

Abstract

Climate risks are increasingly finding expression in rural poor arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) of East Africa with disproportionate impacts on the most vulnerable of the communities including women, children, and the elderly. More often, the assessment of climate risk and vulnerability does not put the communities at the center of such investigations, with assessment mostly biased toward modeling among other scientific approaches. There is, however, increasing evidence that communities' inclusion in climate risk assessment can achieve greater community good not only in articulating their climate-inflicted challenges, and identifying locally led adaptations, but also in building communities' confidence and sense of ownership of proposed adaptation strategies. This paper presents a synthesis of climate risks facing pastoral communities living in the ASALs of Africa and recommends the use of the innovative PACDR in future community climate risk assessments among ASAL communities in East Africa. Furthermore, the paper presents a case study of a participatory research practice with the Maasai community in Kenya and the key adaptation pathways to climate change identified.