Social Differentiation under Climate-Related Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity; a study on Groundnut Farmers in the Upper West Region.

Background
The northern savannah zone of Ghana which largely semi-arid, depend mainly on subsistence climate-sensitive agriculture. The area like most parts of Ghana is characterized by structural, social and cultural inequality and marginalization. Moreover, the region has been the hotspots of climate-related stresses presently and for the past decades. Faced with stresses such as droughts, inter and intra decadal variability, dry spells, floods and high temperatures, the region also faces poor infrastructure, high illiteracy and low development.

These climatic and non-climatic factors interact at varying degrees to produce vulnerability in the semi-arid areas of Ghana. This is not say that vulnerability in these areas are homogeneous across individuals, households or communities. Vulnerability is differentiated across social groups due to gender, cultural, socioeconomic status and the access to capital assets.

Groundnuts are one of the main crops in the Upper West Region, with about 37% of Ghana’s production. Produced for both household and the market, it is one of the main commercial crops for farmer of all social groups due the following reasons; It fetches higher prices in the market relative to other crops, requires less labour and little or no inputs, maintains soil fertility and reduces soil erosion risks and crop residue is used as a mulch and animal feed.

Research Objectives
- To examine the factors that account for differential vulnerability among groundnut farmers of different social groups.
- To identify how groundnut farmers of different social groups cope with or adapt to climate related impacts and other challenges.
- To examine the implications of current adaptation strategies and interventions on the vulnerability and wellbeing of the different social groups.

Rationale for the Study
- Research has shown that climate change and variability presents one of the biggest threats to food security, livelihoods and wellbeing in fragile, climate-sensitive and resource dependent societies in SSA.
- To reduce livelihood vulnerability and enhance wellbeing in these systems research needs to identify and understand the social dynamics of vulnerability at the micro level.
- This is aimed at guiding policymakers to develop effective and sustainable policies and interventions that will foster asset building and reduce the vulnerability.

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