

Summary of the CCAFS Oxford University Research Team

<p>Meghan Bailey Social Lens</p>	<p>The social lens analyzes the socio-cultural, class, caste, ethnic, abilities and gender components of adaptation and food security. How social differentiation and inequality affect adaptive capacity and the ability of individuals to make informed and motivated decisions about adaptation options; the negotiation of timescale trade-offs for actions; the inter and intra household information flows and decision-making power structures therein; and the role of personal construct, cognition and cultural models relevant to individual, household and community-level adaption decisions and plans; are all central to designing and supporting equitable, desirable and durable programmatic responses. Each of these critical components is considered under the social lens, with the added dynamic of climate information services. How does or could access to futuristic information at multiple scales (decadal, seasonal and short-term meteorological and climatological projections), whilst maintaining high ethical standards regarding approaches to uncertainty and model skill, play out for subsistence-oriented communities, their power architectures, their community processes and their development aspirations? The primary methods used are an adaptation of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, a Repertory Grid Analysis, multiple participatory focus groups over time and the production of ethnographies through extensive participant observation whilst imbedded in communities.</p> <p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to take advantage of the limited interventions on offer by development partners and government bodies is hindered by an individual's class, caste, gender, socio economic status and physical and cognitive abilities. Most notably, lower ranking women within large extended family households, women of some minority casts who are unable to join group work, older women with physical disabilities and elderly men and women who live separately from their adult children struggle to take advantage of services which might improve their adaptive capacity. • Inequitable flows of information within and between households regarding community organizing and opportunities for training favours well networked households and those with relatively higher amounts of leisure time and often excludes households with men working outside the community or with women who are unable to join groups because of the traditions of their caste, because their lower economic status means they have comparatively less leisure time for meetings or who otherwise prefer to work and live privately. This calls into question the design of the majority of communications and organizing strategies operating within the area by organizations and extension officers currently tasked with providing livelihood assistance.
<p>Jessica Thorn Environmental Lens</p>	<p>What benefits and trade-offs small-holder farmers accrue from ecosystem goods and services? How land management practices affect ecological integrity? What will happen to trends when climatic variability and change press the system? The environmental lens combined advanced field data collection methods across four water catchments, to be analyzed through cellular automation modeling and spatial representation for effective communication. The aim is to develop a decision-making tool, for policy-makers and practitioners tasked with assessing vulnerability and prioritizing adaptation strategies, which highlights what incentives drive sustainable land management practices. Conceptually, it provides critical assessment of the application of the conceptual framework of ecosystem services to the local level, moving beyond economic valuation, accounting for human values and well-being.</p>

	<p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-holder farmers across Nepal are autonomously adapting to the real effects of climate variability and change, such as changing the timing of planting with the late arrival of rainfall, shifting the timing and types of crop varieties with extended periods of drought, seasonal migration with changing river courses, diversifying cultivation to off-season vegetable farming, storing seeds to insure against crop losses from siltation during periods of increased rainfall intensity. Major gaps in knowledge remain in what are the objectives towards which farmers are striving for, what adaptation strategies are currently being adopted, what their impacts have on human and natural systems. • Although efforts are being made, National, Local and Community Adaptation Plans currently under development in Nepal do not adequately consider indicators of ecological resilience. Tools for assessing vulnerability at the landscape level and prioritizing interventions in longer-term time horizons that go beyond adaptation as development BAU and consider primarily human development objectives are needed. • In order for the frame of ecosystem services to have utility at the local level and benefit the farmers involved in the data collection, parameters should provide information that can simply analyzed immediately to inform land management practices, which is then later extrapolated to broader spatial scales. Through this approach, the process of data collection in itself can support building adaptive capacity.
<p>Abrar Chaudhury Economic Lens</p>	<p>The economic lens focuses on tracing the effectiveness of the current adaptation funding mechanisms in reaching climate vulnerable in an equitable and efficient manner. Supported by a comprehensive actor –mapping and stakeholder power –interest analysis, the lens seeks to identify potential areas of cooperation among key stakeholders to meet selected policy objectives. The insights from the field can feed into an innovation framework for improving the existing funding design or adopting a fresh approach.</p> <p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global adaptation funding is not the only source of in country funding. Other sources are available such as commercial credit, private investment, Gov’t funding but it requires a formal and legally enforceable investment landscape. • Adaptation funding is following existing development pathways. The usual suspects in development (Multilaterals, Bilaterals, Development NGOs, Practioners) are driving the adaptation process and as these agents are locked in existing hierarchical and operational development systems, they are likely to hit the same roadblocks of power, politics and corruption. • There are multiple and competing funding channels for climate finance. Bypassing the official channels undermines the government’s legitimacy but avoids time consuming and often-corrupt bureaucratic processes. • Lack of demand driven projects. Devolving power at local level entails that only projects that are demanded by communities are pushed forward. Climate change impacts are often long term and are difficult to visualize by the community especially when needs are more immediate.

Chase Sova Political Lens	<p>The political lens is aimed at understanding the effects of institutions (broadly defined to include policy, rules and procedure, organizational structure, and political culture) on the adaptive capacities of small-holder agricultural producers, in an effort to improve the writing and implementation of climate change adaptation and sectoral policies. Methods include semi-structured interviews, actor-mapping, stakeholder influence-mapping, and the content and discourse analysis of institutional documents. Specifically, the research hopes to draw insights in to the power-dynamics between actors at multiple levels and improve our understanding of how adaptation decisions are made, by whom and for what reason.</p> <p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Amidst continued governmental instability, INGOs and donor organizations have taken on a central role in developing Nepal’s adaptation policies, projects and planning initiatives.- An ongoing ten-year period without local level elections currently requires that local bureaucrats assess community needs without the support of elected officials.- A high rate of inter-ministerial transfers (the transfer of ministers and top bureaucrats from one department to another) has negatively affected continuity and institutional memory within Nepal’s central government.-Reference to climate change is not made in Nepal’s interim constitution, although its inclusion has been discussed at length in constituent assembly committees.
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