcome of the endowment of
individual dignity because it contributes to individual self-development.\textsuperscript{121}

### 3.3 Participation legal framing

#### 3.4 The right to participate

“One of the most basic principles of democracy holds that all citizens have a right to partici-
(p either directly or indirectly through representatives of their own choosing) in decisions
that critically affect their personal interests.”


The right to participate in public life is one of the most basic and fundamental human rights. It
is an inalienable right that all humans enjoy by virtue of being a part of the human society.
The right was first included in United Nations (UN) documents,\textsuperscript{122} and is one of the core ele-
ments of human rights-based approaches. In environmental issues, the right to participate in
decisions that affect the environment has recently gained considerable traction due to long-
term environmental and physical hazards that the lack of attention to climate change and envi-
ronmental neglect could cause.\textsuperscript{123} Described by William Cobbett as the right of all rights,\textsuperscript{124}
one finds few reasons for disagreement. Not only is it a right in itself, but also a right that
paves way for and is a pre-condition for realization of other rights.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{120} Morris (2003), p.226.
\textsuperscript{121} Ahmad and Talib (2011), p.63.
\textsuperscript{122} UDHR Art 21; ICCPR Art 25; CEDAW Art 7 & 14; Declaration on the Right to Development Article 2 (3)
\textsuperscript{123} Monshipouri (2014):In Mihr and Gibney (2014) p924
\textsuperscript{124} Cobbett cited in Waldron (1998) p307- Waldron however cautions against referring to participation as such
stating that participation as the ‘right of rights’ is ‘a phrase which when read carelessly might suggest that
participation is more important than the other rights with which it might conflict.” According to him, partici-
pation is a right better off viewed as a right whose exercise seems peculiarly appropriate in situations where
reasonable right-bearers disagree about what rights they have.
\textsuperscript{125} See Report of the Special on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights- A/HRC/23/36 (2013/03/11)), para.19
3.5 What does the right to participation mean for rural women and climate change challenge?

Participation framed as an inherent right has foundation in both international human rights frameworks, as well as domestic law, which give it normative force.

Hazelton argues that,

“The legal framing of the concept of participation has normative force. “Playing the “human rights card” can be persuasive, sometimes even conclusive, in contemporary decision making; this is one aspect of what makes the moral force of human rights so attractive — they help you to win arguments and, sometimes, to change the way things are done.”126

Further, Ms. Carmona also argues that, participatory processes based on human rights do not accept power dynamics as they are, rather they start from the premise that power differentials must be eliminated and seek to explicitly recognize and challenge inequality, including structural and systemic power imbalances in social and economic life.127

The Human Rights Council has acknowledged that, “Participation in decision-making is of key importance in efforts to tackle climate change”128 precisely because participation in a human rights perspective draws attention to the importance of aligning climate change policies and measures with overall human rights objectives, including through assessing possible effects of such policies and measures on human rights.129 The human rights framework seeks to empower individuals and underlines the critical importance of effective participation of individuals and communities in decision-making processes affecting their lives.130 Therefore and specifically in this study context, participation as an inherent right guarantees rural women inclusion in climate activities and demands obligatory duties from the government in ensuring respect, protection and promotion of it. It offers them the possibility to take part in cli-

126 Hazelton (2013), p.268; See also A/69/213 Para 4.
128 A/HRC/10/61 para 79.
129 A/HRC/10/61 Para 80.
mate action because it challenges forms of domination that restrict people’s agency and self-determination.\textsuperscript{131}

Popovic, however, cautions that the “recognition of a right to participate does not in and of itself ensure effective participation. To the contrary, it begs the question of what effective participation means and what it requires.”\textsuperscript{132} Similarly, Mary Robinson Foundation has also noted that, participation alone will not guarantee gender equality unless women are present in decision-making fora and have agency and voice to affect change in all areas of decision-making, are supported with capacity building, networks and access to resources to strengthen their knowledge or confidence.\textsuperscript{133} Therefore, merely having a voice or being present in climate change related meetings or activities may not suffice. It will take more than that to entail elements of meaningful and effective participation, a move bound to represent a step away from forms of passive or tokenistic participation. Indeed UN Women notes that, for participation to be meaningful it must be more than just a numeric presence in decision-making, rather it should include aspects of strategic representation of issues that matter to different groups of women.\textsuperscript{134} Also forwarding a similar thought, the UN Special Rapporteur on Water and Sanitation stated that active, free and meaningful participation rules out tokenistic forms of participation such as a mere sharing of information or superficial consultation.\textsuperscript{135} Effective participation of rural women in climate action would therefore have to embody elements such as training, information sharing, and knowledge access, resource access in order to effectively contribute to addressing the climate challenge.

3.6 The legal frameworks/ guarantees for rural women participation in mitigation and adaptation practices and strategies of climate change

3.6.1 The CEDAW, rural women and climate change

Although the CEDAW does not necessarily have explicit provisions on climate change both in general context or specifically on rural women, it has not stopped the Committee from rec-

\textsuperscript{131} A/HRC/23/36 para 16.
\textsuperscript{132} Popovic (1993), p.891.
\textsuperscript{133} Mary Robinson Foundation (2015), p.8.
\textsuperscript{134} UN Women (2013), p.30.
\textsuperscript{135} A/69/213 para 18; Gaventa (2002), p.7.
ognizing that climate change poses specific threats on rural women\textsuperscript{136} or obligating the state to “ensure full participation of rural women in designing, planning and implementing such policies.”\textsuperscript{137} Indeed, it can be argued that, the principles of equality, non-discrimination and state obligation that form the core of the convention are aptly suitable for application in context of rural women and their inclusion in climate actions.

That said, the right of rural women to participate in climate change is derived in the preamble,\textsuperscript{138} articles 7 and 14(a) and (f) of the CEDAW convention. Article 7 of the convention has obligatory duties for states parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right; “to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government.”\textsuperscript{139} According to the committee, this provision requires of states parties to ensure that women have the right to participate fully in and be represented in public policy formulation in all sectors and at all levels.\textsuperscript{140} For the realization of this, states parties ensure that barriers to women’s full participation in the formulation of government policy are identified and overcome.\textsuperscript{141} In the particular case of AWARE women, the focal point of this case study, one of the observed and identified barriers was illiteracy, customs among others. Education for one is therefore essential for enabling rural women to be able to make the best and right choices but also to meaningfully participate in mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Additionally and of particular relevance to this study context are the contents of article 14 of the convention in its express and distinct recognition of rural women as a unique group more over with rights to take part in the activities of their governments.\textsuperscript{142} The CEDAW committee notes that, article 14 is the first of its kind to explicitly focus attention to rural women\textsuperscript{143} as a special group that merit special attention not only because of the distinct problems they are faced with but also of the special role that they play in the wellbeing and liveli-

\textsuperscript{136} Statement of the CEDAW Committee on Gender and Climate Change, 44th session, 2009.
\textsuperscript{137} CEDAW GR 34 para 12.
\textsuperscript{138} CEDAW Para 9. Convinced that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields.
\textsuperscript{139} CEDAW Art 7(b).
\textsuperscript{140} CEDAW GR 23 para 25.
\textsuperscript{141} CEDAW GR 23 para 27.
\textsuperscript{142} CEDAW Article 14.
\textsuperscript{143} CEDAW GR 34 Para 2.
hoods in their families and in rural communities. In so doing, they moved beyond the general categorization of women in recognition of intersectionality. By recognizing rural women as a district group, Pruitt also writes that, article 14 moves beyond the implicit focus on urban populations that characterize a great deal of contemporary law making to evince a concern about gender as it intersects with rurality.

Article 14(2) in particular requires of states Parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right “to participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels,” and “to participate in all community activities.” The right to participate is further noted in the committee’s General Recommendation 34 (GR 34). Accordingly, GR 34 paragraph 53 states that, rural women have a right to participate in decision-making at all levels and in community-level discussions with high authorities. In keeping with its much enumerated principle of equality, the committee stated that gender equality is an essential element to the successful initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate change policies and as such, women’s right to participate at all levels of decision-making in climate change policies and programmes must be guaranteed. Their full participation is essential not only for their empowerment, but also for the advancement of society as a whole. In addition, Mary Robinson foundation also asserts that, it is not only the right thing to do but it will also lead to climate actions that are more successful and better for people and planet. Furthermore, Brody et al in their study also argued that promoting women’s and girl’s meaningful participation in decision-making processes can begin to address gender inequalities not just by raising their profile and status in the community but also in challenging traditional assumptions about their capabilities.

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146 CEDAW Art 14 (a)
147 CEDAW 14 (f)
148 Statement of the CEDAW Committee on Gender and Climate Change, 44th session, 2009, para 6.
149 Statement of the CEDAW Committee on Gender and Climate Change, 44th session, 2009, para 1.
150 CEDAW committee GR 23 Paragraph 17: The statement is indicative of the role women in the subsistence of their households. It even holds more meaning in context of the rural women.
It should however be noted that, full equality referred to by the convention, means much more than equality before and in the law. According to Sen, equal consideration for all may in fact demand the very unequal treatment in favor of the disadvantaged. Such considerations are indeed worth noting when seeking solutions to how best to address the issues of climate change. In light of this, GR 34 paragraph 21 calls upon states parties to develop and implement temporal special measures (TMSs) to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality for rural women in all areas where they are underrepresented or disadvantaged. Such measures are quite befitting for addressing climate change.

Also importantly, these utterances recognize and understand the existence of differences among people and because of such differences, the need for taking appropriate actions. In any case, contextualized in to climate change and rural women, these reiterations would entail a critical look in to barriers to rural women participation in climate change and thereafter-suitable measures including TSMs to enable, encourage and promote their equal participation in adaptation and mitigation strategies, actions of climate change. Inaction will not only implicate participatory rights of rural women in climate challenge, but also the long term objective of gender equality envisioned in the CEDAW and other international human rights treaties and ultimately the UNFCCC objective of reducing the greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere.

3.6.2 The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights - ICCPR

The ICCPR, a core international human rights instrument, also has provisions that guarantee rural women participatory rights in climate change strategies and actions. Article 25(a) states that every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions, “to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives.” The Human Rights Committee has been clear as to what constitutes the conduct of public affairs. It noted that, conduct of public affairs is a broad concept that covers several aspects including formulation and implementation of policy at international, national, regional and local levels. Furthermore, paragraph eight establishes a basis for rural women participation where they can

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152 Holtmaat: In Hellum and Aasen (2013), P.106.
154 ICCPR GC No 25 para 5.
do so ‘by exerting influence through public debate and dialogue with their representatives or through their capacity to organize themselves.’

3.6.3 The UNFCCC

The climate convention starts with “Acknowledging that change in the Earth’s climate and its adverse effects are a common concern of humankind.” This statement is testament that climate change as currently experienced, is a problem for all and because it is such, it requires action from all stakeholders. With the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC being the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to a level that will prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, arriving at this ambitious objective will in no uncertain terms require efforts by all stakeholders including rural women in mitigation and adaptation strategies. As mentioned earlier, the UNFCCC itself has no mention of women, but it has given more recognition to the potential of women in climate action in its COP decisions. The Cancun agreement for instance recognizes the need to engage a broad range of stakeholders at the global, regional, national and local levels (...) and importantly for aims sought out in this study. The agreement notes that, that gender equality and the effective participation of women and indigenous peoples are important for effective action on all aspects of climate change.

That being said, article 6(a) (iii) of the convention obligates states parties while carrying out their commitments as enumerated in art 4, to promote and facilitate public participation in addressing climate change and its effects and developing adequate responses. It would therefore mean that, rural women being a substantial part of the greater public, Uganda for her part is duty bound to ensure that rural women are not excluded or marginalized from climate action. However, to ensure that the women effectively and meaningful participate in their contribution to the climate challenge; many other aspects are necessary such as fulfilment of other rights like the rights to freedom of expression and information, association and assembly.

155 ICCPR GC No 25 para 8.
156 UNFCCC preamble para 1.
157 UNFCCC Art 2.
158 Decision 23/CP.18; Decision 36/CP.7; Decision 18/CP.20.
159 FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1 para 7.
160 Decision 36/CP.7 para Urging Parties to take the measures necessary to enable women to participate fully in all levels of decision making relevant to climate change.
bly. States parties and Uganda in this case will have to ensure the development and implementation of educational, training and public awareness programmes on climate change to educate, empower and engage all stakeholders of whom rural women are part of, and entail access to information on climate change and its effects. Indeed, among others, Popovic has argued that meaningful right to participate in environmental decision making requires education. Access to climate change information in all its forms is necessary and vital for the climate challenge. In this case, the right to information plays a significant role in protecting and promoting equal participation in the conduct of public affairs. Elements of this can also be seen in the Rio Declaration, Principle 10. This principle states that, “...at the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available.” Although the declaration addresses the environment in general, climate change as we know is an environmental problem and arguably falls within this scope of principle 10. Popovic also further argues that participation in any form it takes must incorporate the freedom to develop and exchange ideas and information.


According to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, “Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his country either directly or through freely chosen representatives.” But perhaps even more specifically relevant for rural women is the

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161 UNFCCC Art 6(a)(i).
162 UNFFCCC Art 6(a)(ii).
164 Popovic (1993), p.695 ‘Many international treaties treat the right to obtain information about the environment as an important component of public participation in preserving the planet’
165 Principle 10 Rio declaration; Popovic (1993), p.688 writes that, although instruments such as the Rio declaration do not purport to create enforceable obligations in the legal sense, they do provide valuable insight into the elements of an operational right to participation and they do reflect a degree of international consensus.
166 Carlarne et al (2016) (Eds), p.220 “Climate change is a type of an environmental harm as such human rights obligations that apply in the context of environmental harm generally should apply to climate change as well.”
provisions in the African Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa which calls upon states parties to take positives actions to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other measures to ensure that women are equal partners with men at all levels of development and implementation of State policies and development programmes.169 During the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) meeting, women empowerment was placed high on the agenda and the meeting resolved to develop a CAHOSCC Women and Gender Programme on Climate Change to engage women and gender in climate change related actions.170

3.6.5 Uganda and rural women’s’ right to participate in climate challenge.

There is no doubt that Uganda has made significant strides in regards to the rights of women in general. Being a signatory to major international rights treaties noted above, it means that she is duty bound in fulfillment of those obligations. These aside, Uganda’s 1995 Constitution grants protection of human rights to its citizenry. Particularly, Art 33 of the Constitution is dedicated to women. Some of the main rights include, “the State shall provide the facilities and opportunities necessary to enhance the welfare of women to enable them to realize their full potential and advancement” and “Women shall have the right to equal treatment with men, and that right shall include equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities”; and “Laws, cultures, customs or traditions which are against the dignity, welfare or interest of women or which undermine their status, are prohibited by this Constitution.”171 In light of the guarantees enshrined in this article, it can be assumed that, this includes facilitating the participation of rural women in climate change.

In any case, on the right to participate, the Constitution under National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy and Art 59 provides for participatory rights. In particular, National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy II (i) states that, “the State shall be based on democratic principles which empower and encourage the active participation of all citizens at all levels in their own governance.”172 The express mention of women participa-

170 Press Release Nº08.23rd AU summit.
171 1995 Uganda constitution Art 33 (2), (4) and (6).
172 The State shall recognize the significant role that women play in society. As mentioned earlier, women in Uganda, especially in rural areas have significant roles they play in their communities and in context of climate change have amassed a wealth of knowledge relevant for Uganda’s climate change efforts.
tion however comes in context of parliamentary representation where there shall be one woman representative for every district in Art 78(i) constitution of Uganda and Art 10(e) of the local government Act provides that women councilors shall form one-third of the council.

3.7 Towards a human rights based approach to rural women participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation

Tschakert & Machado stated that, the “issues of climate change require a shift from needs to a rights approach.” A human rights-based approach is conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights.

According to this approach, human rights standards contained in and principles as derived from the UDHR and other human rights international instruments guide development cooperation and programming in all sectors and phases of programing process. These principles and standards are vital for rural women participation in the climate challenge. For one, because for instance, it can guide policies and measures of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

3.7.1 Obligations, duties and rights

First and foremost, “under a human rights-based approach, plans, policies and programmes are anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law.” This approach introduces the important idea that certain actors have duties to facilitate and foster development. While states in this case are recognized duty bearers, HRBA sees people as citizens and as Eyben points out, a citizen connotes someone with rights rather than someone receiving welfare or buying services. People become agents and subjects, rather than objects of their own development. According to the Human Rights Council, “human rights obligations and commitments have the potential to inform and strengthen international and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legiti-

174 The principles include Universality and inalienability, Indivisibility, Inter-dependence and Inter-relatedness, Equality and Non-discrimination, Participation and Inclusion and Accountability and Rule of Law.
175 OHCHR-Applying HRBA to climate change negotiations, policies and measures, p.1.
176 Ibid.
In the particular case of Uganda, it would mean that in her compliance with her international obligations, she has a duty to rural women to ensure that they are included in mitigation and adaptation strategies. This would include obligations towards eliminating all barriers to rural women participation in climate change such as review of its cultural norms, policies and laws that are discriminative or neutral to facilitate participation of rural women. The CEDAW committee however cautions that when any such measures are taken, they must extend beyond a purely formal legal obligation of equal treatment of women with men. Undertaking such measures has the potential of remedying the marginalization that rural women face in climate change adaptation and mitigation and thus facilitating or promoting inclusive participation for them.

Other than being a human right, participation is a core element of HRBA. Participation from a rights perspective provides an opportunity for rural women to be active agents in their own destiny. The right to participation guarantees empowerment and inclusiveness for rural women in mitigation and adaptation. It has the potential to ensure dialogue between and amongst all stakeholders, because it is grounded on principles of equality and nondiscrimination. The Special Rapporteur on the right to water and sanitation also states that human rights understand participation as genuine empowerment, rather than mere consultation and provision of information. Therefore, for processes to be truly participatory, they should reflect the requirement for “active, free and meaningful” reflected in article 2(3) of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development (UNDRD). Active, free and meaningful participation would mean that rural women get the opportunity to articulate and express their needs and concerns, be heard and influence decisions in their communities with others without fear of backlash. In addition, it would also entail for capacity building of rural women such as awareness, learning and training of new ways of dealing with the climate challenge. Cornwall has argued that merely “being involved in a process is not equivalent to having a voice.” As such Brody et al insist that ensuring meaningful participation in decision-making processes

180 CEDAW GR 25 Paragraph 6- The Committee notes that, indirect discrimination against women can also occur when laws, policies and programmes are based on seemingly gender-neutral criteria which in their actual effect have a detrimental impact on women.
182 A/HRC/23/36 para 22- the right is strongly linked to empowerment which is a key human rights goal and principle.
184 Cornwall (2008), p.278.
for rural women on climate change responses so that climate change policy and grassroots interventions respond to their specific needs and draw on their knowledge and experience is critical. Furthermore, in order for rural women to meaningfully and effectively participate in climate change, access to information is important. Thus rural women will need to have all relevant information to be able to meaningfully and effectively participate and contribute positively to resolving of the climate challenge.

3.7.2 Equality and non-discrimination

A fundamental principle of human rights law is that all human beings are entitled to their human rights without adverse discrimination of any kind. Rights based approach employs elements of inclusion, equality and non-discrimination as such it pays attention to the marginalized and excluded with the potential of building their agency and empowering them.

By virtue of inclusiveness and empowerment to those groups in society often left on the fringes of decision-making, implementation, planning and development process, it makes the approach especially attractive for making a case for rural women inclusion in climate challenge. According to Ms Carmona, “the principle of equality and non-discrimination implies that everyone should have equal and effective opportunities for making their views known to other members of society, and to be part of decision-making processes.”

HRBA also allows for identification of the most pressing needs of individuals in society. Like Pillay points out, it compels us to look at the people whose lives are most adversely affected and thus provides the legal rationale and grounds to advocate the integration of human rights obligations into policies and programmes countering the negative effects of environmental challenges. To summarize, recalling among others the broad legal basis in international, regional and national law and the Mary Robinson foundation report, this chapter has argued that including the participation of rural women in climate decision-making and all related climate change actions at all levels is not only the right thing to do, it will also lead to climate actions that are more successful and sustainable.

4. CHAPTER FOUR
4.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Rural women/Members local knowledge, skills and practices of coping with climate change

The field findings like noted earlier in chapter two of this thesis showed that rural women indeed have knowledges, skills and practices for coping with the impacts of climate change. However, responses generated from participants particularly members varied both in depth and in acumen especially between younger and elderly women. According to Briggs et al, this is an attribution of access to different elements such as environments, issues of wealth and mobility, experience, age and gender.¹⁸⁹

4.2.2 Knowledge of predicting weather patterns

All participants agreed rural women had local knowledge and skills of weather forecasting. The members, they said that, they could tell when rains or drought was about to come by the singing of birds, the appearance of a distinct star known as Lomoroko, by migration of certain birds and animals, flowering of certain plants, change in the color of ghee (for example if it becomes lighter drought is coming). They also said that, the direction the moon faces can tell the amount and time of rainfall.¹⁹⁰ Similar observations were mentioned by key informants. For example, Environment officer, he said that, rural women had indigenous/local knowledge on early warning such as reading celestial bodies like stars and the moon. Forecasting participants said gave women and communities a head start in opening gardens and plots so that the soils captured as much moisture as possible to enable seed growth.¹⁹¹ Timing of planting the members said was everything. For example, AR8 said, “We have to time planting period to avoid crop failure because some crops take long to mature”

4.2.3 Knowledge of food preservation, storage techniques and wild foods.

Responses generated were cross cutting among all women and key informants. Storage practices mentioned were granaries. These are traditional food storage facilities used to store food

eaten in the future, in lean times and for seeds for next season planting. Food preservation techniques included smoking, sun drying, Emodich technique of food preservation, and threshing without winnowing to protect seeds from for example, weevil infestation while in storage. In regards to wild foods members said they could identify between edible and non-edible wild foods. These were mainly consumed as last resort foods in periods of food scarcities. Examples included ecomai (Balanites tree leaves), fruits like tamarins, alami (wild berries) and tubers. However, participants also mentioned that, these foods were under threat. In order to cope with climate effects of food insecurity, people had turned to cutting and selling wood fuel and charcoal for survival. This, however, was carried out indiscriminately.

4.2.4 Knowledge of potential water points

All agreed that women were knowledgeable of likely water points in the dry seasons. This knowledge, key informants said was passed down, and learned from experience borne out of women roles and responsibilities in their households. ED AWARE for instance said, “This is not surprising because traditionally this is the job of women here. So they have traditional ways of storing food such as using granaries.” Potential water points cited by the women included in, along and near dry riverbeds and streams, ponds, and water pools up in the rocks. This knowledge has been very critical for the survival of women, their families and communities during the drought periods.

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192 See Abeka et al(2012), p.37; “Emodich” is a mixture of preserved food containing meat, ground nut paste, wild fruits and local butter often prepared to be eaten in the lean times of drought
A young girl collects water from a dug out water hole in a dry river bed to water vegetable garden close by

### 4.2.5 Local farm practices
Participants mentioned barricading/ blocking, digging of tunnels/ trenching, shallow gullies, hipping of soil around plant. These they said drain excess water, keep away the flashfloods from crops and protect crops from being uprooted by strong winds and floods. Mixed cropping was also cited. According to participants, this was a precautionary strategy in case some crop types failed. Members also said they had gone back to using local seed varieties because they were more drought resistant compared to modern varieties from NAADs. Mulching, crop rotation and use of a mixture of ash, charcoal and cow dung to make manure were also mentioned.

### 4.2.6 Migration practice
Because of failed seasons culminating in to continuous lack of food, some members said they had had to move to find new places to cultivate. Often this was in groups and limited within the district. Such was the experience of some members interviewed. The result of this as could be observed was an abundancy in harvest. This in turn meant food security for the migrants and their families back in their villages they came from.

### 4.2.7 Local mitigation practices
In mitigation, participants reported practices of not cutting small wild trees growing in their compounds or gardens. These ‘local mitigation practices’ for what could be discerned, were
reminiscent of an external influence. This confirms Briggs et al argument that local knowledge of people or a community is not local as such but tends to comprise a hybrid of various knowledge sources.195

4.3 The nature, forms and levels of members’ participation in adaptation activities and strategies

The findings revealed that the participation of the women in mitigation, adaptation and resilience activities took various forms and levels. Participation levels however varied from project to project and activity to activity. For instance, in some projects such as tree planting and Village Savings Loan Associations (VSLAs), and livelihoods, members participated in all levels/stages.

In mitigation activities for instance, member’s participation took form of learning and getting new information. They underwent training and capacity building in clean energy techniques such as biomass briquette production and construction of energy saving cooking stoves. They also trained in other environmental conservation activities such as making tree nursery beds, tree planting projects in form of agroforestry, orchard gardening and afforestation which included replanting of indigenous tree species and riverine restoration.196 In addition to training and capacity building, participants also mentioned taking part in awareness and sensitization meetings and campaigns. In these meetings they reported that they had been informed about aspects of disaster risk reduction and the negative effects of cutting trees.

Similarly, in adaptation, participants reported skills building and awareness in climate resilience practices such as climate smart agricultural practices (CSA). CSA practices have the potential of increasing productivity, enhancing adaptation and resilience of the farming systems and reducing emissions intensity in the context of achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication.197 According to Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), climate-smart agricultural practices are identified based on the given agro-ecological and socio-economic situation in a given area.198 For AWARE members, CSA trainings related to management and conservation of soils, use of both fast maturing and drought resistant seed varie-

196 ED AWARE
ties. Both drought and fast maturing varieties were procured at subsidized price from
AWARE and freely from government through National Agricultural Advisory services
(NAADs Programme). Procured seeds included sorghum, pearl millet, finger millet, sorghum,
maize and dry land legumes. In addition, members were also taught on how to plant. Accus-
tomed to sowing, members said AWARE advised to plant in rows. Members also reported
receiving training in agronomics practices,199 and contour ploughing to minimize soil erosion
from flash floods. Sensitization in food security matters was also reported by participants.
Members for instance said they were advised to use food sparingly and practice food storage
in granaries and group cereal banks. “They are sensitized about food security and the need for
them to store food in preparation for the droughts, to use food sparingly. There is a tendency
of people here to spend so much of the cereal to make ‘kwete’/local brew.” Said the PO-
AWARE

These campaigns it was said had helped in enhancing food security. Cereal banks are a slightly modernized and larger version of granaries traditionally used by individual women in village. Apart from storing cereal for group members, cereal banks are also a source of income as some of the grains can be sold both to members and non-members for profit but at different prices.200 In their current use, cereal banks have become a food option during periods of scarcity, source of seeds for the next planting season and compared to individual granaries reduced food wastage.

Furthermore it was also reported that members been trained in entrepreneur skills such as bee keeping, in orchard establishment, vegetable gardening, nursery beds and small scale irrigation practices, upon which some members started their own initiatives.201 Training in use of ox ploughs was also identified. Unlike hand hoes, ox ploughs open up soils better to soak up rain water and are less labour intensive. Those members who reported having used ox ploughs said it had increased their crop harvests substantially.

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199 Agronomic practices are farm practices related to aspects of soil quality, water use and crop residue
200 FAO –Uganda p1-Cereal bank buys grain at its lowest price. It is then stocked and sold throughout the year
with a small profit cushion to provide funds to restock the following year. At the same time, families that
borrow food from the cereal bank can pay back in kind.
201 Vegetable gardens are much smaller making their management easier and often depend on local resources and
knowledges known to women such as water, mulching.
Participants also mentioned training in VSLAs. At AWARE, members said they were encouraged to form groups. VSLAs, interviews revealed represented a very important alternate means of coping in periods of food scarcities not just for members but all people in rural communities in Kabong. Members borrowed for different reasons such as meeting household basic needs often food, to pay school fees, health and to start income generating activities like brewing, vegetable selling, street food selling and vegetable growing. For example, AR6 said “AWARE has promoted formation of VSLA groups. From these groups, we are able to make a living. For example I started my vegetable garden with money I borrowed from the SAC-COS.”

Besides skills building, awareness and sensitization, member participation also took form of experience and knowledge sharing. Like the PO AWARE stated, that, “when the members come to meetings, they participate by sharing their experiences and ways in which they are adapting to climate change effects. They share their knowledge related to food preservation, storage, soil conservation protecting crops from heavy winds and floods.” Though corroborating this statement, members also added that their participation leaned more on them receiving information or skills. Reasons for this, it was noted was because of, already set agendas and project activities by actors, shyness of members and dictates of cultural norms that require women be seen but not heard.

Also noted was that, in some of the occasions in which members put forward their views and needs, they said they got positive feedback. For example some members reported that their request to AWARE and the district for local drought resistant varieties of white sorghum, local white ground nuts and local fruit varieties, was granted and they received their seeds and fruits.

In addition to the above, AWARE also employs partnership and collaborative strategy in her activities and projects. Through this, AWARE has linked her members to actors working on climate change related issues. According to the ED AWARE, if members had their
own initiatives, they were supported with either funding from AWARE, or linked to suitable partners. Some of the collaborations have been with the key informant organizations in this study. For example, members got access to funds for starting their cereal bank from the district. They also got access to trainings, capacity building, awareness and sensitization campaigns, and initiatives with different organizations as mentioned earlier in aspects of tree planting, construction of energy saving cooking stoves, construction of rainwater harvesting tanks, food security and resilience among others. Being part of AWARE members said, made it easier to be part of the climate action. As AWARE members, they were invited for exchange visits, trainings and awareness, and advocacy by other organizations and the district. Such experiences were hardly enjoyed by other women in the villages who were considered illiterate and not important.

4.4 The implications of member’s participation

Participation of members in training, capacity building, awareness and sensitization of in climate related activities resulted in to positive aspects such as heightened awareness on issues of climate change and the accompanying actions taken thereafter by the members.

In mitigation participants said women had engaged and been engaged in tree planting projects. According to members, they had planted trees individually and collectively. Collectively they planted trees around Kabong town and had continued to plant trees in their Orchard garden in AWARE. Some members like AR13 reported that, she had planted about 10 trees around her home. In addition, she said that she did not cut small trees that she found growing either in her compound or garden. Such wildly growing trees members said were likely to survive the harsh conditions. Although different tree types were grown, the growing and use of kei apple trees for live fencing of ‘manyattas’ homesteads and kraals was especially significant in context of mitigation efforts. All the participants claimed that kei apple trees had reduced tree cutting. Although no evidence could be obtained, this could well be the case as Bizzarri in her study observed that construction of manyattas and kraals although only done every few years was probably the most wood-exhausting activity in the region.

202 AWARE orchard project is one of the oldest projects of the members that has benefited them in form of access to fruits as well as income to the organization and to members who sale the fruits. Fruits are also given to feed orphans.

The raising of tree nursery beds was evident. This was also done collectively at AWARE and individually. Seedlings from AWARE were distributed to all members at the right time. A good number of members had individual projects. For example AR5 said that, “because of trainings, now i have my own tree nursery bed. When the seedlings mature, I sale them to other people and they plant and for me i get money to buy food and take my children to school.” A kei apple seedling for instance earned those members involved about 800 Uganda shillings. Tree seedlings were for the most part sold to institutions like schools and NU-SUF groups. It was also found that one of the reasons members sold their seedlings besides profit gain was because they were victims of land grabbing as such didn’t have land to engage in tree planting. AWARE currently is working with Uganda Women’s Network (UWONET) to raise awareness of women and communities on issues of land. AR11 however said that despite now knowing her entitlement to her late husband’s land, she could not go back because she would only be chased away again. In Kabong customs dictate that women have no ownership roles but only access. However, even access, as reports indicated was well subject to men’s will.

Other undertaken actions by the members also included Regulated tree cutting practices. Such included pruning of tree branches and stems, as opposed to felling whole trees, replacement of one cut tree by two, and targeted tree planting, a practice of deliberately planting some trees specifically for their fuel (firewood) consumption and income through sale of charcoal and firewood to people living in town.

In addition, with their new skills, some members said they had contracted and were using clean. Although some stoves used wood fuel and charcoal, the amount consumed in comparison to normal three cooking stones were much lower.

About adaptation, review of reports, observations and responses from participants also indicated that, the women had taken up related practices after receiving trainings, awareness
and sensitization. These included CSA practices of crop spacing and management, soil moisture management, contour ploughing, planting in rows among other. Undertaking these practices participants said ensured good crop growth and good harvests. Others had taken up alternative livelihood options/ income generating activities (IGA). Such included bee keeping, selling of cooked food in markets, sale of vegetables and other food stuff like cereals, sale of art and crafts items such as beaded bracelets in the market. Incomes from these had helped members in meeting their basic needs thereby also enhancing their resilience to climate impacts.

In addition, all members said they had taken up food security measures. Accordingly, women said they used food sparingly, stored more food in their granaries, and participated in different cereal banking groups. Yet another very notable food security practice many of the members had taken up was vegetable growing. AR9 reported that, “After the trainings we received many of us opened orchards and vegetable gardens most especially during drought along the river banks because water in quite near the surface there.” This was particularly the case of members living in Kabong town. Vegetable gardening participants reported had helped in reducing hunger particularly for those involved and to an extent benefited community people in context of access and lower prices compared to vegetables coming from other districts. AR7 for example said, “Yes, women have contributed to the reduction of starvation and death. Because of us, we have reduced starvation in our households and even in other families. After AWARE trained us, I went back home and started my own vegetable garden. I live near dry deep gulley so it’s easier to get water to water my vegetables.” Besides providing food, vegetable gardening also earned them income. These incomes members said was put to different uses such as meeting household needs and coping with climate impacts, which in turn enhanced their resilience.
VSLAs were yet another adopted adaptation and resilience practice by the members and had become an immediate means of coping in the face of climate change. “When crops fail, VSLAs becomes the most immediate and alternate means of survival” Said ED AWARE. With VSLAs member could borrow money to start up IGAs cited earlier but also to buy food when no other alternative materialized.

It should be noted that, take up of some of mitigation, adaptation and resilience activities was not limited to only members. Working as advocates and trainers in AWARE, and with the district, member became trained other women and communities in skills and knowledges they had acquired. Indeed the ED AWARE stated that, “When the members get trained, they also take these newly gained knowledge and skills to their children and other women in the villages.” This was transmitted through exhibitions, training and dramas. During the FGD, members said they had gone to other villages where they talked about backyard gardening. The result was that some of the women in those villages established their own backyard gardens. The vegetables were eaten, while some of it was exchanged or sold to buy sorghum. Other members like AR16 said that she had participated in community resource mapping which turned beneficial to her village. With their knowledge and experience, she and other women in her village mapped out potential water points, which became used for watering small animals and household use.

4.5 Inclusiveness of rural women in Uganda climate policies and legal frameworks of climate change

In context of legislation, it was found that, there was no legislation directly pertaining to climate change. However, suggestions have been made for enactment of an overreaching standalone legal framework for climate change. The constitution of Uganda as noted earlier in chapter three can be referenced to as entailing equal participation of rural women in climate action.

On policies, the study reviewed Uganda National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) and National Disaster Preparedness and Management Policy. The NCCP is Uganda’s main instrument for addressing climate change issues in the country. Upon review of the policy, it was found that, the policy makes a general reference to rural women participation only once. It stated “the Government of Uganda-(GoU) must thus ensure that communities are empow-

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ered and that both men and women participate meaningfully in planning, testing and rolling out adaptation and mitigation activities in rural and urban areas. The rest of the document makes a general reference to women but in context of vulnerability. The National Disaster Preparedness and Management Policy of 2010, also makes a general reference to participation of individuals within communities, because they are thought to have valuable information and resources to share, and because they have rights and obligations to participate in key decisions that affect their lives, they are called upon to prepare for and respond to disasters.

4.6 Discussion

The findings suggest to the relevance of local knowledge, skills and practices in ensuring the resilience women and their families to climate impacts. In addition, they also suggest that, including rural women in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and actions has great potential. For one, in context of contributing to emission reductions, and secondly, in building and strengthening the adaptive capacity and therefore resilience of members. In regards to climate change policy and legal documents reviewed, these were found to be largely neutral and wanting. As to levels of participation, despite cases in which members shared their experiences, knowledges and were even heard, participation for the most part leaned towards information receiving and training.

The findings revealed that the members’ local knowledges and practices of coping with climate had fostered their resilience that of their households and to an extent of their communities at large to the impacts of climate change. Practices of migration, weather forecasting, and potential water points had a correlation to an enhanced measure of food security particularly for the members and their households. Weather forecasting for instance, helped the women in guiding and timing of planting thus ensuring food security. This resonates with findings by Nganzi et al and Lunga and Musarurwa. Lunga and Musarurwa in their study found that knowledge of weather forecasting had largely assisted the communities in planning both daily and seasonal activities thus ensuring agricultural sustainability. Nganzi et al also found that, indigenous knowledge of weather forecasting mainly helped farmers in making farming decisions, but also provided an early warning signs to the community members, thus

preparing them to deal with anticipated adverse weather conditions such prolonged droughts and floods.\textsuperscript{208} The knowledge of potential water points helped women and their communities to cope with water scarcities. Abeaka et al in their study of rural Keruso community in Kenya also noted to the potential of women’s knowledge in solving the problem of water scarcity.\textsuperscript{209} Anderson also writes that, during a drought in the small islands of the Federated States of Micronesia, it was local women’s, knowledgeable about island hydrology as a result of their land-based work, who found potable water by digging new wells that reached the freshwater lens.\textsuperscript{210} On the other hand, Guinand and Lemessa noted to significance of wild foods in rural southern Ethiopia for coping with climate change.\textsuperscript{211} All the above attest to the relevance of such knowledges in coping with climate change.

Nevertheless, it was also found that, these very knowledge bases and practices were also under threat due to increased frequency and magnitude of occurrences in climate change, and ensuing effects. For example, forecasting had increasingly become unpredictable and less reliable due to changes in climate thus affecting timing of planting. Such gaps could be covered by modern technology, and systems such as early warning and forecasts through government meteorological department. Egeru in his study makes a suggestion of fusion of local knowledge with modern knowledge. According to him, an approach as such is a good recipe in offering a greater opportunity for resilience and adaptation to changing conditions and circumstances.\textsuperscript{212} It was also noted that, wild foods especially the dibble tree leaves that communities depend on, in times of scarcities were under threat from indiscriminate and excessive cutting of trees.\textsuperscript{213} Wood fuel and charcoal burning for sale had become a major alternative livelihood coping strategy in the Karamoja sub region to which the study area is part of.\textsuperscript{214}

In engaging in multitude of activities as noted in the results above, the findings demonstrate that rural women are and can be agents and actors in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Indeed, Global Environment Facility (GEF) forwarded a similar argument stating that women can be powerful and catalytic agents of change for their communities if

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{208} Nganzi et al (2015), p.49.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Abeaka et al (2012), P.37.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Anderson (2002 ), p.24.
\item \textsuperscript{211} Guinand and Lemessa (2000), p.31.
\item \textsuperscript{212} Egeru (2012), p.223.
\item \textsuperscript{214} Bizzarri (2009).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
only they are given adequate opportunity, voice, capacity and resources to do so.\textsuperscript{215} This turned out to be the case with AWARE members. With a combination of their local knowledges and through awareness, sensitization, capacity building and training given to the members and by the members to nonmembers in the communities and villages,\textsuperscript{216} they have individually and collectively, applied these newly acquired knowledges and skills in to practice. The uptake of related activities and initiatives had positive implications on mitigation, adaptation and ultimately resilience. Such are confirmation of literature assertions about rural women as actors and agents in climate change. Although no actual measurable quantities as to GHGs reductions in context of mitigation can be claimed nor could be obtained, Aguilar writes that, improved stoves have the potential to reduce carbon dioxide emission levels, while tree projects increase carbon sequestration.\textsuperscript{217} In Uganda, these efforts and their continuity have the potential to contribute to Uganda’s 22% estimated reduction of overall national GHG emissions in 2030.\textsuperscript{218} In adaptation and resilience, evidence on ground was observable and noticeable.

Furthermore findings also reveal a correlation between the participation of the women in mitigation and adaptation activities and initiatives to increased food security for the members and their families especially during the drought periods. Taking an example of vegetable gardens, members said during the FGD that, where previously everything was brought from

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{215} GEF (2014/7/1-2018/6/30), p.17; UN Women watch, Fact sheet p.1.
\item \textsuperscript{216} WEDO (2007), p.3 has noted that women have a tendency to share information related to community well-being.
\item \textsuperscript{217} Aguilar (2009), p.160.
\item \textsuperscript{218} Ministry of Water and Environment (10/ 2015), Uganda’s intended nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), p.11.
\end{itemize}
Mbale now they could get that from their own vegetable gardens. While the first incidence of benefit went to the women and their families, communities also benefited in context of affordability compared to vegetables coming from outside the district. Like vegetable gardens, members take in use of granaries/cereal banks have played an important role in food security particularly in context of ensuring availability of seed for the next planting season for them and other community members. Regards cereal banks, it is worth noting that cereal banks are indicative of integration of local based practice in to climate policy. This is not to say that, the members’ knowledge of food storage as such had a direct catalytic role in the introduction. However the process of coming up with disaster risk reduction the strategic plan according to the document of the parliamentary forum on disaster risk reduction, started with conducting field visits to the different hazard hotspot in western and eastern Uganda involving local communities.\textsuperscript{219} For the case of Karamoja sub region, cereal banks were identified as one of the most appropriate strategies to break the cycle of food scarcity, soaring market prices and dependency on food aid in the region.\textsuperscript{220} The uptake of cereal banking among the members and other people in communities resonates with Nyong et al assertion that “building on the indigenous knowledge systems of the region offers great prospects for effective integration of mitigation and adaptation strategies that will be attractive enough to the vast majority of small-scale farmers who are expected to use them”.\textsuperscript{221}

Participation of the members in climate activities, findings showed had a positive influence on social and economic empowerment. Such included increased purchase power and ability by members to negotiation for plots to plant their vegetables. All of these consequently contributed to their and their families’ wellbeing and resilience to climate impacts. These findings confirm Bäthge’s assertion that climate change mitigation or adaptation activities offer opportunities for advancement of economic empowerment of women.\textsuperscript{222} For example, Reta et al in their study found that a significant part of VSLA members were able to diversify their income and increased their adaptive capacity.\textsuperscript{223}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{219} Uganda parliamentary forum on disaster risk reduction- strategic plan: 2013 – 2017-pvii.
\textsuperscript{220} Okoth, J. FAO’s National Programme Manager (14/08/2013).
\textsuperscript{221} Nyong et al (2007), p.792.
\textsuperscript{222} Bäthge (2010), p.4.
\textsuperscript{223} Reta et (2016), p.35.
\end{flushright}
The findings showed that members’ participation levels took a form of exchange, where members received, shared and got listened to. For all purposes, this can be recounted as active, meaningful and effective participation. Such a flow and exchange of information and ideas is reminiscent of a free and meaningful participation, one devoid of tokenistic forms of participation such as a mere sharing of information or superficial consultation.\footnote{A/69/213 para 18; Gaventa (2002), p.7.} Popovich has also argued that, participation in any form it takes must incorporate the freedom to develop and exchange ideas and information.\footnote{Popovic (1993), p.708; See also UNDP et al (2009), p. iv.} This overall indicated that, members were not merely seen as recipients of climate knowledge, but were also acknowledged as people/partners with knowledge, capacity and skills worth of sharing.

Although participation as noted above involved exchange of information and knowledge, it was also evident that, for the most part, it leaned towards receiving. In context of Arnstein’s ladder of participation, this would very well fall in the lower rungs of tokenism. However, it can also be argued that, training and providing members information and techniques on issues of climate change is an important and necessary level of participation. Indeed, Wilcox has also argued that “different levels are appropriate at different times to meet the expectations of different interests.”\footnote{Wilcox (1994), p.4.} This is certainly also befitting in context of climate change and its increased frequency and magnitude as to challenge women existing knowledges and practices. Training in new skills, sensitization and awareness of members on new information on coping with climate impacts builds on and further strengthens members and their communities’ capacities to be resilient to climate change impacts.

With the exception of the constitution of Uganda, no other legal frameworks were found to be directly addressing the issue of climate change. However, in the Constitution as noted in chapter three, are provisions that could be appropriate and relevant in ensuring and promoting the participation of rural women in climate action. Although for example the national climate policy makes reference to participation of both men and women in both rural and urban areas, for the greater part of it they remained neutral and dwelt more on vulnerability of women. Regardless of these shortcomings, at the local level, the district local government promotes involvement of rural women in climate action. For AWARE members, some
got recruited as advocates, trainers, trainees, and had access to government funding, seed and seedlings through NAADs.
5. CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2 Conclusions

The findings of the fieldwork in the Kabong district in Uganda clearly show that rural women are a vital component for addressing climate change. With support combined with their knowledge, they can do much in the climate challenge. This means that rather than exclusion and marginalization, the solution to effectively addressing the climate challenge lies in their inclusion and participation in climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience strategies, initiatives and activities.

During the study, I found that rural women had their own local knowledge and practices of coping with climate impacts. These had not only over time served their needs and needs of their communities, had also ensured their resilience to the impacts of climate change. The fact that these continued to do so, point to their potential for informing future climate policy actions and projects. While that was the case, the findings also showed that these local knowledge and practices had become increasingly vulnerable to, and threatened due to increasing magnitude and frequency of climate change and indiscriminate use of wild resources.

Furthermore, the findings also brought into focus the potential of inclusive participation of rural women for climate action. Inclusive participation provided members opportunities not only to share their experiences, knowledge and practices of coping with climate change, but also to articulate their needs. Although these were not common, it was an indication on the part of the organization and other actors, of their importance in the climate challenge. In addition, members were also able to gain enhanced awareness, learn new information and techniques of adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change which they put into practice, and also shared with other community members. Overall, participation of members had a trigger effect on aspects of food security, empowerment, resilience as well as the mitigation objective expressed as stated in article 2 of the climate convention. Not only that, their participation equally has potential implications for achieving the aspirations as set in the post 2015 development agenda. All the above point to the capacity and potential of rural women as actors and agents in climate change mitigation and adaptation activities.
The findings also revealed that government played an important role in promoting the participation of rural women in climate change activities. For example, it was found that, it had established partnership with local organizations. With particular reference to AWARE Uganda, the district had on different occasions invited AWARE and her members to different awareness and sensitization campaigns and members had been engaged in advocacy projects and activities. In addition, it had provided training to some of the members in construction of energy saving cooking stoves and nursery bed establishment and raising and tree planting. Through the NAADs project for instance members had access to drought and fast maturing seed varieties and tree seedlings. With the help of AWARE, members were also able to access district funding associated with disaster risk management and food security. With these funds, members were able to start their first group cereal bank. Through its meteorological center, government has provided climate early warning messages through radio broadcasts to all people in the country. Despite lacking radios, members have access to such information from their organization and through their collaborates and networking with the district

In context of legal frameworks, no climate change instrument was found. Nonetheless, the equality provisions in the constitution together with government’s international obligations in the treaty instruments mentioned earlier press upon her, the obligation to ensure the participation of rural women in climate change activities. Policy wise, despite the mention of rural women, the climate policy document for the most part remain neutral. It also does not take note of their potential of contribution with most reference of women made in context of vulnerability. However, the National Disaster Preparedness and Management Policy of 2010, takes note the right and obligation of communities to participate in key decisions that affect their lives, they are called upon to prepare for and respond to disasters.

Recognition of the rights of rural women in context of climate change is crucial for the UNFCCC objective as well as resilience of rural women. The rights of rural women particularly participatory rights and equality before the law are of utmost importance on many fronts. Equality is essential in ensuring access and ownership by women to productive resources like land. With this as one of the key informants stated, rural women can peacefully engage in cultivation, adaptation and mitigation such as tree planting. The CEDAW committee also noted in context of climate policies that, equality of men and women is essential for successful

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227See chapter three

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initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate change policies. Equally, the right to participation of rural women as noted in chapter three is very important for the climate challenge. The evidence from the field attested to this. As a result of members’ participation, enhanced food security was noticeable. In addition to this, participation of members also had implications on members’ social and economic empowerment.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1. To Government

There is need for government to promote more participation of rural women as their participation is valuable to her realization of her international obligation such as emission reduction targets, gender equality, poverty reduction, SDGs among others. To achieve this, she will need to one:

To ensure review of and formulation of inclusive and non-neutral climate change policies. Such policies should recognize not simply as vulnerable but as people equipped with agency, skills, and knowledge of coping. The new national climate change document for one provides lee way for this. As it is a “living” document, it can be that can be revised to ensure more inclusiveness for rural women and all marginalized groups.

Where policies, regulatory and legal frameworks already exist, government needs to step up in implementation. It was found that there were discrepancies in context of implementation and practice. Actors did not necessarily adhere to what was written in policy and legal documents. For example, review of land related documents revealed that the constitution and the land act despite their strong position on rights of women to land, the practice on ground was contrary. Discriminatory customary law systems prevailed on ground at the expense of women. At the same time, it was noted that these norms curtailed rural women’s abilities to engage in adaptation, mitigation activities and ultimately also implicated on their capacity to be resilient.

229 Statement of the CEDAW Committee on Gender and Climate Change, 44th session, 2009, para 6
230 see discussion in chapter three
231 National Climate Change Policy(2015)p.11
Wedeman and Petruney have stated that, the first step towards tackling the challenges of climate change is empowering women to safeguard the environment.\textsuperscript{232} Rural women full potential is yet to be fully tapped. With the right training, opportunities to access climate information and resources such as technologies and land among others, rural women will greatly contribute to addressing of the climate challenge. FAO has also stated that increasing women’s access to land, as well as complementary inputs has great potential to generate broader socio-economic benefits, particularly in countries where hunger is more widespread and women play a major role in the agriculture sector, the proportional decline of hunger could be even greater.\textsuperscript{233} Remove all barriers to rural women participation in climate action will be vital.\textsuperscript{234} Government will need to address inheritance issues of women in general, so as to accord ownership and access to land.

There is need for government to take in to account local knowledge and practices in to policy and climate project. For one, their use can lead to successful and sustainable mitigation and adaptation strategies and initiatives. And secondly this knowledge can be used to guide future policy actions and planning.

The positive consequences of climate migration need to be assessed and taken in to account as a viable coping mechanism and solution in policy actions. Migration cannot be only looked negatively.

Government has a role to play in raising awareness particularly on sensitive issues such as land. They need to collaborate and support NGOs and civil society in such endeavors.

5.3.2 To NGO and CSO actors in climate change

There is need for actors in climate change that is government, Non-Government Organizations and civil society organizations to coordinate their activities. It was notable from participant responses that there were cases of overlap in activities. Coordination amongst them will therefore help in avoiding or at the very least reduce overlap of activities. At the same time, coordination can help in discovering of existing gaps in need of implementation.

\textsuperscript{232} Wedeman and Petruney p.
\textsuperscript{233} FAO (2012)p.41-42
\textsuperscript{234} See for example CEDAW GR 23 para 25
There is need NGOs and CSOs to raise awareness on issues of human rights. These awareness campaigns must be directed not just to rural women but to men who actually hold the power over the women.

It is also important for climate actors including government to capture and preserve traditional knowledges that women in rural communities use for coping with impacts of climate change. Some of these could be applied in other areas. But preservation is also important to ensure that this knowledge does not disappear over time.
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7. Annex 1: Respondent Questions

**AWARE MEMBERS**

1. What is your perception of climate change?
2. What do you understand by climate change mitigation and adaptation?
3. What local knowledge/ skills/ practices of coping do you have?
4. Do you think that you have a right to participate in climate change adaptation and mitigation?
5. In what ways have you as rural women participated in climate change mitigation and adaptation practices/ strategies? And if so, to what extent? And were you able to share your own experiences and knowledges of coping?
6. Are there challenges that you face when taking part in mitigation and adaptation actions and strategies?
7. How has the district/ government in particular promoted the participation of rural women in climate change mitigation and adaptation and if so how?
8. Would you say that, your participation has been beneficial or has contributed to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and actions?

**Key informants**

1. What is your perception of climate change?
2. What is your perception of climate change mitigation and adaptation?
3. What local knowledge/ skills of coping do rural women have?
4. To what extent have rural women been engaged to participate in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies?
5. In what ways have engaged rural women participated in climate change mitigation and adaptation practices/ strategies.
6. How has the government/district in particular promoted the participation of rural women in adaptation and mitigation?
7. What constraints are there that prevent women from effectively participating and contributing to the climate challenge?

8. What climate change policy and legal frameworks are in place?

9. How do they stand in context of gender/rural women inclusiveness?

10. Would you say that the participation of rural women has been beneficial or has contributed to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and actions?

**Focus group discussion**

1. What is your perception of climate change?

2. What is your perception of climate change mitigation and adaptation?

3. Do you think that you as rural women have a right to participate in climate change mitigation and adaptation practices and if so why?

4. What local knowledge/skills/practices of coping do you have?

5. Do you think that you have a right to participate in climate change adaptation and mitigation?

6. In what ways have you as rural women participated in climate change mitigation and adaptation practices/strategies? If so, to what extent? And were you able to share your own experiences and knowledges of coping?

7. Are there challenges that you face when taking part in mitigation and adaptation actions and strategies?

8. How has the district/government in particular promoted the participation of rural women in climate change mitigation and adaptation and if so how?

9. Are you aware of any policy and legal frameworks in place that promote the participation of rural women in climate change mitigation and adaptation?

10. Would you say that your participation has been beneficial to climate change mitigation and adaptation processes/challenge?
8. Annex 2: Field pictures

Members’ nursery bed at AWARE Uganda grounds back yard

ED AWARE and some of the members in awareness raising in one of the villages

Women in one of the village’s village establishing their own vegetable and tree Nursery beds after being trained by AWARE and her members

FGD with some members

Some members tree nursery beds protected with fig apple tree branches
Some members’ vegetable nursery beds near dry river beds

Members undergoing training in entrepreneur skills

Some of the member during an exchange visit.

The practice of trenching to carry off flash flood waters

Kei apple tree in one of the member’s homes in Kabong town