

The Impact of Climate Change on Women in East Africa: A Comparative Study of Kenya and Uganda

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ABSTRACT

The escalating global crisis of climate change has disproportionate ramifications on specific regions and demographics, notably exacerbating gender inequalities in vulnerable areas such as East Africa. This research proffers a critical, descriptive examination of the intertwined nature of climate change and gender disparities in Kenya and Uganda, both agrarian societies confronting profound climate-induced adversities. Rooted in qualitative research methodologies, this study meticulously draws from literature and firsthand accounts, aiming to understand how women, integral to these societies yet structurally disadvantaged, navigate the increasingly hostile environmental shifts. Preliminary findings indicate that women, particularly in rural settings, face exacerbated hardships due to climate change, further widening the gender gap. Additionally, these adverse effects are not merely environmental, but intrinsically social and economic, manifesting in amplified burdens in sourcing essential resources, increased migration, and deepening poverty. Furthermore, by comparing Kenya and Uganda, distinct yet interconnected, this study provides detailed insights beneficial to both academia and policy making. This study brings attention to the significant gap in current research addressing gender specific effects of climate change in East Africa. In synthesizing these intricate dimensions, this research critically contributes to a holistic understanding of climate change's gendered impacts and the necessity for gender centric solutions in the global climate action discourse.

Keywords: Ecofeminism, Climate Change, Women, East Africa

ÖZ

Küresel ölçekte tırmanan iklim değişikliği krizi, özellikle Doğu Afrika gibi savunmasız bölgelerde cinsiyet eşitsizliklerini belirgin bir şekilde artıran belirli bölgelere ve demografik gruplara orantısız sonuçlar doğurmaktadır. Bu araştırma, hem tarım toplumları olan Kenya ve Uganda'da iklim değişikliği ve cinsiyet eşitsizliklerinin iç içe geçmiş doğasını eleştirel ve tanımlayıcı bir incelemeyle sunmaktadır. Niteliksel araştırma yöntemlerine dayanarak, bu çalışma literatürden ve birinci elden elde edilen bilgilerden titizlikle yararlanarak, bu toplumlarda hayati öneme sahip fakat yapısal olarak dezavantajlı durumda olan kadınların giderek daha düşmanca olan çevresel değişikliklere nasıl uyum sağladığını anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Ön bulgular, özellikle kırsal kesimlerdeki kadınların iklim değişikliği nedeniyle artan zorluklarla karşılaştığını, bu durumun cinsiyet uçurumunu daha da genişlettiğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, bu olumsuz etkiler yalnızca çevresel değil, aynı zamanda kökten sosyal ve ekonomiktir. Temel kaynakları temin etme, artan göç ve derinleşen yoksulluk gibi yüklerin artmasına neden olmaktadır. Ayrıca, birbiriyle bağlantılı fakat farklı olan Kenya ve Uganda'yı karşılaştırarak, bu çalışma akademiye ve politika yapımına yararlı olacak ayrıntılı bilgiler sunmaktadır. Bu araştırma, Doğu Afrika'da iklim değişikliğinin cinsiyet özel etkileri konusundaki mevcut araştırmalardaki önemli boşluğa dikkat çekmektedir. Bu karmaşık boyutları bir araya getirerek, bu araştırma iklim değişikliğinin cinsiyetle ilişkili etkilerine genel bir anlayış katkıda bulunur ve küresel iklim eylemi söyleminde cinsiyet odaklı çözümlerin gerekliliğini vurgular.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ekofeminizm, İklim Değişikliği, Kadınlar, Doğu Afrika.

DEDICATION

*To my family and the courageous women whose stories inspired this
research*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| CIDP | County Integrated Development Plans |
| EAC | East African Community |
| FLLoCA | Financing Locally-Led Climate Action |
| FOA | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| GBV | Gender Based Violence |
| GCCS | Gender and Climate Change Strategy |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| IPPC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| MWE | Ministry of Water and Environment |
| NAP | National Adaptation Plan |
| NCCAP | National Climate Change Action Plan |
| NDC | Nationally Determined Contributions |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| WB | World Bank |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The phenomenon of climate change has in the past few decades emerged as a significant global challenge due to its intricate characteristics. The effects of climate change have metastasized in recent years, as they have become far reaching affecting everything from the ecosystem, human life, the weather and the global economy in unprecedented ways. The United Nations (UN) defines climate change as “long-term changes in temperatures and weather patterns” that have since the age of industrialization been accelerated by human activities (UN, n.d.). The outcomes of these changes are nothing short of alarming, manifesting as catastrophic weather events, unprecedented food shortages, and many more issues that threaten life’s existence on our planet. Governments and international organizations have recognized the magnitude of this issue, hence numerous initiatives and collaborations are in place to reduce greenhouse emissions and promote sustainable alternatives such as expanding the use of renewable energy sources (UN, 2018). However, while these impacts are widespread, they’re not uniformly distributed, as different regions and demographics face varying degrees of challenges, with gender inequalities being notably exacerbated by climate change.

Africa, despite only contributing 3.8% of global emissions, is one of the regions that is most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly in rural areas

demonstrating that its effects will not be uniform globally (CDP, 2020). As per Climate Watch's 2023 report, Kenya emits under 0.1% of global greenhouse gases annually, with Uganda contributing even less than Kenya. Most East African countries are low income, agrarian societies with over 80% relying on agriculture for their economic prosperity (EAC, n.d.). As a region that is already prone to poverty, droughts and food insecurity, the impacts of climate change have been particularly severe due to high temperatures and prolonged dry spells in some areas while others have been plagued by rainfall and floods (BBC, 2019). All these factors have led to food shortages, loss of livelihoods, conflicts, forced migration, and, in many cases, loss of life.

Considering East Africa's historical vulnerability to droughts and food insecurities, these climatic shifts pose an urgent concern. More often than not, during global crises, such as wars and pandemics, the effects are considerably worse for women. This is no different in the face of climate change as women are disproportionately affected by it (Seitz, 2009). Climate change is not just an environmental issue, it has profound social repercussions like the emergence of climate refugees. In addition, it also brings about significant economic consequences. One poignant example can be seen in East Africa. Oftentimes, women in East Africa, as in many parts of the developing world, bear the brunt of these adversities. They are commonly the ones ensuring the fulfilment of their families' essential needs, ranging from procuring food and water to sourcing energy for heating and cooking. However, with the changing climate conditions, these resources have become increasingly scarce and difficult to secure, thereby amplifying the burdens women already shoulder and exacerbating existing gender disparities (UN Women, 2022).

This study focuses on two countries from the East African Community (EAC), Kenya and Uganda. Both of these nations are deeply reliant on their agrarian sectors and natural resources. In recent times, they've confronted more frequent and severe climate induced adversities, including but not limited to droughts, floods, landslides and other extreme weather conditions. The changing weather patterns have brought about a surge in waterborne diseases, especially in regions deprived of safe drinking water facilities. These climatic changes aren't just detrimental to the environment; they also profoundly impact the daily lives and overall wellbeing of local inhabitants. Moreover, both countries host refugees from neighboring countries thus stretching their resources even thinner. To address these pressing challenges, both Kenya and Uganda have initiated a series of measures, formulated dedicated climate action plans, and invested in sustainable energy solutions. However, the road ahead remains long and fraught with challenges, requiring persistent efforts to combat the profound impacts of climate change.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Climate change is a critical issues affecting the lives of millions of people especially those living in the global south. In regions like East Africa, socio-economic and cultural factors intensify the impacts of climate change, this increases their susceptibilities and reduces their adaptive capacities. Communities in these areas already face, a multitude of challenges, such as limited access to resources, poor governance, poverty, and deeply rooted traditional practices. Both Kenya and Uganda, representative nations from the region, are grappling with the manifold challenges presented by climate change. The intricate web of climate change has been observed to disproportionately affect women, especially in areas like East Africa where traditional societal structures might render them more vulnerable. According to UN

statistics a staggering 80% of individuals displaced by climate change are women (OHCHR, 2022). This significant number points to a need for a deeper understanding of the relationship between gender and climate change.

Through a focused lens on the interplay between climate change and gender in Kenya and Uganda, this research seeks to uncover the deeper ramifications of this global crisis. Gender gaps are systemic injustices that are made worse by climate change as it leads to increased conflict, migration, poverty and a myriad of other climate related issues that have a compounded effect on women because of their “limited access, control, and ownership over resources, participation in decision making, and freedom of choice that are determined by the overarching patriarchal values and social norms” (ICIMOD, 2022). Gaining a comprehensive understanding of how climate change impacts women is also crucial for formulating effective adaptation and mitigation approaches. Any policies or interventions that overlook the gender specific consequences of climate change run the risk of exacerbating prevailing inequalities and undervaluing the vital role women inherently hold in advancing sustainable environmental initiatives.

Even with intervention from national governments and global organizations, the specific implications of climate change on East African women remain inadequately researched. There’s also a glaring lack of insight regarding how climate change might be magnifying preexisting gender inequalities in these nations. This research aspires to bridge this knowledge gap, meticulously exploring the impacts of climate change on women in Kenya and Uganda and unearthing actionable mitigation and adaptation strategies.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This comprehensive research is guided by the following objectives:

To delve deep into the multifarious ways by which the shifting climate patterns influence the economic, social, and environmental facets of women's lives in East Africa, specifically honing in on Kenya and Uganda.

To thoroughly scrutinize the potential exacerbation of pre-existing gender inequalities in Kenya and Uganda, attributed to the ongoing climate changes.

To critically evaluate and identify effective climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies in Kenya and Uganda, with a particular focus on the role of women as crucial players in promoting climate change action.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How has climate change affected women in Kenya and Uganda?
2. How has climate change impacted gender inequality?
3. What is being done by Kenya and Uganda to tackle the climate change crisis?
4. What should be done to mitigate climate change's effects on women in Kenya and Uganda?

1.5 Hypotheses

This study is predicated on two essential hypotheses. The first is that women in regions most affected by climate change in Kenya and Uganda experience higher levels of social and economic vulnerability compared to those in less affected regions. Secondly, that empowering women in Kenya and Uganda leads to the development of

more effective climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, reflecting the ecofeminist view of women's role in environmental stewardship.

1.6 Methodology

Kothari (2004) explains research methodology as:

“The specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic. It includes the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge such that the methodologies employed from differing disciplines vary depending on their historical development.”

This study is an exploratory qualitative research and a comparative study drawing insights from both literature and firsthand accounts of women in Kenya and Uganda who are directly affected by climate change. A systematic review of the latest peer-reviewed literature on the interplay between women and climate change in these countries provides foundational knowledge, revealing prevailing trends, knowledge gaps, and overarching themes.

For the interviews purposive sampling is utilized to ensure that the voices of those most affected, like rural inhabitants or those engaged in agrarian activities, are prominently featured. These interviews, designed to be semi-structured, ensure comprehensive coverage of key discussion points while allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes and insights.

1.7 Justification of the Study

East Africa's vulnerability to climate change, given its dependence on agriculture and natural resources, makes the study of its gendered impacts especially pertinent. Women, being a crucial segment of the population, face structural disadvantages

which amplify their vulnerability to climate related changes and by placing women at the center of the analysis we aim to contribute to the climate response.

Focus on Kenya and Uganda for this comparative study was an informed decision, driven primarily by their shared membership in the East African Community (EAC) and the unique juxtaposition they present in terms of socio-economic, environmental, and cultural paradigms. Both nations are deeply reliant on their agrarian sectors, making them notably susceptible to climate change impacts, and their geographical proximity means they often experience similar climatic adversities, such as droughts and floods. Furthermore, Kenya and Uganda have different ways of addressing the challenges posed by climate change, providing valuable insights when studied together.

While countries like Botswana or other EAC members have their own important stories related to climate change, the combination of gender, tradition, and environment in Kenya and Uganda, coupled with their varied economic profiles and refugee situations, sets them apart as particularly interesting subjects for research.

This research not only broadens the existing literature on gendered climate impacts but also equips policymakers and NGOs with knowledge to devise effective, region-specific interventions. Ultimately, understanding these impacts in the context of East Africa provides a lens through which to view broader global issues, fostering effective solutions.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This research focuses on the gender specific aspects of climate change on women in Kenya and Uganda, carefully exploring how environmental shifts uniquely impact

them. During the course of this study, several particular restrictions were encountered, including significant time constraints that limited the interviews to a rigidly defined period, restricting the depth of information that could be gathered. As for the empirical limitations of this research official government documents on Uganda's climate change policy was difficult to acquire and most of the secondary data focused on specific regions or aspects, leaving gaps in a comprehensive understanding of Kenya and Uganda. Many areas, particularly those showing a complex relationship between gender inequality and climate change, could not be thoroughly studied due to the inadequacy of existing research and the limited resources dedicated to this multifaceted issue.

Furthermore, the sample size achieved for this investigation was smaller than initially desired, potentially impacting the comprehensiveness of the findings. Another challenging issue faced was a language barrier, which necessitated that the researcher enlists the services of a translator to ensure accurate and meaningful communication with the participants. This, however, could have led to misinterpretations of the views of the participants as some concepts might have been lost in translation. Additionally, the study was limited due to the fact that it only focused on areas that were severely impacted by climate change resulting in a narrow scope.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

This section provides an overview of the organizational layout of the thesis. It introduces each chapter sequentially, detailing its specific focus and relationship to the overarching research objectives. Chapter one features the introduction which entails an overview of the research, including the background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, methodology, justification, and limitations of the study.

Chapter two provides a literature review that includes an examination of existing scholarly works relevant to climate change, gender inequalities, and their manifestations in Kenya and Uganda. The next chapter comprises a theoretical framework. A detailed exploration of Ecofeminism as the theoretical lens through which this research is approached. Chapter three will lay the philosophical and conceptual foundations that show the link between women, nature, and social hierarchies in the contexts of Kenya and Uganda.

The fourth chapter looks at the methodology used in this research. It provides details on the research design, sampling procedures, and data collection techniques as well as the data analysis methods employed in this study. Chapter five shows the data analysis using both thematic and comparative analysis. It also provides the findings, which includes the presentation and examination of the research findings, followed by an in-depth analysis aligned with the research questions. The final chapter presents the conclusion which will constitute final reflections, recommendations for policy formulation and future research.

1.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the pervasive and consequential effects of climate change pose significant threats, particularly in vulnerable regions like East Africa. The unique and often underestimated role that gender plays in shaping these impacts requires closer scrutiny. This study takes an innovative approach by considering the intertwined nature of climate change and gender inequality in Kenya and Uganda. Through qualitative research, it seeks to unearth the ways in which women, as central yet disadvantaged members of these societies, are affected by changing environmental conditions. The study's strategic focus on two distinct but geographically connected nations offer valuable perspectives that are anticipated to enrich the global discourse

on climate action. Guided by a clear framework of objectives, questions, and methodological considerations, this research sets the stage for a thoughtful investigation into the human dimensions of a global crisis. By bridging knowledge gaps and emphasizing the voices of those most affected, it aspires to contribute not only to academic understanding but also to real world solutions that recognize and address the gender specific ramifications of climate change.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Climate Change and its Effects in East Africa

Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing issues facing the international system today. It is an occurrence that is felt globally, and it impacts the lives of millions of people. Its characteristics include rising temperatures, extreme weather patterns and increased water levels. According to Abebe (2014), certain regions like East Africa which have long been dealing with a multitude of problems are more vulnerable to climate change. Countries in this region comprise of Kenya, Uganda, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Somalia, all of which have been plagued with poor governance, conflict, and famine.

As documented by the East Africa hazards watch (2023), in the past few decades, East Africa has experienced substantial changes in climate patterns. It is grappling with elevated occurrences of heatwaves and cyclones creating the perfect atmosphere for locusts and other pests to thrive (Baraibar, 2021). Rwigema (2021) postulates that this surge in pests and diseases is a direct result of fluctuating weather patterns. As temperatures rise and rainfall patterns become more erratic, conditions become favorable for certain pests and vectors. For instance, the significant locust outbreaks that have swept across the region not only decimate crops but also intensify the competition for already scarce resources, thereby exacerbating food security issues and threatening livelihoods. Salih (2020) further reinforces this viewpoint, drawing

attention to the increased frequency of these extreme weather events and their devastating impact on agriculture, the backbone of East African economies.

Additionally, the area is also dealing with droughts and floods which have contributed to soil erosion, loss of livestock, starvation and waterborne diseases. This geographical location heavily relies on agriculture for its economic growth and development; however, this has been impeded by the rising temperature, prolonged droughts, and unpredictable rainfall. Another equally significant concern, as Yengoh (2020) notes, is the projected increase in heat stress for smallholder farmers. Many farmers in East Africa are smallholders, meaning they manage and rely on small patches of land for their sustenance and livelihood. Rising temperatures, combined with more infrequent but intense rainfall, can lead to harsher working conditions, making it increasingly difficult for these farmers to cultivate their lands. This phenomenon does not merely threaten their income but also their overall well-being, as the intense heat can lead to various health complications. These climate related disruptions have stifled and hindered the socio-economic development of an already fragile region. Research indicates that over sixteen million people in the region face food insecurity as a result (Nash 2022).

Water, life's vital element and the bedrock of agriculture, is becoming a concern due to the effects of climate change. Opere (2019) delves deep into how climate change is disrupting water resources in East Africa. Increasing droughts are an evident issue, but the repercussions extend beyond merely parched lands. Reduced river flow and increased scarcity of freshwater not only affect agricultural activities but also contribute to community disputes over access to this precious resource. In a region where many communities are still reliant on rivers and lakes for their daily needs,

reduced flow can significantly impact their livelihoods and daily routines. Furthermore, as resources become scarcer, the likelihood of conflicts increases. Inter-community disputes over land and water, increased food insecurity due to failing crops, and the strain of emerging pests and diseases can exacerbate tensions. This environment gives rise to internally displaced persons (IDPs), as individuals and families are forced to leave their homes in search of better opportunities or simply to escape the escalating conflicts (Van Baalen, 2018). Climate change also adversely affects human health in East Africa, leading to the spread of diseases such as malaria and meningitis (Githeko, 2021).

2.2 Gender and Climate Change: A Global Perspective

Climate change poses significant threats to ecosystems, economies, and societies worldwide and these impacts are not evenly distributed. Certain populations are more vulnerable than others due to various factors, including gender. Indeed, the intersection of gender and climate change presents complex challenges that are deeply embedded in societal norms, economic models, and political frameworks. Women, in particular, shoulder the brunt of these challenges, often facing exacerbated vulnerabilities due to existing socio-economic and cultural inequalities.

Ide (2021) sheds light on another dimension, stating that gender considerations have been largely overlooked in research focusing on the security implications of climate change and conflict. Such an oversight is critical, especially when examining the intricate interplay between socio-economic factors, climate-driven conflicts, and gender roles in affected regions. For instance, if women are most often the gatherers of water and other resources, climate induced scarcity can make them more susceptible to conflict situations.

The health repercussions of climate change for women also remain underexplored. Desai (2021) points towards the direct impact of climate change on women's reproductive health, highlighting that factors such as increased exposure to heat stress, altered infectious disease patterns, and limited access to healthcare services can compound the threats women face. However, while Desai's emphasis is significant, there's a need for more empirical research to quantify these assertions and analyze them in different geographical and socio-economic settings.

Furthermore, the labor force presents another arena that's impacted by the gendered effects of climate change. Oswald (2020) critically points out that climate change exacerbates gender gaps in the labor force, further marginalizing and excluding women. This observation aligns with the broader socio-economic narrative of climate change, wherein women, already grappling with societal discrimination and inequality, find themselves further isolated in the wake of environmental adversities. Yet, the depth of this exclusion varies across industries and regions, making it necessary to analyze this relationship in varied contexts.

Nevertheless, despite their disproportionate vulnerability, women's experiences and voices are often overlooked and neglected in climate justice progressions (Oduanya, 2022). Their perspectives, knowledge, and potential contributions to mitigating and adapting to climate change remain sidelined, not only at the grassroots level but also in global climate discussions and negotiations.

2.3 Role and Responsibilities of Women in Addressing Climate Change

While women are undoubtedly vulnerable to climate change effects, their essential roles in combating climate change cannot be undermined. They stand as pillars of transformation and reservoirs of indigenous knowledge and skills. Drawing from their time-honored responsibilities in agriculture, natural resource stewardship, and familial caregiving, women offer invaluable perspectives on local ecological systems and sustainable methodologies (Leach, 2007). Notably, female farmers have been identified as custodians of vital information about native crop types and ecologically harmonious farming practices, offering solutions for climate adaptation and countermeasures (Bhattarai, 2015).

Moreover, it's imperative to ensure women's voices resonate in climate related deliberations, as this leads to more balanced and fair resolutions. Research emphasizes that when women are integrated into environmental oversight, outcomes include enhanced resource conservation, heightened adherence to environmental standards, and more effective conflict settlements (Westermann, 2005). Echoing this sentiment, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has urged the weaving of gender perspectives into climate strategies and initiatives (UNFCCC, 2019).

Yet, the path for women to fully engage in climate discourse remains riddled with obstacles, especially in less developed nations. Their limited presence in formalized establishments, constrained educational opportunities, and prevailing gender stereotypes can curtail their involvement in shaping climate strategies (Djouidi, 2016).

As a result, there's a discernible lack of gender-informed climate policies. A collective drive is needed to ensure that climate change strategies are comprehensive, giving equal weight to the perspectives and needs of all genders (Kaijser, 2014).

2.4 Gendered Impacts of Climate Change: An Examination of the Effects on Women in Kenya and Uganda

In the evolving landscape of climate change discussions, the economic impact on women, particularly in East African nations like Kenya and Uganda, presents complicated challenges. A substantial portion of East Africa's population is dependent on agriculture, with women playing pivotal roles in subsistence farming, agribusiness, and resource management (Adenle, 2018). Yet, as climatic irregularities mount, the repercussions for these women are varied and often go beyond mere economics.

One primary economic challenge is reduced agricultural productivity due to unpredictable rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and a surge in pests and diseases (Omotoso, 2023). For many women in Kenya and Uganda, crop yields are not just a source of income but sustenance for their families. Nakiyemba (2022) found that as droughts become more frequent, women's workloads significantly increase. They have to walk longer distances to fetch water or find alternative sources of livelihood, which further reduces their productive hours for other economically viable activities. This in turn has an effect on women's health, education, and economic opportunities, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and gender inequality.

However, this straightforward causality between climate change and reduced yields is sometimes debated. Some researchers argue that not all crop failures can be attributed to changing climate patterns. For instance, Foley (2011) postulate that flawed

agricultural practices and local land management decisions play a notable role in diminishing returns. In this context, one can argue that while climate change exacerbates the situation, it is not the sole factor affecting women's economic productivity in agriculture.

The climate change narrative also interlinks with market dynamics. As crops fail or become unpredictable, local markets get saturated with similar products in good harvest seasons, leading to drastically reduced prices, thereby affecting women's earnings (Nelson, 2009). During poor harvests, the scarcity drives up prices, making basic foods unaffordable for many, especially women, who often have to allocate resources for their families' needs before their own.

Furthermore, while women in Kenya and Uganda bear the brunt of climate-induced agricultural shocks, they still lack equal access to vital resources like credits, agricultural inputs, and training. According to Doss (2014), traditional patriarchal systems, coupled with institutional biases, make it difficult for women to secure loans or own land, putting them at a disadvantage even before environmental challenges are considered.

Critics might contend that simply viewing women as victims of climate change is an overly narrow perspective. Denton (2002) argues that this stance might overlook the adaptive strategies that many women have already begun employing. Innovations such as drought-resistant crops, small-scale irrigation, and the formation of women's cooperatives are just a few ways women are maneuvering the changing tides.

In conclusion, the economic impact of climate change on women in Kenya and Uganda is an intricate web of socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors. While there's a consensus on the severity of the situation, the discourse benefits from recognizing both systemic challenges and the resilience shown by women in these regions. Future interventions need to be multilayered, addressing both climate related issues and deeply ingrained societal norms.

2.4.1 A Comparative Analysis

Climate change presents vast challenges globally, with particular burdens on vulnerable populations. In the context of Kenya and Uganda, these challenges intersect with existing social, economic, and gender-based vulnerabilities, thus amplifying their effects on women. The East African region has experienced increasing climate extremes over recent years. The IPCC's Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere (IPCC, 2019) accentuated the vulnerability of Kenya and Uganda to mounting climate unpredictability. Additionally, Janzen, (2020) indicated the increasing frequency and intensity of droughts in East Africa, which can significantly impact livelihoods. Kenya and Uganda have a significant dependence on agriculture.

Both countries heavily rely on agriculture. FOA (n.d.) notes that around 65% of Kenya's workforce derives its livelihood from agriculture, while in Uganda, this figure is even higher at 70%. The main agricultural products, such as tea and maize in Kenya and coffee and bananas in Uganda, have shown susceptibility to climatic changes, resulting in decreased yields. Moreover, the economic reverberations of climate-induced agricultural losses are significant. For instance, between 1900 and 2018, the nation experienced a significant number of natural disasters, including 20 flood events, 40 epidemics, 9 droughts, and 5 landslides. Alarmingly, these events resulted in the

tragic loss of over 200,000 lives and inflicted economic damages amounting to a minimum of \$80 million. Such figures raise concerns about the nation's disaster preparedness and resilience capabilities. (WB, n.d.).

Hansen (2019) emphasized that shifting rainfall patterns are notably affecting smallholder farmers. Women play a central role in agricultural activities, their pivotal role is often overshadowed by lack of recognition, thus heightening their vulnerability in the face of changing climates. Both Kenya and Uganda exhibit gendered roles deeply rooted in cultural practices. The study by CARE (2020) underscores the adversities faced by women due to their responsibilities in water collection, subsistence farming, and household duties. These responsibilities, deeply ingrained in societal norms, increase their vulnerability to climatic shifts. Multiple studies have documented the pronounced challenges women face in the context of climate change. For instance, Oluoko-Odingo (2021) highlights that Kenyan women, limited by resources and societal structures, confront more difficulties during environmental hardships. In Uganda, the pattern echoes, with women confronting additional health, safety, and social risks during climatic extremities. Previous research points out that gender dynamics play a significant role in shaping adaptive capacities in both nations.

While some patterns are discernible regarding the gendered impacts of climate change in Kenya and Uganda, a detailed comparative analysis between women's experiences in the two countries remains limited. This gap signifies a need for research that can further unravel the complex relationships between gender, climate change, and societal structures in East African contexts.

2.5 Climate Change and Gender Inequality: An Intersectional Analysis

2.5.1 Gender Inequality and Climate Change: A Connection

The relationship between gender inequality and climate change has increasingly been a point of contention among scholars and policymakers alike. The link between these two areas offers a critical lens through which to can understand the vulnerabilities faced by communities, particularly women, in the wake of global warming.

In the past, gender was in the background of environmental discussions. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, however, a shift began to emerge as this change was marked by the groundbreaking work of Denton (2002), who asserted that climate change impacts are not gender-neutral. She noted that women in developing countries bear a disproportionate burden due to their roles that vary from farmers and water collectors, making them more susceptible to climatic changes. Similarly, Alston (2014) noted that women’s vulnerability to climate change originates from socio-economic and political factors, emphasizing the significance of power dynamics.

However, it is important to note that not all scholars agree with these viewpoint as challengers argue that the emphasis on women’s vulnerability can overshadow their resilience and agency. Arora-Jonsson (2011) cautioned against making broad generalizations, pointing out how such narratives can reinforce stereotypical roles by categorizing women as “victims” but this debate has been central in shaping the trajectory of gender and climate change studies, creating a clear dichotomy in scholarly works. Moreover, when discussing gender and climate change, a recurring theme has been the consideration of women as active agents in climate action. Bina (2010)

contended that women play crucial roles in resource management and conservation. Hence, their participation in decision-making processes becomes imperative. In contrast, Carr and Thompson (2014) pointed out that while women's participation is vital, the quality of their participation matters more than the quantity. They emphasized the necessity for women to be given influential roles rather than symbolic ones.

Research methods have also evolved over time. While early research leaned heavily on qualitative methodologies with case studies and anecdotal evidence, there has been a surge in empirical, data-driven studies in recent years. For instance, Djoudi (2016) employed mixed-method approaches in their research on the Sahel region, blending qualitative insights with quantitative data for a comprehensive understanding.

Interestingly, several studies have highlighted the interconnectedness of gender inequality and climate change, yet there's limited focus on the role of men in these dynamics. As MacGregor (2010) pointed out, understanding masculinity is as essential as femininity in comprehending the gendered impacts of climate change.

One glaring gap in the literature is the limited exploration of urban contexts. While much emphasis has been placed on women in rural settings, urban women's vulnerabilities and strengths remain understudied.

2.5.2 Recurring Themes in Gender Inequality and Climate Change

Education serves as a foundational pillar for personal and societal growth. However, girls face a disproportionate burden of climate-induced responsibilities that compromise their educational attainment. Terry (2009) emphasizes that in climatic distress situations, girls display higher dropout rates due to their obligation to fetch water and firewood over extended distances. This observation begs the question, why

are only girls primarily entrusted with these duties and deep-seated socio-cultural norms that assign gender-based roles offer an explanation. Yet, Terry's insights could have benefited from a deeper exploration into the long-term societal repercussions of such educational barriers.

The second theme is forced Marriages. Warner's (2011) study illuminates the alarming tendency of families resorting to marrying off young daughters during climate-induced crises, particularly within agricultural societies. While this coping mechanism is distressingly evident, the study might have overlooked the potential psychological trauma such young girls endure. Moreover, attributing forced marriages exclusively to economic pressures limits the scope of the investigation.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is another theme that has been observed. Desai (2021) elucidates the correlation between climate change-induced resource scarcity and a rise in gender-based violence. Their research links the onset of such violent incidents to environmental events that lead to resource shortages. However, attributing violence predominantly to scarcity may oversimplify the broader context of systemic gender power imbalances.

The final theme is Climate Refugees/ IDPs. The grim realities faced by women labeled as "climate refugees" are captured in the work of Rigaud (2018). The study underscores the added vulnerabilities faced by displaced women, from exploitation to health-related adversities. Nonetheless, the work might benefit from emphasizing the resilience of these women beyond their victimhood status.

2.6 National Responses to Climate Change: A Comparative Analysis of Strategies in Kenya and Uganda

Governments across the globe have increasingly recognized the pivotal role of climate change interventions in achieving sustainable development. Both Kenya and Uganda, as East African countries, have demonstrated their commitment to climate action, albeit through varied initiatives, policies, and strategies. This review offers a comparative insight into the approaches of these two nations.

2.6.1 Kenya's Approach to Climate Action

In 2016, Kenya ushered in a new era of climate commitment with the adoption of the Climate Change Act, emphasizing a climate-resilient low-carbon economic development pathway (National Treasury, n.d.). Central to this commitment is the mandate for the government to formulate a National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) and to revisit it every five years. As highlighted by the Climate Action Tracker, the most recent NCCAP covering the period 2018-2022 serves as a guide for climate actions that align with Kenya's National Determined Contributions (NDC). The act also saw the birth of the Climate Change Directorate, which, according to legislative reviews, stands as the lead agency in orchestrating climate change action plans and offers operational directives to the cabinet secretary.

Further fortifying its climate stance, in 2023, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Forestry tabled and secured the passage of an amendment to the Climate Change Act 2016 (Government of Kenya, 2023). This amendment underscores Kenya's dedication to bolstering climate change resilience, fostering low-carbon development, and aligning national efforts with the aspirations of the Paris Agreement.

Kenya's climate strategy has also been enriched by its collaborations with global institutions, such as the World Bank. The Financing Locally-Led Climate Action (FLLoCA) Program, funded by the World Bank, stands as a testament to Kenya's commitment (Arnold, 2021). Moreover, civil society organizations lie at the heart of Kenya's climate approach, enabling the nation to build a holistic understanding of its climate landscape. Furthering its commitment, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Forestry Draft Strategic Plan for 2023-2027 focuses on recruiting a vast contingent, named the Green Army, predominantly comprising youth and women. This initiative aims to enhance afforestation, emphasizing its prioritization of grassroots-level interventions.

2.6.2 Uganda's Climate Action: Gender at the Forefront

Uganda's response to climate change places gender disparities front and center, addressing the varying impacts on its populace. Notably, women experience intensified effects due to entrenched structural inequalities in this predominantly patriarchal setting. These inequities, spanning from economic to cultural domains, define restrictive gender roles, causing women to shoulder a heavier burden. Restricted access to vital resources like education, employment, and technology exacerbates these disparities for Ugandan women. Coupled with prevalent gender-based violence, these challenges limit their involvement in crucial decision-making processes at multiple societal levels.

Furthermore, cultural obligations, especially in unpaid domestic work, further heighten women's susceptibility to climate-induced vulnerabilities (UNDP, n.d.). Environmental repercussions of climate change, like diminishing natural resources, force women into extended journeys seeking essential goods, like water and firewood.

These endeavors not only amplify their poverty risk but also isolate them from vital governance and policy deliberations. Despite these adversities, women's significant contributions to agriculture and household management underline their essential role in Uganda's sustainable progression.

With women constituting 77% of Uganda's agricultural workforce, their impact on the economy is undeniable. They're also predominantly responsible for household energy sources and waste management, underpinning their value in Uganda's climate action strategies. However, the majority's reliance on traditional cookstoves accelerates deforestation, burdening women with biomass collection and associated health risks (UN Women, 2017).

Moreover, the agricultural sector, vital to Uganda's economy, witnesses' gender-biased constraints. A lack of land ownership rights for 69% of women results in marginalized decision-making roles, hampering effective climate change combat strategies. While the National Climate Change Commission strives for gender-integrated climate action, capacity-building remains a pressing concern to ensure well-rounded strategies (UNDP, n.d.).

Uganda's dedication to gender-sensitive climate action is evident in their policies and initiatives. Emphasizing gender nuances in climate impacts, the nation pushes for women's perspective inclusion in climate solutions. The National Adaptation Plan, funded by a \$2.9 million investment and supported by international bodies like UNEP, showcases Uganda's commitment and collaborative stance on climate issues (UNEP, 2023).

Challenges persist, with women's voices highlighting hurdles from restricted land rights to political representation limitations. These concerns point to systemic issues necessitating attention. The National Climate Change Act 2021 and bodies like the National Environment Management Authority mark Uganda's institutional commitment to climate solutions (Government of Uganda, 2021). Nevertheless, the real measure of the success of these policies lies on the ground, locally with the people affected.

While both Kenya and Uganda exhibit commendable efforts in structuring their climate change responses, there remains a discernible gap in centering these strategies around the unique challenges and potentials of women. The literature strongly advocates for a more integrated approach, ensuring gender-centric insights inform and enrich national climate change strategies.

Chapter 3

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework of ecofeminism and the conceptual framework which will detail the interconnected relationship between climate change and gender inequality, and women's experiences in Kenya and Uganda. Ecofeminism will serve as a guide in examining the research questions discussed in the first chapter.

3.2 Ecofeminism: Bridging the Gap Between Women and nature

Ecofeminism is a social and political movement that merges ecological and feminist perspectives, emphasizing the link between women and nature in a patriarchal society (Adams, 2014). Françoise d'Eaubonne first introduced the term in 1974 to underscore the crucial relationships among women, nature, and the well-being of society.

According to ecofeminist, the patriarchal societal norms that result in the subjugation and sidelining of women similarly play a role in environmental degradation. Ecofeminism's core tenet revolves around opposing all forms of domination, whether directed at women, nature or marginalized groups. Within this framework, the suppression of women and the environment is seen as inextricably connected, an idea captured by the term "intersectionality." This concept was first introduced by Kimberle Williams Crenshaw and it emphasizes that oppressive systems are interconnected, and that dismantling one system of oppression requires addressing all systems simultaneously (Crenshaw, 1989).

The theoretical underpinnings of ecofeminism can be traced to two distinct philosophies, radical feminism and deep ecology. Radical feminism seeks to restructure society by eliminating male supremacy, while deep ecology argues for the inherent worth of all living beings, regardless of their use to human beings (Merchant, 1992). Ecofeminism, then posits that the dualistic thinking that positions men against women also positions humans against nature, leading to exploitative behaviors.

Within the body of ecofeminist literature, there is contention that there is a correlation between the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature in patriarchal societies. They argue that the same logic of domination underpins both forms of exploitation, the patriarchal perception of women and nature as passive resources to be controlled, exploited, and dominated. To redress these imbalances, ecofeminists call for an end to all forms of oppression, positing a vision of a world that respects and appreciates the intrinsic value of all living beings (Warren, 2000).

Ecofeminism further distinguishes itself by emphasizing that the traditional division of labor in many societies wherein women are often responsible for gathering water, firewood, and other natural resources makes them more directly dependent on, and knowledgeable about, the environment. As such, ecofeminism highlights women's unique perspective and potential role in environmental conservation (Diamond, 1990).

3.2.1 Contributions of Ecofeminism to Climate Change Discourse

Ecofeminism has progressively shaped the climate change discourse by centering the experiences and vulnerabilities of women in the face of environmental crises. Plumwood (2002) argued that nature, like woman, are dominated, controlled, and used as a resource to serve the projects of reason and culture. In drawing parallels between

the domination of nature and women, ecofeminism presents a dual critique of patriarchal systems and the environmental degradation they perpetuate.

Ecofeminist theory, as highlighted by Adams (2014), reveals and challenges the overlapping sources of oppression, illustrating the complications that arise when these matters are treated as independent from each other. This theoretical perspective emphasizes that the effects of climate change on women cannot be isolated from other intersecting forms of oppression. The impacts are intertwined with social, economic, and environmental factors.

Moreover, Gaard (2017) asserts, “The ecofeminist analysis seeks to unearth the deeper ideological roots of why women and nature are jointly exploited.” It suggests that without understanding the dual exploitation faced by women and the environment, solutions to climate change will remain inadequate. Ecofeminism provides the necessary bridge between feminist theory and environmental ethics, prompting a more comprehensive approach to climate action.

Ecofeminism’s contributions extend to policy discussions as well. As stated by Harcourt (2019), “To genuinely address climate change, policymakers must adopt an intersectional lens, viewing climate solutions not as gender-neutral, but as deeply intertwined with gender relations.” This perspective emphasizes the importance of embedding gender considerations in climate policies, ensuring that they are equitable and effective.

All in all, as articulated by numerous scholars, ecofeminism offers invaluable insights into the climate discourse as its emphasis on interconnected oppressions, the

intertwined destinies of women and the environment, and the need for holistic and inclusive solutions make it a critical perspective in shaping both the conversation and solutions surrounding climate change.

3.2.2 Application of Ecofeminism to Climate Change

The insights provided by ecofeminism are especially relevant when addressing climate change, a crisis that exacerbates existing inequalities, including gender disparities. Climate change impacts and vulnerabilities are not gender-neutral. Women, particularly those in developing countries, bear a disproportionate burden of climate change impacts due to societal roles, lack of access to resources, and limited mobility (Alston, 2020).

Ecofeminism recognizes the gendered nature of climate change impacts and the ways in which the patriarchal structures contribute to environmental degradation. For example, the overexploitation of natural resources for economic growth mirrors the patriarchal attitude of domination and control, further contributing to climate change (Warren, 2000).

Ecofeminist perspectives also highlight the importance of women's roles in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Women often have unique knowledge and skills related to resource management and sustainable practices, given their roles in many societies as primary caregivers and providers of food and fuel. Recognizing and leveraging this knowledge can lead to more effective, equitable, and sustainable responses to climate change (MacGregor, 2010).

The ecofeminist lens allows us to understand how power imbalances, systemic oppression, and exploitation permeate both human interactions and human-

environment relations, with climate change serving as a focal point for these interconnected struggles. At the heart of ecofeminism is the identification of dualisms, such as nature/culture, male/female, and mind/body, where the latter term in each dualism is prioritized, leading to the devaluation and domination of the former. These dualisms are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, creating an oppressive and exploitative power dynamic that contributes to the climate crisis (Plumwood, 2002).

The patriarchal capitalist system not only exploits and marginalizes women but also the environment. Industries tend to exploit natural resources, viewing them as inexhaustible and freely available for their profit-oriented operations. The relentless pursuit of economic growth, often without environmental or social considerations, has pushed our planet's ecological systems to their limits, resulting in severe climate change (Mellor, 1997).

This situation parallels the patriarchal oppression of women, where women's labor, especially in the Global South, is often exploited, undervalued, and even rendered invisible. The overburdening of women with tasks associated with caring for the family and the community, along with the added impacts of climate change such as longer distances to fetch water or firewood, serve as examples of the intersecting oppressions of patriarchy and environmental degradation (Agarwal, 1992).

Beyond acknowledging the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women, ecofeminism also recognizes women's unique potential to combat climate change. Ecofeminists argue that the marginalization of women and their exclusion from decision-making processes are not only injustices in themselves but also missed opportunities for climate action. Women's indigenous knowledge and their historical

roles in maintaining biodiversity can be invaluable for building resilience and sustainability (Shiva, 1989).

For instance, women in rural areas, due to their daily interactions with the environment, have in-depth knowledge of local ecosystems, which is crucial for sustainable natural resource management and climate change adaptation. Hence, empowering women, incorporating their perspectives, and making use of their knowledge in climate policies can foster more effective and resilient solutions (Rocheleau, 2013). Despite the global recognition of the importance of gender equality in climate change discussions, progress remains slow, and much more needs to be done. Incorporating an ecofeminist perspective could transform the approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation, emphasizing the interconnectedness of gender, society, and the environment, and facilitating a shift towards a more equitable, sustainable world (Külcür, 2019).

3.3.3 The Relevance of Ecofeminism in Analyzing Climate Change Impacts on Women in Kenya and Uganda

The intersection of ecofeminism and women's experiences in East Africa provides a powerful lens for understanding the complex dynamics of climate change in this region, for instance, in East Africa, women are predominantly responsible for food production, water collection, and fuel provision (Dankelman, 2010). The degradation of the environment and the changes in the climate severely affect these activities, amplifying women's vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity.

Ecofeminist perspectives reveal the structural inequalities that exacerbate these vulnerabilities, such as women's limited access to land rights, financial resources, and decision-making processes because these barriers not only make women more

susceptible to climate change impacts but also limit their capacity to participate in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts (Buckingham, 2010). In Kenya and Uganda, ecofeminism provides a critical framework for analyzing climate change impacts on women as it underscores the intertwined nature of gender inequality and environmental degradation, both of which are exacerbated by climate change.

Historically, East African societies are predominantly agrarian, and women are the primary cultivators as they're engaged in the physical labor of planting, weeding, and harvesting crops, gathering firewood, fetching water, and taking care of the household and livestock (Raney, 2011). For instance, in Uganda, women are responsible for agricultural work, changes in weather patterns due to climate change are disrupting traditional farming practices, resulting in decreased agricultural productivity and increased food insecurity, therefore, carry the burden of these impacts (Magrath, 2008). In Kenya, the situation is similar, droughts and unpredictable rainfall, exacerbated by climate change, affect women's ability to provide food and water for their families (Niang, 2014). Moreover, this context is crucial to understand the ecofeminist perspective in East Africa as these gender roles often overlap with cultural norms and expectations, which further exacerbate women's vulnerability to climate change (Terry, 2009).

Ecofeminism provides a lens to understand these issues not just as environmental problems but as a consequence of patriarchal structures and gender inequality. Simultaneously, ecofeminism acknowledges the agency of East African women, who have been active in community based environmental movements and the case of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, started by Wangari Maathai, is a potent example of

women taking leadership in environmental conservation and community development (Muthuki, 2006).

3.3.4 Limitations and Critiques of Ecofeminism

The idea of ecofeminism, though powerful, is not without critique. Ecofeminism, as a framework, has significantly shaped discussions on gender and environmental degradation. Yet, it is not without its critiques. From an internal standpoint, some scholars question its coherence, arguing that it occasionally paints an overly homogenized picture of women's experiences globally, thereby undermining the diversity of women's relationships with the environment (Gaard, 2011). Externally, there have been concerns about its applicability in various socio-cultural contexts, particularly in non-western settings where traditional ecological knowledge and gender roles might differ markedly from Western narratives (Agarwal, 2016).

Another significant criticism is the claim of essentialism, which according to Plumwood (1991), is the notion that ecofeminism might inherently and problematically link women with nature, suggesting a biological determination in their roles as caregivers. Such views have been critiqued for inadvertently reinforcing gendered stereotypes, potentially limiting women to predefined roles (Sturgeon, 1997). In the context of this research, it becomes evident that women's roles as caregivers and primary managers of natural resources in regions like Kenya and Uganda aren't simply products of essentialist impositions but rather that these roles emerge from culturally, socially, and economically embedded practices that have been passed down through generations.

Furthermore, from a broader feminist perspective, some argue that ecofeminism diverges too heavily from core feminist goals. While feminism broadly seeks to

challenge and transform patriarchal structures, critics worry that ecofeminism, by intertwining women's liberation with environmental activism, might dilute the core focus on women's rights (Alaimo, 2000). Some feminist scholars contend that by veering into the realm of environmental justice, ecofeminism sometimes risks sidelining the pervasive issues of gender injustice.

This research recognizes the criticism levied by some feminists who feel that ecofeminism's interlacing of environmental justice with women's rights can sometimes overshadow the latter. However, in exploring the unique contexts of Kenya and Uganda, the study reveals how environmental challenges and gender inequalities are inextricably linked, amplifying the necessity of addressing both in tandem. For instance, when climate change exacerbates resource scarcities, it is often women in their roles as primary caregivers and resource managers who bear the brunt of these changes. Thus, their liberation is inherently tied to the health and stability of their environment. Rather than seeing ecofeminism as a departure from core feminist goals, this research posits it as an essential expansion of the feminist framework, particularly in regions where environmental degradation and gender inequality are interdependent phenomena.

In this study, while recognizing these criticisms, ecofeminism is employed as it offers the most apt framework for the specific contexts of Kenya and Uganda. The research methodology has been designed to capture a diverse range of women's voices, thus addressing the critique of homogeneity.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

3.3.1 Introduction

The conceptual framework for this study titled “The Effects of Climate Change on Women in East Africa: A Comparative Study of Kenya and Uganda” lays out the key concepts, variables, and relationships within the ecofeminist theoretical context. It guides the research by setting a clear structure for the analysis.

3.3.2 Climate Change

Climate change is a term that is often misunderstood or oversimplified, the term encompasses a broad range of natural phenomena and human-caused alterations to the Earth’s climate. The World Health Organization defines climate change as “changes in the planet’s climate that are attributable either directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere, observed over comparable time periods” (WHO, 2018).

For this research, the concept of climate change encompasses: temperature changes, extreme weather events and changes in rainfall patterns. As per the IPCC (2018), climate change includes both global warming driven by human emissions of greenhouse gases, and the resulting large-scale shifts in weather patterns.

3.3.3 Women

The experiences, opportunities, challenges, and well-being of women in Kenya and Uganda, particularly concerning the effects of climate change, are deeply intertwined with socio-economic, cultural, and environmental dynamics specific to East Africa. While it’s essential to acknowledge the diversity and individuality of experiences among women in these countries, certain overarching themes emerge when examining their relationship with climate change.

Experiences: Livelihood- In both Kenya and Uganda, a significant portion of women are engaged in agriculture, which is vulnerable to changing weather patterns. Erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, or floods directly influence their yields and, consequently, their income and food security. Water and Firewood- Climate change often means longer treks for water and firewood, further exposing women to the risks of physical harm or assault.

Opportunities: Empowerment Programs- Both countries have seen an emergence of women-focused climate resilience programs, emphasizing women's roles as community leaders and environmental stewards. Micro-financing and Entrepreneurship- With the right resources, women have initiated climate-smart agricultural practices, green enterprises, and other environmentally-friendly businesses.

Challenges: Land Rights- Despite their significant role in agriculture, many women in Kenya and Uganda lack land rights, limiting their ability to make decisions that might enhance resilience to climate change. Limited Access- Women often have limited access to climate change information, technology, or financial services that might aid in adaptation or mitigation. Gender Roles: Deeply ingrained gender roles can limit women's mobility, decision-making power, or access to resources in the context of climate crises.

Well-being: Health- Women's health, especially reproductive health, can be adversely affected by climate change. Drought or famine conditions can lead to malnutrition, affecting pregnant or breastfeeding women. Mental Health- The stress and trauma of losing homes or livelihoods due to climate-induced events can have psychological

implications. Security- In times of resource scarcity, instances of domestic violence, early marriages, or even transactional sex can rise, endangering women's well-being.

3.4 Conclusion

Ecofeminism asserts that gender inequality and climate change are interrelated issues. The complexity of gender inequality is exacerbated by climate change and should not be considered in isolation. As Beridze (2022) notes, ecofeminism views gender inequality as being at the core of the contemporary climate crisis. The ecofeminist approach may guide the policies and interventions in Kenya and Uganda, recognizing the interconnected nature of the problems and developing holistic solutions that address both climate change and gender inequality. Through the lens of ecofeminism, mitigating the effects of climate change on women would require a comprehensive approach that recognizes the overlapping forces of oppression and seeks to address them in a coordinated manner, rather than treating them as separate issues. The significance of an ecofeminist perspective is that it would bring depth and complexity to this study connecting climate change with gender dynamics and other interrelated issues.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This study is an exploratory qualitative research based on the literature as well as interviews with women in Kenya and Uganda, recognizing that climate change has far reaching consequences that disproportionately affect certain segments of the population, this study seeks to investigate these disparities. As stated by Creswell (2013), qualitative research is suitable for exploring complex phenomena and gathering information from detailed and context rich data, particularly when investigating subjects that require human interpretation.

The research is designed to explore the underlying dynamics that shape women's vulnerability to climate change in these two countries. It utilizes a dual approach, combining a thorough review of existing literature with primary data collected through interviews with affected women and the integration of these methodologies allows for a nuanced understanding of the subject matter.

By focusing on women in regions that are particularly susceptible to climate change, this study hopes to offer insights into the gendered dimensions of environmental change. It further emphasizes the need for incorporating gender sensitive policies and interventions in addressing climate challenges and this introduction sets the stage for the subsequent sections, outlining the methodological choices that guide the study,

thereby laying a foundational framework for understanding the complex intersections of gender, environment, and society in the context of climate change in Kenya and Uganda.

4.2 The Site of Study and Units of Analysis

The geographical focus of this study is placed on Kenya and Uganda, two East African nations with diverse ecosystems and social structures, all of which contribute to the complex relationship between gender and climate change. Within these countries, the research targets regions known for their susceptibility to the impacts of climate change, such as drought-prone rural areas, coastal zones facing sea level rise, and agricultural communities struggling with erratic weather patterns.

The units of analysis encompass individual women who have experienced the impacts of climate change directly, as well as community practices, social norms, and policies that shape their vulnerabilities and responses and so by examining both the microlevel experiences of individual women and the macrolevel structures that influence these experiences, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which climate change affects women's lives in these specific locations.

Moreover, this inquiry acknowledges the diversity among women in terms of age, occupation, social status, and other factors that might affect their relationship with climate change and it ensures that the study is not monolithic in its approach, but rather, recognizes the multifaceted and context specific nature of the phenomena being examined.

Kenya and Uganda were selected not just for their geographical significance but also for the cultural, historical, and socio-economic contexts that shape the ways in which climate change is perceived, experienced, and addressed within these societies.

4.3 Sample and Selection Procedures

The process of selecting the sample for this study was carefully crafted to ensure an exhaustive and insightful understanding of the experiences and perspectives of women affected by climate change in Kenya and Uganda, with the total sample size comprising 20 participants, equally representing both countries, with 10 individuals selected from each. Purposive sampling was utilized as the primary method for selecting participants.

According to Palinkas (2015), purposive sampling is a qualitative research method where researchers select participants based on specific characteristics or qualities, allowing for a thorough exploration of the targeted phenomena by selecting subjects who are particularly knowledgeable or experienced in the area under investigation (Etikan, 2016). Therefore, by concentrating on those most affected, the study delves deeper into the lived experiences and personal narratives of participants, illuminating the complex interplay between gender, environment, and socio-economic factors as this process enabled the research to align with ecofeminist principles by giving voice to often marginalized communities, highlighting their resilience, wisdom, and strategies in dealing with climate change.

Inclusion criteria were carefully specified to encompass female gender, age 18 years and above, residency in Kenya or Uganda for at least five years, willingness to be interviewed, ability to communicate effectively in a language used for the interview,

and a demonstrated understanding of climate change and its potential impacts on their community, while the exclusion criteria were outlined to omit male gender, individuals below 18 years of age, current residents outside of Kenya or Uganda, and those unable to participate in the interviews due to language barriers.

4.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is a vital phase in the research process, and the techniques employed must be robust, reliable, and relevant to the research questions, and for this study, the data collection involved a combination of both primary and secondary sources.

4.4.1 Primary Data Collection

The primary data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with women who had been directly affected by climate change in Kenya and Uganda, using a carefully designed interview guide that facilitated the interviews, and utilized open-ended questions that allowed for a rich and extensive exploration of the participants' experiences, perceptions, and feelings related to climate change.

The interviews were audio recorded to ensure accurate transcription and later analysis, with each interview scheduled to last approximately 20 minutes, additional time was allocated when necessary and prior to the interview, participants were provided with an informed consent form outlining the purpose of the study, their rights as participants, and assurance of confidentiality.

4.4.2 Secondary Data Collection

The secondary data was gleaned through a systematic review of existing literature, encompassing peer reviewed articles, reports, and other scholarly works focusing on the impact of climate change on women in Kenya and Uganda. The sources used to search for this were online databases such as Google Scholar, African Journals Online

(Ajol), ProQuest, and Jstor to identify the most recent and relevant literature on the topic.

Both the primary and secondary data collection methods were guided by feminist principles and ecofeminist theory, recognizing the significance of women's voices, experiences, and wisdom in understanding the complex dynamics of climate change therefore the combination of interviews and literature review ensured a thorough examination of the subject, capturing both personal narratives and academic insights. By using these data collection techniques, the study sought to add to the expanding body of knowledge connecting women's lived experiences with the complex effects of climate change in the African context.

4.5 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis method selected for this study was meticulously structured to thoroughly scrutinize the qualitative data obtained from both the interviews and the review of relevant literature where two main techniques were utilized in the analysis of the primary data, thematic analysis and comparative analysis.

4.5.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis served as the central method in the data analysis process, enabling the discovery of prevalent themes and patterns within the interview data as this approach ensured a methodical and consistent interpretation of the participants' experiences and viewpoints. The analysis procedure commenced with an attentive reading and revisiting of the transcripts, succeeded by a stage of coding where vital concepts were flagged and from these preliminary codes, dominant themes were discerned, classified, and scrutinized, mirroring the participants' comprehension of climate change and its influence on their existence.

4.5.2 Comparative Analysis

Alongside thematic analysis, comparative analysis was also utilized to enable a contrast of responses from participants in Kenya and Uganda, assisting in emphasizing the similarities and differences in experiences, viewpoints, and mindsets between the two nations as this comparative evaluation yielded insightful observations into the ways that distinct geographical, cultural, and socio-economic elements may shape the impact of climate change on women in these particular regions.

The combined use of thematic and comparative analysis offered an intricate examination of the data, enabling a richer understanding of the complexities of women's experiences with climate change, furthermore, this approach also aligned well with the ecofeminist theoretical framework of the study, emphasizing the interconnectedness of women's lived experiences with the larger ecological systems, with the estimated duration for the data collection and data analysis being one month this ensured a rigorous and thorough exploration of the research questions.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations form the backbone of this research, ensuring that participants are treated with respect and integrity throughout this process. First and foremost, all participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the research without penalty at any stage of the study, a right clearly stated in the informed consent forms and reiterated verbally during the initial interaction with each participant, and ensuring that participants understand they can leave the study at any time promotes an atmosphere of trust and collaboration (Sieber, 1992).

Moreover, the researcher was readily available to discuss the study with participants, if necessary to monitor any negative effects or misconceptions and this open line of communication was essential for mitigating potential misunderstandings or discomfort that may arise during the research process, allowing participants to express any concerns or questions they might have and enabling the researcher to clarify any uncertainties about the study's aims and methods. This engagement ensured that participants felt supported and understood, strengthening the overall quality and ethical grounding of the research.

Further, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained to the highest degree, and cultural sensitivity was observed throughout all interactions and procedures and since the research deals with potentially vulnerable populations, the methodology has been carefully designed to ensure that the research is conducted in a respectful, non-intrusive manner.

Chapter 5

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WOMEN IN KENYA AND UGANDA

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive exploration of the collected data, utilizing the methodologies delineated in the previous section. By employing both thematic and comparative analysis, it aims to unearth significant insights about the impacts of climate change on women in Kenya and Uganda and the ways these impacts might be affecting existing gender disparities.

5.1.1 Thematic Analysis

Table 1: Direct Impact of Climate Change on Women

| Sub-themes | Kenya (Codes) | Uganda (Codes) |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Water Scarcity | Drying rivers, drought, water fetching responsibility | Flooding, unpredictability of rains, deforestation |
| Agricultural Impact | Crop failure, loss of livestock, food scarcity | Unpredictable seasons, reduced harvest |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Economic Impact | Reduced trade, loss of stock | Impact on small businesses, reduced fish catch, blocked market routes |
| Health and Traditional Practices | Dying medicinal plants, increased workload, Water borne diseases | Pollution, rough waters, impacts on fish mongering |

Table 2 : Impact on Women's Livelihoods

| Factor | Kenya | Uganda | Uganda (Activist's Insights) |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Water Scarcity | High | Moderate | High |
| Economic Struggle | High | High | High |
| Physical & Emotional Burden | High | High | Very High |
| Education Disruption | Moderate | Moderate | Very High |

Table 3: Gender Inequality Exacerbated by Climate Change

| Sub-themes | Kenya (Codes) | Uganda (Codes) |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Economic Disparity | Limited financial independence, inability to migrate | Fights for resources, small businesses affected more, primary earners |
| Societal Expectations | Family caregiver role, societal punishment, responsibility to fetch water | Primary earners in families, primary sellers in fish mongering |
| Health & Well- being | Sanitary needs, trauma, mental health | Sanitary needs, trauma, mental health |
| Education & Future | Displacement, lost sources of income, child marriages | Absence of schools, priority for male education, child marriages |

Table 4: Government Interventions vs. Community Initiatives

| Intervention Type | Kenya | Uganda | Uganda (Activist's Insights) |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Government Policies | Low | Low | Low |
| Community Initiatives | High | High | Moderate |
| Need for External Support | High | High | Very High |

The profound impact of climate change on East Africa, specifically Kenya and Uganda, is evident through a qualitative study focusing on its effects on women and the thematic analysis above, which is grounded in a series of comprehensive interviews, seeks to juxtapose the realities women face in both countries.

Direct Impact of Climate Change on Women: Kenya: Women have noticed drying rivers and more frequent droughts and as a participant commented, “We now walk miles to fetch water, making it a taxing responsibility.” Similarly, the adverse agricultural effects like crop failures and loss of livestock have intensified food scarcity which in turn has affected the economic sphere that has been marred with reduced trade, and traditional medicinal plants are dying out, leading to an increased workload for women. In Uganda; the unpredictability of rains, flooding, and deforestation has challenged the traditional roles of women, one participant shared, “The seasons are no longer predictable, affecting our harvest greatly.” Small

businesses face the brunt with reduced fish catch and blocked market routes, and health is compromised due to pollution.

The Impact on Women's Livelihoods; In both countries, the struggle for water is evident. However, economic challenges are pronounced. In Uganda, an activist highlighted, "The emotional toll on women, especially with fluctuating incomes from fish mongering, is immense." Education disruptions in both nations are notable, however they are more heightened in Uganda.

Gender Inequality Exacerbated by Climate Change: Climate change augments existing gender disparities. In Kenya, limited financial independence and societal expectations like the caregiving role strain women. This also leads to young girls being married off to ease the burden on the family. Uganda faces similar challenges, where the absence of schools due to climate disruptions leads to a prioritization of male education and an increase in child marriages.

Government Interventions vs. Community Initiatives: While governmental policies in both countries are deemed as lacking, community initiatives are soaring. One respondent from Uganda opined, "Government initiatives are not enough. We've had to start our community programs to combat the effects of climate change."

For enhancing the rigor of this analysis, it would be beneficial in future studies to incorporate intercoder reliability by involving multiple coders to ensure consistency and reduce subjectivity in code derivation. The decision to manually analyze data, as opposed to utilizing software like NVivo and Atlas.ti, was influenced by several factors. Manual analysis fosters a reflexive approach, allowing the researcher to

engage deeply with the data and derive nuanced insights. While software offers systematic categorization and visual representations, manual coding allows for an intimate understanding of the data's texture, especially crucial in qualitative research where context and subtlety matter.

5.1.2 Comparative Analysis

Kenya

In Kenya, climate change has left unmistakable imprints on the daily life of its female populace and with the noticeable drying up of rivers and more frequent droughts, the impact has magnified considerably. One of the most harrowing personal accounts comes from a woman who mentions the grueling journeys they undertake to fetch water, which has now become a burdensome responsibility. This illuminates not only the physical challenges faced due to climate change but also the mental and emotional toll it takes; additionally, the economic landscape, which is critical for women's empowerment and security, has been disrupted.

The reduced trade particularly in regions that heavily rely on agricultural produce and livestock, amplifies food scarcity and it is daunting to note that traditional medicinal plants, which have been an integral part of the Kenyan culture and health framework, are dying out. This poses an additional workload for women who rely on these plants for healthcare and well-being and when comparing this with the literature, it becomes evident that while policies like the Climate Change Act and the collaboration with international bodies aim at climate resilience, the ground realities experienced by women depict a story of struggle and adaptation.

Uganda

Uganda faces its own unique set of climate-related challenges which are compounded for women, who are traditionally anchored to roles deeply intertwined with the environment, especially in agriculture. The onset of climate change has brought about a marked unpredictability in Uganda's weather patterns and this inconsistency, particularly concerning rainfall, has dire consequences for the country's agricultural practices, which remain central to its economic framework. As the patterns of the seasons become erratic, traditional roles that women have upheld for generations are thrown into turmoil; a telling narrative comes from an interviewee who highlights these erratic seasons, noting their disruptive impact on harvests. Such personal accounts serve as stark reminders of the implications of climate change to human beings.

Uganda's economy, especially at the grassroots level, bears the brunt of these climatic upheavals and the fishing industry for instance which is a significant contributor to local economies and a domain where women play pivotal roles, witnesses dwindling fish catches. This decline not only affects the livelihoods dependent on fishing but also sends ripple effects throughout the local economies where women engaged in fish mongering find their incomes becoming increasingly unstable, further compounded by blocked market routes and escalating pollution-related health issues.

The literature on Uganda presents a slightly more hopeful image by highlighting the country's gender-centric approach to climate change. On paper, Uganda's commitment to integrating gender considerations into its climate strategies is commendable. However, as the narratives from the ground indicate, there is a palpable gap between policy intentions and actual implementations but despite the intent, many

women, especially those engaged in agriculture and fisheries, continue to grapple with the widening chasm between supportive policies and their lived realities. Cultural norms, when mixed with the adversities of climate change, amplify women's vulnerabilities, drawing attention to the need for more effective, ground-up interventions. While policies and strategies like the National Climate Change Policy and National Development Plan (NDP) emphasize the integration of gender perspectives, there's an evident need for these to be more intricately connected with ground realities. The lived experiences of women, especially those involved in agriculture, showcase a struggle between policy intentions and their implementations.

Intercountry Comparative Analysis

Both Kenya and Uganda exhibit economic strain from climate change, particularly on women who are primary caregivers and actively involved in small businesses and this is further compounded by the unpredictability of climate extremes which impacts agriculture, thus affecting livelihoods reliant on it; this confirms the literature's notion of agriculture's vulnerability to climatic changes. The dependence of both Kenya and Uganda on agriculture, as stated by FOA, is reflected in the interviews, emphasizing the significant economic strain due to climate change.

When comparing Kenya and Uganda, some striking similarities and differences emerge, both countries witness the intense struggle for water resources, marking a universal climate-induced challenge. However, while both nations face economic challenges, their nature varies, Uganda's struggles are more pronounced in the areas of fluctuating incomes, especially from industries like fish mongering. The ripple effect of these economic instabilities touches other sectors, such as education and this

is also notably from the interviews conducted in Uganda where it is revealed that it faces more heightened educational disruptions than Kenya.

The literature largely focuses on broad environmental changes however the interviews delve deeper into the socio-cultural implications, like altered social dynamics in Kenya and Uganda, revealing localized impacts. The literature mainly highlights gender dynamics without delving deep into individual experiences, in contrast, interviews uncover personal narratives and experiences, providing a nuanced understanding of climate change implications. Climate change has resulted in economic strains, altered social dynamics, and environmental desolation for women in Kenya and Uganda. Climate-induced challenges amplify the existing vulnerabilities and responsibilities of women, exacerbating gender inequalities.

Another common theme across both countries is the exacerbation of gender inequalities due to climate change and in both Kenya and Uganda, traditional gender roles strain women even more in the face of climate adversities. Yet, while Kenya sees a rise in young girls being married off, Uganda witnesses a prioritization of male education. The decisions made in both countries to alleviate the burden of climate change disproportionately affect women and young girls, whereas Kenya emphasizes partnerships with global institutions and grassroots-level interventions, while Uganda foregrounds gender considerations and long-term planning. Tailored interventions, like microfinance, skill-building workshops, conservation projects, and community programs, can address the unique challenges faced by women in both countries.

The narratives from the interviewees often mirror the literature; for instance, the literature notes women's vulnerability due to societal roles, a notion reinforced by

interviewees describing their personal experiences this however, discrepancies emerge when comparing individual experiences with broad trends highlighted in the literature. The reasons for such differences could range from a diverse interviewee sample to evolving societal dynamics since the literature's publication.

Lastly, both Kenya and Uganda seem to converge on one aspect; the inadequacy of government interventions where in both nations, the consensus is that official policies and interventions don't sufficiently address the ground realities. Both countries highlight climate change's significance in their policy frameworks, with Kenya leaning on global partnerships and Uganda accentuating gender considerations. Historical factors, coupled with socio-economic dynamics, might explain Kenya's inclination for partnerships, given its colonial past and current geopolitical positioning which has paved the way for community initiatives, that are seen as more responsive and effective. This suggests that while top-down strategies are essential, grassroots movements provide the much-needed localized solutions to combat climate adversities and should be funded by the governments as they know the exact issues experienced by the women.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Summary

Our research delved deeply into the intricate dynamics between climate change and gender in Kenya and Uganda, highlighting how climatic shifts compound existing socio-economic and cultural factors to disproportionately affect women. The thematic analysis revealed prominent themes like Economic Strain, Altered Social Dynamics, Environmental Desolation, and more. Each theme exhibited how women's lived

experiences were profoundly shaped by the tangible and intangible impacts of climate change.

5.2.2 Interpretations

Economic Strain: This theme consistently appeared in both countries. In Kenya, reduced income due to crop failures directly affects women who are often primary caregivers. Initiatives like microfinance, skill-building workshops, and tailored educational programs could provide women with resources and knowledge to adapt to these challenges. In Uganda, the unpredictable weather pattern seems to decimate small businesses, a sector where women are notably active. These findings resonate with the ecofeminist view, suggesting that women's intimate connection with their environment often translates to bearing a more significant burden of climate adversities.

Altered Social Dynamics: This unveiled another layer of gendered implications of climate change. While both countries presented challenges, Kenya's narratives painted a particularly concerning picture of resource-based conflicts creating hostile environments for women. Community-based programs addressing these social implications can foster understanding and reduce conflicts. In contrast, Ugandan women felt strained by added responsibilities due to forced migrations and disruptions in traditional roles.

Environmental Desolation: This theme echoed a profound sense of loss. The drying rivers in Kenya and the witnessing of deforestation in Uganda are not just environmental concerns but are intricately tied to women's cultural, emotional, and economic landscapes. Conservation projects, like restoring rivers and reforestation, can counter these environmental challenges while also supporting the socio-cultural

and economic facets integral to women's lives. The research reveals heightened social and economic challenges for women in climate-affected areas of Kenya and Uganda. Furthermore, empowering these women enhances the efficacy of climate response strategies.

5.2.3 Implications

The results underscore that climate change is not just an environmental issue; it's deeply socio-cultural, with women at its intersection in East Africa. The study affirms that while global warming affects all, its repercussions are mediated by existing societal structures, amplifying vulnerabilities for already marginalized groups like women.

Moreover, the study stresses that policies aimed at climate resilience cannot adopt a 'one size fits all' approach. Different regions, with their unique socio-cultural structures, will need tailored strategies. Ignoring this facet, as the study suggests, could exacerbate existing inequalities.

5.2.4 Limitations

While the research provides valuable insights, it's essential to acknowledge its limitations. The thematic analysis, while robust, relies heavily on participant narratives, which could be influenced by recall biases or even societal pressures. Furthermore, the study exclusively focuses on two countries, potentially excluding nuances that might be prevalent in other parts of East Africa. The gender dynamics explored primarily revolved around women, without a comparative assessment of men's experiences.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

In the contemporary era, the pressing issue of climate change and the multitude of consequences it brings can no longer be denied or sidelined and this is visible from the mounting evidence, ranging from scientific data to firsthand accounts, continues to spotlight the profound and often detrimental effects of this global crisis on both urban centers and remote villages and its ubiquitous nature ensures that no corner of the earth remains untouched. Kenya and Uganda, two nations in East Africa, serve as focal points in this study as they were chosen for their shared regional characteristics yet distinct national identities and by directing our lens towards these countries, the research intended to go beyond generic observations and uncover the nuanced and layered hardships that climate change imposes on their female populations.

Our initial point of investigation was the alarming statistics from the United Nations indicating that women make up the majority (80%) of those displaced due to the ramifications of climate change. Seeking to comprehend the profound interplay between gender and environmental changes, this study was carried out in a methodical manner where we sought out to bridge the gap between the theoretical framework and the empirical evidence observed in the field.

Building upon the work of Rwigema (2021), who postulated that the surge in pests and diseases is tortuously linked with fluctuating weather patterns, our research further

underscores this observation specifically, in the context of East Africa. We found that increased flooding has led to a rise in water borne diseases such as malaria and the erratic weather patterns, characterized by both Rwigema's findings and our own, point towards a direct correlation between environmental changes and public health crises. Moreover, apart from vector borne diseases, our study also noted an upsurge in waterborne diseases like cholera, further emphasizing the multi-layered challenges posed by climate change. Ecofeminism, a theoretical framework that places women and nature in a shared realm of exploitation and subordination, played a pivotal role in shaping this study's approach, but a deeper analysis reveals that certain groups, delineated by geography, gender, and socio-economic factors, bear a disproportionate burden. Whether it's the impact on their roles as caregivers, providers, or community leaders, understanding the distinct adversities faced by women in these nations is crucial for framing holistic and effective solutions.

By employing ecofeminism as our theoretical lens, our research systematically investigated the tangible and intangible ways climate change intersects with gender dynamics in Kenya and Uganda. This theoretical base, which positions women and nature within shared spheres of exploitation, was crucial for interpreting the qualitative data derived from our thematic analysis. Through this perspective, the ties binding women's day to day experiences with the overarching ecological shifts became even more pronounced.

Addressing our primary research question on how climate change affects women in Kenya and Uganda, the thematic results were instrumental, women in Kenya painted a grim landscape of shrinking water bodies and parched agricultural lands. Women, often the primary caregivers and providers in their families, are thrust into economic

hardships and this amplifies their vulnerabilities as they grapple with the dual challenges of lost livelihoods and the complexities that come with being displaced. Uganda's story, while sharing some parallels with Kenya, unfolds differently, where the country's women reported unpredictable rains, flooding as a result of rampant deforestation and socio-economic disruptions and these firsthand accounts grounded in ecofeminism provides a vivid portrayal of women's lived experiences, intricately weaving the environmental and the socio-cultural. Further, the exacerbation of gender inequality due to climate change, as uncovered in our thematic analysis, addressed our second research query and it revealed that in both countries, the dynamics of climate change have amplified existing gender disparities, with societal expectations placing additional burdens on women, from economic constraints in Kenya to prioritized male education in Uganda.

Echoing the insights of Odusanya (2022), our research in Kenya and Uganda underscores that women's experiences and voices in the context of climate justice are frequently overshadowed. Despite the significant challenges they face due to the ramifications of climate change, their perspectives and solutions often remain on the periphery of crucial dialogues. This absence is not merely an oversight but a stark manifestation of systemic marginalization that overlooks the valuable contributions women can make to combat climate adversities, further supporting this is Djoudi's (2016) observation, which resonates deeply with our findings. Women in Kenya and Uganda, representative of many in less developed nations, grapple with multiple barriers in actively participating in climate discourse, from limited representation in decision-making institutions and constrained educational opportunities to the enduring constraints of gender stereotypes, their potential remains largely untapped. It is crucial

for any climate strategy to acknowledge and address these systemic challenges to ensure an inclusive and effective approach.

In terms of governmental and community-based interventions, as explored in our third and fourth research questions, the findings revealed a stark difference between top-down and grassroots approaches. While governmental policies often fall short, the community initiatives which are rooted in the resilience and adaptive capacities of women provide hope and this aligns with the ecofeminist stance that women, given their intimate ties with nature and their communities, are not merely victims of these environmental shifts, but are also crucial agents of change and sustainability. Thus, the intricate ties between ecofeminism as a theory and the empirical findings from Kenya and Uganda have shed light on the multi-dimensional ways climate change impacts women's lives.

Drawing parallels and contrasts between the two countries was enlightening, moreover Kenya and Uganda are neighbors and share some broad cultural and geographical characteristics, the repercussions of climate change on their female populace vary. Climate change doesn't just affect women's economic stability or physical well-being, its effects can be seen altering the socio-cultural landscapes of these nations, further magnifying existing gender disparities. However, the tales of women's resilience and their capacity to adapt and persevere also emerge powerfully from this study.

Our research findings from Kenya and Uganda resonate strongly with the observations of Nakiyemba (2022) who stated that as the frequency of droughts escalates, women in these regions find their workloads intensifying substantially; compelled to cover increased distances in search of water or to explore alternative livelihood sources, they

face the unfortunate consequence of diminishing productive hours for other economic pursuits. It is evident that the repercussions of climate change aren't merely environmental but also have profound socio-economic implications, especially for women who are already balancing multiple roles in their communities. The insights gathered from this research, while deeply rooted in the East African context, echo universally where across continents, communities, and ecosystems, the challenges posed by climate change are multi-dimensional, intertwining human lives, especially those of women, with environmental dynamics.

This study highlighted that addressing climate requires not just overarching strategies but also initiatives tailored to women's unique experiences and that there is a dire need for expansive studies that not only encompass more East African nations but also delve into intra-gender dynamics. The following are a few potential research areas/questions. How do climatic changes affect different age groups within women? Are younger women facing challenges different from their older counterparts? Has climate change lead to an increase in child marriages? Additionally, a comparative study between men and women might provide a more holistic view of climate-induced gender dynamics. Given the complex web of socio-cultural norms in East Africa, ethnographic studies might offer richer, more in-depth insights. Gazing into the future, the journey to confront and mitigate climate change promises to be arduous with every step bringing with it fresh challenges and complex conundrums. However, the vast potential for positive transformation is equally palpable and this research underscores the importance of inclusivity, of ensuring every voice is heard and every perspective is considered.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Transcripts (Kenya)

Note: Interviews were conducted in English, Somali and Swahili. For interviews originally in Swahili, translations into English were directly made from the audio recordings.

(M=Maureen, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in English)

Interview 1: Maureen Otieno, 36

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

M: My name is Maureen, I'm 36, and I work as a teacher here.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

M: Certainly. The climate here is quite variable. We have areas prone to flooding, especially during heavy rain seasons, and then there are places that suffer from drought. It's a challenging environment, to say the least.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training formal or informal on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

M: I graduated from university, and yes, through local organizations, I've attended workshops on sustainable farming methods and other environmental practices.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

M: Over the years, I've noticed our rivers are drying up and there's less rainfall. The prolonged drought affects our water supply, making it harder for my family, especially for cooking and cleaning.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

M: The drying up of rivers means a longer distance to fetch water. As a woman, I feel it's more our responsibility to ensure there's water at home, which sometimes means less time for work and other duties. Additionally, the unpredictable rains disrupt school schedules.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

M: Definitely. I think the effects of climate change impact women more since we have the responsibility of fetching water, ensuring the family's well-being, and even dealing with agricultural challenges. For instance, when water sources dry up, it's often the women who have to walk longer distances, which affects their safety and health.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

M: In our community, women have formed groups where they share resources and knowledge. By collaborating, we can adapt better. For instance, some women have started community gardening, using drought-resistant crops.

I: Do you believe that climate change has intensified pre-existing gender disparities in your community?

M: Certainly, women with limited resources or financial independence face the greatest challenges, often unable to purchase water or relocate, leaving many of us constrained in our capacity to adapt.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

M: Certainly. Economic disparities play a role, as women with limited financial means have fewer options. Then there's the societal expectation of women being primary caregivers, which ties us down.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change? Have they been effective?

M: In Kenya, there's the Climate Change Act, and county governments have been mandated to allocate funds for climate-related activities. But honestly, on the ground, especially for farmers like me, the effects aren't felt as much as they should be.

I: In your opinion, do these policies and initiatives address the needs and concerns of women in your community?

M: While some policies might touch upon general issues, I feel they often overlook the specific challenges that women, especially rural women, face.

I: Are there any local or community-based initiatives that you know of that address climate change and its effects on women?

M: Yes, as I mentioned earlier, women in our community have formed groups to pool resources and knowledge. These groups often focus on sustainable farming and water conservation.

I: How can women play a more significant role in promoting sustainable and equitable climate action in your community?

M: I believe women need more representation in climate-related discussions and decisions. If empowered and given the right platforms, women can be at the forefront of sustainable change in our community.

(A=Amina, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in Somali)

Interview 2: Amina Hassan, 60

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

A: I am called Amina. I'm 60 years old and work as a traditional healer in our village.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

A: Our region experiences both extremes – there are times of heavy flooding, but there are also harsh periods of drought. The balance seems to have shifted more towards droughts lately.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training formal or informal on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

A: I never got the chance to go through a formal school or college education. However, over time, the people in our community have taught me a lot. I've come to understand about how the climate is changing, and I've also picked up knowledge on how to live in a sustainable way. I've gained much of this knowledge by attending workshops and events right here in our local area

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

A: Our medicinal plants are dying out. I've observed hotter conditions and infrequent rains which are affecting these plants.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

A: Women come to me for cures, but with the changing climate, it's hard to help them because the scarcity of plants has made my job challenging and it's also harder to find firewood and water.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

A: Sure, many of the younger women have to travel longer distances to get firewood or water as this is physically demanding and time-consuming but with age, I can't travel far, making life harder for elderly women like me.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

A: Some women have started growing plants in their homes, forming small gardens and they also come together to share knowledge about which plants are more resilient to changing climates.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

A: Yes, older women in particular struggle to adapt to these changes due to our traditional roles and constrained resources.

I: Do you believe there are societal, cultural, or financial aspects in your locality that heighten women's susceptibility to the effects of climate change?

A: Women are often expected to provide and care for their families where this responsibility, combined with our limited mobility and resources, makes us more susceptible to the impacts of climate change.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change and have they been effective?

A: I've heard about some government projects, but in our village, their impact has been minimal and we often feel left out.

I: In your opinion, do these policies and initiatives address the needs and concerns of women in your community?

A: They might help to some extent, but they don't directly address our unique challenges as women.

I: Are there any local or community-based initiatives that you know of that address climate change and its effects on women?

A: Women in our village have formed groups as they share knowledge and try to find ways to adapt together and it's a collective effort.

(B=Beatrice, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in Swahili)

Interview 3: Beatrice, 42

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

B: I am Beatrice, 42 years old, and I'm a farmer here in our village.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

B: We have two main seasons: the rainy season and the dry season. However, in recent years, the dry season has become more prolonged, and the rainy season less predictable.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training, formal or informal, on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

B: I attended school up to the primary level and regarding climate change, most of what I know comes from community gatherings and discussions.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

B: The soil has become drier, making it difficult to cultivate and the rains are also less reliable, sometimes leading to crop failure.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

B: Farming has become more challenging because sometimes we don't harvest enough, which means less food and income for my family, so this affects our health and overall well-being.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

B: I feel women bear a bigger burden as we are responsible for feeding the family, so when the harvest is poor, it's up to us to find alternative sources of food, men in our village often migrate to cities looking for work when farming is bad, leaving women behind to manage the challenges.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

B: Some of us have diversified our crops, planting varieties that can withstand dry conditions, others have started small-scale poultry or goat farming as an alternative source of income.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

B: Absolutely. The challenges brought by climate change add to the daily challenges women face, making our lives even more difficult.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

B: The traditional roles assigned to women make us primary caregivers. With fewer resources and more responsibilities, we are often at the front lines of climate change impacts.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change? Have they been effective?

B: I've heard of some programs, like tree planting, but I haven't seen many of them implemented in our village.

I: How can women play a more significant role in promoting sustainable and equitable climate action in your community?

B: Women need access to education, resources, and training. If we understand the science and have the tools, we can make informed decisions and play a more active role in fighting climate change.

(M=Mary, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in English)

Interview 4: Mary Kamau, 39

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

M: My name is Mary Kamau, I'm 39 years old, and I work as a community organizer, especially focusing on women's issues and resource distribution.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

M: Well, our region, especially in northern Kenya, is predominantly pastoralist. We have been facing severe droughts due to climate change, and areas like Garissa are occasionally hit by floods, although not as frequent as our droughts.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training, formal or informal, on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

M: I've completed high school education and attended several workshops on climate change adaptation. These workshops provided informal training about the challenges posed by climate change in our region.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

M: We've seen reduced rainfall patterns, more prolonged and severe droughts, and increased temperatures as this has affected our water sources and pasture for livestock, leading to conflicts over these diminishing resources among the pastoralist communities.

I: How have these alterations impacted your everyday activities, including your job, well-being, and familial duties?

M: It's been tough, with the diminishing resources, men often migrate, leaving women behind and women have to walk longer distances to fetch water and firewood making it a taxing responsibility. The changing climate dynamics have also increased responsibilities for many women as they become the primary caregivers in the absence of men. Also, due to the increased stress in communities, relationships within families are strained, leading to instances of gender-based violence.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

M: Absolutely. Men, for example, can migrate with livestock during harsh times, but women are often left behind to manage households with limited resources. This makes women and children more susceptible to malnutrition and health issues. Additionally, young girls sometimes have to drop out of school because they're needed at home or they need to travel longer distances to fetch resources, making them more vulnerable.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

M: Yes, some women have diversified their sources of income. They venture into informal trades or rear chickens. Women also form groups to support each other, sharing resources and information.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

M: Yes, it has. The changing climate dynamics amplify the challenges women already face, like exclusion from decision-making or economic barriers. Their vulnerabilities are heightened, especially when it comes to land and livestock ownership.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

M: Yes, women here have limited economic opportunities and are excluded from decision-making processes. They also have mobility constraints due to their responsibilities towards children. The gender dynamics coupled with existing socio-economic challenges make them more susceptible to the negative impacts of climate change.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change? Have they been effective?

M: In Kenya, we have the Climate Change Act, and each county has a department focusing on climate change. The county governments are mandated to allocate a part of their budget for climate change activities. But I'm not entirely sure about their effectiveness on the ground.

I: In your opinion, do these policies and initiatives address the needs and concerns of women in your community?

M: Not entirely. While there are efforts to address climate change, there isn't a specific focus on women and the unique challenges they face due to climate change.

I: Are there any local or community-based initiatives that you know of that address climate change and its effects on women?

M: There are a few, especially women-led groups that come together to support each other, share resources, and find alternative livelihoods. But more needs to be done to specifically target the unique challenges women face.

I: How can women play a more significant role in promoting sustainable and equitable climate action in your community?

M: Women should be involved in decision-making processes, given opportunities for economic activities, and linked to opportunities beyond their immediate situation. Also, women's rights need to be advocated for more strongly.

(F= Faiza, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in Somali)

Interview 5: Faiza Hagi, 47

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

F: My name is Faiza, I'm 47 years old, and I am a farmer in this community. I mainly grow crops and keep a few livestock.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

F: Our region primarily used to have predictable rainfall patterns, which is vital for our crops. But lately, due to climate change, there are longer drought periods and unpredictable rainfalls. Sometimes, when it rains, it leads to flooding which can destroy our crops.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training, formal or informal, on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

F: I only went up to middle school. However, I've attended community workshops on sustainable farming techniques that are resilient to climate change.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

F: I've noticed delayed rainfall and sometimes erratic rainfall patterns. The droughts have become more frequent and intense, and water sources for irrigation have become scarcer.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

F: Farming has become more challenging. Reduced crop yields mean less income and food for my family. Sometimes I have to seek alternative sources of income. My children, especially my daughters, are now required to help more on the farm or fetch water from farther distances, affecting their education and overall well-being.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

F: Yes, they are, while men can travel and seek work elsewhere when crops fail, women often remain, taking care of families with reduced resources and so, women bear the brunt of the strain when resources are scarce, like fetching water from faraway places, and ensuring food is available for the family.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

F: Many of us are diversifying our crops, opting for drought-resistant varieties and some women have also started small-scale businesses or trade to supplement their income. There's also an increasing trend of women joining cooperative societies to pool resources and share farming techniques.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

F: Well, land ownership is a major one. Most women don't own land, making it hard for them to access climate change-related financing. Cultural norms also often restrict women's participation in decision-making, further hindering our ability to address challenges effectively.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change? Have they been effective?

F: I'm familiar with Kenya's plans for the environment but many of these plans don't really look at the specific problems women, especially those living in the countryside, go through.

I: In your opinion, do these policies and initiatives address the needs and concerns of women in your community?

F: Not as much as they should. There's a gap when it comes to focusing on the unique challenges women face. Women farmers, in particular, need more targeted support.

I: Are there any local or community-based initiatives that you know of that address climate change and its effects on women?

F: There are women-led groups focusing on sustainable farming and resource sharing. But more can be done, especially in terms of training and financing.

(K=Khadija, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in Somali)

Interview 6: Khadija Sheik, 39

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and your role or occupation in the community?

K: My name is Khadija Sheik, I'm 39, and I work in small livestock farming, but lately, it's been very tough. Many of us are also increasingly worried about our children's education and our community's well-being.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

K: Traditionally, our region had a mix of rainy and dry spells. But now, the climate is either extremely dry or suddenly floods. This unpredictability not only affects our farming but also our health and children's schooling.

I: What is your academic background? Have you had any formal or informal training on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

K: I finished primary school, and once, a local group trained us on climate-sensitive farming. But many in our community haven't had access to continued education, especially with the disruptions caused by climate change.

I: What environmental changes have you observed in recent years that you'd attribute to climate change?

K: Certainly. Droughts are becoming more prolonged, our fertile lands are deteriorating, and we've lost numerous animals. Our youth are worried about their future incomes, and many have been displaced.

I: How have these changes influenced your daily life, especially concerning your work, health, and family responsibilities?

K: Life has become more challenging. Witnessing our livestock die is emotionally draining. Moreover, journeys to fetch water often interfere with the women's sanitary needs, leading to health concerns and mental stress. Our children's education is also often disrupted, making us anxious about their futures.

I: Do you perceive the impacts of climate change differently for women and men in your community? Could you provide some instances?

K: Absolutely. Women often bear the brunt as we're responsible for fetching water and ensuring the family is nourished. The scarcity has intensified our tasks and has brought about mental and physical health challenges, especially concerning sanitary needs.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or strategies that women in your community have devised to deal with these climate-induced challenges?

K: Some women now collect rainwater and grow plants that don't need much water. We're also forming groups to discuss our mental well-being and the unique sanitary and health challenges we face.

I: Do you believe that climate change has intensified existing gender inequalities in your community?

K: Yes. As resources become scarce, women's roles intensify, which has consequences on our health, and there are growing concerns about our children's disrupted education. Many women cannot move or adapt due to our bound duties, which makes the situation even harder.

I: In your view, are there societal, cultural, or economic factors in your community making women more susceptible to climate change's impacts?

K: Yes. Women like me don't own the animals; we just take care of them. Also, men decide things even when women know the problems better.

I: Are you aware of any interventions by the Kenyan government concerning climate change? Have they proven beneficial?

K: I've heard of a few but I don't see much change for us animal keepers and they often bypass remote areas like ours.

I: In your perspective, do these policies and actions cater to the needs of women in your community?

K: Not really. They help a bit, but they don't really understand what women like me go through.

I: Do you know of any community-based programs addressing climate change and its effects on women?

K: Some groups come and teach us new ways to keep our animals and find other jobs.

(A=Anisa, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in Kiswahili)

Interview 7: Anisa Alin, 41

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

A: My name is Anisa Alin. I am 41 years old. I help my family by farming small pieces of land in our community.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

A: In our place, sometimes there's a lot of rain and we get floods. Other times, there's no rain for a long time and everything becomes very dry. In recent years, it's been more dry than wet. Rivers that used to have water all year now dry up sometimes.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training formal or informal on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

A: I never went to school. But sometimes, people from outside come to our village. They teach us how to farm better with the changing weather. They tell us about taking care of our land and water.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

A: I've seen our water sources change. Rivers and wells don't have as much water as before. Some plants we used to grow don't grow well anymore because rain doesn't come when it should.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

A: Every day feels harder, I have children and it's my job to look after them. But with less water, I have to walk longer distances to find some and when our crops don't grow, there's not enough food and so, my family becomes weak and sickly because of it.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

A: Yes, it's different for women like me, we have more work as we spend a lot of time getting water, cooking, and looking after children where men can go to other places to find work, but we women stay home and our jobs have become much harder because of the changing weather.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

A: Many women, including me, have joined together, we talk and share what we know about farming and when things are very tough, like during long dry times, we help each other with what little we have.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

A: Yes, with everything changing because of the weather, our jobs as women have become even harder. We have to do more to take care of our families, and it feels like we bear more of the burden.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

A: In our place, women are the ones who mainly care for the family. This means that when things become difficult, like with less water or food, we feel it a lot. We have to work harder to make sure everyone is okay.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change? Have they been effective?

A: I've heard people talk about programs from the government. But I don't see them helping us much here. We need help that looks at our daily problems and tries to solve them.

I: In your opinion, do these policies and initiatives address the needs and concerns of women in your community?

A: Not really. Women have big problems because of the changing weather. But many times, these problems are not looked at or talked about in the big programs.

(R=Rose, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in English)

Interview 8: Rose Wahu, 48

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and your role or occupation in the community?

R: I'm Rose. I'm 48, and I farm here.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

R: Sure. Some areas get lots of water and flood. But other parts hardly get any rain and are very dry.

I: What is your academic background? Have you had any formal or informal training on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

R: I finished secondary school. Some local groups taught us about farming that helps the land.

I: What environmental changes have you observed in recent years that you'd attribute to climate change?

R: Rains come at strange times now. Sometimes too much and it floods, sometimes too little and our crops die.

I: How have these changes influenced your daily life, especially concerning your work, health, and family responsibilities?

R: Farming is hard now. We're never sure of good harvests. When crops fail, we all eat less.

I: Do you perceive the impacts of climate change differently for women and men in your community? Could you provide some instances?

R: Yes. Women work more on the farm and at home. When crops are bad, we struggle to find food for the family.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or strategies that women in your community have devised to deal with these climate-induced challenges?

R: Some women grow different types of plants that survive the changing weather. We also share what we have.

I: Do you believe that climate change has intensified existing gender inequalities in your community?

R: It seems so. With harder farming, women have more work and worries.

I: In your view, are there societal, cultural, or economic factors in your community making women more susceptible to climate change's impacts?

R: Women don't decide much but are affected a lot. We don't own much land or money to change things.

I: Are you aware of any interventions by the Kenyan government concerning climate change? Have they proven beneficial?

R: I've heard some plans from Kenya. Some are good, but not all reach us.

I: In your perspective, do these policies and actions cater to the needs of women in your community?

R: Not all the time. More should be done to help women, specifically.

(A=Anne, I=Interviewer)

Interview 9: Anne Njeru, 51 (Interview conducted in Swahili)

I: Can you please share your name, age, and role in the community?

A: I'm Anne Njeru, 51. I'm a mother and caretaker. I fetch water daily for my family using our donkey.

I: Can you describe the climate of this region?

A: It's become unpredictable. We see both severe droughts and sudden floods, making our life challenging.

I: What is your educational background? Any training on climate change?

A: I attended a few years of primary school. Recently, an NGO taught us about water conservation and sustainable farming.

I: How has the environment changed recently?

A: Water sources are farther, and fetching it is harder. I often spend hours, especially with the long queues.

I: How do these changes impact you?

A: The journey is exhausting, and there's constant fear of running out of water. This affects our health, work, and family life.

I: Are women and men affected differently?

A: Yes. Women have the added responsibility of water fetching and household chores, increasing our workload.

I: How are women coping?

A: Many now wake up earlier or invest in larger storage containers, trying to adapt to these hardships.

I: Do you think gender inequalities have risen?

A: Definitely. The scarcity of resources has made women's roles harder. We're often at the frontline, facing these challenges head-on.

I: Any factors that make women more vulnerable?

A: Old customs mean women often have set roles and less money, making it tough for them to adjust and grow in different situations. Traveling long ways might be risky because there are dangers that could harm women. When there's just a tiny bit of money, people might skip on buying important stuff like sanitary pads so they can buy food and keep their families fed.

I: Are you aware of any government climate initiatives?

A: I've heard of a few, but they haven't directly benefited us yet. More needs to be done at the grassroots level.

I: Do these policies consider women's concerns?

A: Not adequately. While there are policies, the implementation often misses the mark, especially in understanding women's unique challenges.

I: Any local initiatives targeting women and climate change?

A: Women in our village have formed groups to share knowledge and resources. But we need more external support.

(A=Abigail, I=Interviewer) (Interview conducted in English)

Interview 10: A: Abigail Gicheha, 49

I: Thank you, for agreeing to partake in this interview. We sincerely appreciate your participation. Let's start with the demographic information. Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

A: My name is Abigail Gicheha. I am 49 years old. In our community, I am a small trader. I sell some things like fruits and vegetables. I also use a donkey to fetch water from a place that is far from our home.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

A: Our place is like many semi-arid regions in Kenya. Sometimes, we have long periods without rain. This makes the land dry and hard. It is difficult for things to grow. Other times, especially in some years, the rain comes so much that it causes floods. It is strange because in one time, everything is dry, and then suddenly, there's too much water that destroys our homes and farms.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

A: I went to school until primary level. A long time ago. Some local organizations came here and taught us about better ways to farm when rain is little, and how to keep our land from being washed away when there is too much rain.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

A: Things have become more extreme. Like I said, sometimes it is too dry for a very long time, making rivers go dry. Then suddenly, we get so much rain, causing floods. The trees and plants are not like before. Many have died because of too much heat and not enough rain.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

A: It has become harder for me, with less water, I must travel even farther with my donkey to find water for my family because this takes a lot of time and makes me very tired. My vegetables don't sell well because they don't grow well in the dry times and this means less money for my family and when there are floods, it's hard to keep our home safe.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

A: Yes, I believe so. Women like me, we have the job of fetching water and looking after the family. With less water around, our work has become much harder, the men can move around more and look for work in other places, but us women have to stay and manage the home.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

A: Some of us have started to dig small water holes close to our homes, so we don't have to go very far and others have started to plant different kinds of crops that can survive with less water as we try our best to adjust to this changing world.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

A: Absolutely, I've observed that too. As I mentioned, women already shoulder a lot at home, and the climate shifts have further intensified our tasks but unfortunately, our challenges often go unnoticed, but there's a pressing need for increased support and empathy.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

A: In our culture, women are expected to take care of the home and family and so, if there is no water or food, it is seen as our failure. This is a big pressure as many women also don't have the money or the freedom to move to better places when things get tough.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Kenyan government has implemented in response to climate change and have they been effective?

A: I don't know of any.

I: How can women play a more significant role in promoting sustainable and equitable climate action in your community?

A: Women understand the land and the needs of the family and if we are given a chance, training, and resources, we can lead in finding solutions and we just need others to believe in us and support us.

Appendix B: Interview Transcripts (Uganda)

Note: Interviews were conducted in Luganda and translations into English were directly made from the audio recordings.

(A=Agnes, I=Interviewer)

Interview 1: Agnes Nalyle, 43

I: Can you please share your name, age, and role in the community?

A: My name is Agnes Nalyle, I am 43 years old, and I have been a farmer in our community for over two decades.

I: Can you describe the climate of this region?

A: In the past, we had regular rainfall, but now, due to climate changes, we often experience unexpected floods and prolonged dry spells, heavily influenced by deforestation.

I: What is your educational background? Any training on climate change?

A: I did not have the chance to attend formal school, and no official training on climate change has been provided, but I learn from my surroundings and community.

I: How has the environment changed recently?

A: Again, the rains have spoiled many of crops by washing away our farms. This has been caused by the deforestation that has been happening in the mountains. The trees acted as a barrier when the snow melted but now that they are gone it leads to flooding and people homes being washed away.

I: How do these changes impact you?

A: The recent floods have left me devastated, as I lost my husband and now, I am left to raise our five children alone with all these problems brought on by climate change. These unpredictable seasons make farming a gamble and the reduced harvests mean

less food for my family and less produce to sell, which impacts our finances and livelihood.

I: Are women and men affected differently?

A: Yes, I think they are because women in our community typically handle the selling of goods, including fish, at local markets. When adverse weather patterns cause floods, the paths and routes to these markets often become blocked or downright unsafe. This not only hinders women from selling their goods, leading to a loss of daily income, but also restricts their ability to buy essential supplies. Additionally, these blocked routes limit our access to other vital services, such as healthcare, making women more vulnerable during such times. The economic challenges resulting from these environmental changes place an increased strain on women, who are already balancing multiple responsibilities within the family and community.

I: How are women coping?

Honestly not very well as we don't have any funds or food to eat when such events occur. The only reprieve we get is from local organizations who provide us with food and are helping us learn other forms of earning a living.

I: Are you aware of any government climate initiatives?

A: I don't know of any.

I: Any local initiatives targeting women and climate change?

A: Yes, as I mentioned there are NGO's who are empowering women impacted by climate change by teach them alternate means of livelihoods. They are taught about drought resistant crops, how to transition from work that is heavily dependent on the land to skills like soap making and producing their own sanitary pads.

(D=Dorothy, I=Interviewer)

Interview 2: Dorothy Kasujja, 51

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

D: My name is Dorothy and I am 51 years old. For many years, I've been selling vegetables and feeding families in our village.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

D: Uganda used to have two rainy seasons but now, it's hard to predict and because of this I have fewer vegetables to sell because crops fail without enough rain.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

D: Lately, due to what some attribute to climate change, I've noticed big changes in our local weather and land, with rain arriving unpredictably-sometimes too heavily and then not at all, streams and wells having less water, soil erosion making farming difficult, and frequent hotter days.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

D: The climate situation has been quite challenging for me and my business. With the seasons no longer adhering to their usual patterns, there are times when I find myself struggling. The inconsistency in rainfall patterns coupled with the heightened instances of flooding means that both the quality and quantity of the vegetables I manage to harvest and sell are adversely affected, making it harder for me to maintain steady sales.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

D: I believe climate change affects women and men differently in our community because of their traditional roles. Women, often responsible for farming and fetching water, struggle more with erratic rain and have to go further for water, while also ensuring food for the family

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

D: Women in our community, known for their resilience, have found ways to deal with climate change. They're planting different crops that can handle drought and collecting rainwater in big tanks. By forming groups, they share resources and knowledge, get better prices, and learn new skills for extra income during hard times.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

D: Without a doubt, climate change has intensified existing gender disparities, and speaking from my perspective as a woman, obtaining resources, particularly vital ones like water for crops, has grown increasingly challenging, with many women, including myself, wrestling not only with the economic repercussions of climate shifts but also its mental and emotional strain.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

D: In families with limited means, boys are often prioritized for education because there's a belief that boys will later support the family, sidelining girls' futures.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Ugandan government has implemented in response to climate change and have they been effective?

D: I'm not familiar with any but when politicians come through our area, they make promises in regards to helping us deal with climate change. However, people here now only see them as empty promises because it's been years and nothing has been done.

(P=Prescovia, I=Interviewer)

Interview 3: Prescovia Nawayauja, 39

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

P: My name is Prescovia and I am a Fishmonger. I have five children and I am the primary provider in our house.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

P: Certainly, in this region of Uganda, we experience a tropical climate with two main rainy seasons, however, due to global climate changes, we've seen unpredictable weather patterns lately, leading to sporadic rainfall and prolonged dry periods, and as for the environmental characteristics, the major lakes and rivers, including Lake Victoria, which is vital to our fishing industry, have been significantly impacted by the rising water levels, which not only affects the fish habitats and breeding patterns but also our ability to access certain fishing zones, making it increasingly challenging for fishmongers like myself to maintain a steady supply and adapt to these changing conditions.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

P: I haven't gone to school nor have I had any training in regards to climate change

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

P: Recently there was a massive flood in the area that prevented us from working and earning money. The only thing we were able to do was temporarily move our business to higher ground by creating makeshift stalls.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

P: When the water levels rose tremendously it affected us because our customers were unable to come and buy the fish and as a result, I lost many customers. I was unable to look after my family properly. I couldn't afford to pay the medical bills for my children. Now as the water is slowly going back to normal, I am trying to rebuild my business. As for my mental health I am constantly worried about what will happen to my family if another flood occurs.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

P: We do not have any coping mechanisms in place if another flood were to occur. We also do not have any support from the government

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

P: In Uganda polygamy is legal. This sometimes means that one family is neglected over the other, which is the case for me. I have to provide for my children without any support and this is hindered when we experience climate change.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Ugandan government has implemented in response to climate change and have they been effective?

P: There is no assistance from the government whatsoever. I would want the government to make a buffer zones so that the water does not overflow and flood adjacent areas during extreme weather conditions.

(J=Jane, I=Interviewer)

Interview 4: Jane Umutoni, 43

I: Thank you for joining us today, Jane. Can you begin by introducing yourself and explaining your role in the community?

J: My name is Jane Umutoni. I'm 43 years old, and while I am primarily a farmer, I've also become an activist addressing the pressing climate change issues we face, particularly in Kasese.

I: Can you shed some light on the major environmental challenges facing Kasese?

J: Certainly. Our area has been severely impacted by the silting of our rivers. This sediment buildup forces the water to change its natural course. Tragically, it's causing erosion at the base of the iconic Rwenzori. Not only is this altering the very landscape of our beloved mountain, but it's also resulting in the destruction of homes, crops, and tragically, sometimes even lives.

I: How does the situation become more complicated during the rainy season?

J: It's heartbreaking. When it rains, especially heavily, the volume of water pouring down from the mountain is overwhelming. Our already burdened rivers can't handle it, causing them to overflow. This leads to extensive flooding, which wreaks havoc on our farms and settlements as well as an increase in diseases like malaria and cholera.

I: Has the government been proactive in addressing these issues?

J: It's been a sore point for our community. While there is acknowledgment of the issue, we haven't seen comprehensive measures to desilt these rivers. This inaction exacerbates the damage with every passing rainy season.

I: As a farmer, how has this impacted your livelihood and daily life?

J: Our crops are our lifeblood, and with frequent flooding, yields are unpredictable. Some seasons, we suffer total loss. Beyond the immediate financial impact, there's an

emotional toll. Our land isn't just our source of income; it's our heritage. Watching it get washed away bit by bit is heart-wrenching.

I: Do you think the effects of these environmental changes have been different for women in your community?

J: Women play a central role in agriculture and household management here. When farms are destroyed, it is women who bear the brunt of trying to find alternative sources of food and income. We face both the immediate pressure of feeding our families and the longer-term challenges of rebuilding our livelihoods.

I: How are women in your community coping with these challenges?

J: Resilience is in our nature. Many of us are diversifying our crops, exploring other income sources, and working together in cooperatives. While we face tremendous challenges, we also support and lean on each other more than ever.

I: Lastly, what do you believe can be done to help alleviate this situation?

J: Desilting the rivers is paramount. We need a combination of government action, NGO support, and community involvement. Preventive measures, like afforestation and proper land management, can also play a role in safeguarding our environment for future generations.

(L=Lydia, I=Interviewer)

Interview 5: Lydia Namuli, 35

I: Can you please share your name, age, and role in the community?

L: My name is Lydia. I'm 35 years old, and I am a fishmonger in our community.

I: Can you describe the climate of this region?

L: We live near Lake Victoria, where historically, there were two predictable rainy seasons, but recently, this has changed; the lake is central to our livelihoods, particularly for those of us in the fish business.

I: What is your educational background? Any training on climate change?

L: I went through primary education, but did not pursue further studies. I have attended community meetings where NGOs came to speak about climate change and its effects.

I: How has the environment changed recently?

L: The most evident issue is the unpredictable weather patterns; we either grapple with heavy rains leading to floods or endure extended dry periods, and these inconsistencies in the lake's water levels impact the fish populations.

I: How has climate change affected your livelihood?

L: Being a fishmonger, my earnings hinge on the number of fish I catch; any shifts in the lake result in smaller catches and consequently, diminished income, with floods posing a significant challenge. Other times the fishing boats cannot pass through because of the blockage by the water hyacinths which affects my business. If the fishers cannot catch fish, I cannot sell anything on those days

I: Do you think gender inequalities have risen?

L: Women are expected to manage household responsibilities, but they frequently don't have ownership of vital assets like land or resources; this, combined with their economic reliance on male family members and the limited educational opportunities available to them, significantly heightens their susceptibility to the detrimental effects of climate change.

I: Any factors that make women more vulnerable?

L: Yes, I do believe that women have distinct needs, particularly concerning health and hygiene, and disruptions like floods intensify our difficulties; while men

undoubtedly encounter challenges, women grapple with unique hardships like the ones I just mentioned. Women are also expected to manage household responsibilities, but they frequently don't have ownership of vital assets like land or resources; this, combined with their economic reliance on male family members and the limited educational opportunities available to them, significantly heightens their susceptibility to the detrimental effects of climate change.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

L: No, we are struggling to cope. While some have tried to think of contingency plans, most are overwhelmed with the daily challenges and haven't had the means or knowledge to establish long-term solutions.

I: Are you aware of any government climate initiatives?

L: There have been some initiatives like tree planting campaigns and promoting sustainable fishing. But honestly, while they sound good on paper, many of us at the grassroots level haven't seen much tangible impact.

(J=Joy, I=Interviewer)

Interview 6: Joy Babirye, 48

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

J: My name is Joy. I am 48 years old, and I am a farmer and a mother of six.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

J: We live near Lake Victoria. The region has historically had two rainy seasons, and the land has been fertile, supporting our crops. The lake provides us with fish, which is an essential part of our diet and local economy.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

J: I attended primary school, but I didn't go beyond that. But I've attended some community workshops where NGOs have educated us about climate change

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

J: Sometimes the rains come late or they're too heavy, causing floods, leading to the lake's water level rising, which displaces several families, and as a result, our crop yields have reduced and fish catches are dwindling.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

J: Farming has become challenging because whereas we once could predict the seasons, now it's a gamble, leading to reduced yields that mean less food and income, and with flooding comes the threat of waterborne diseases, so as a mother, I am constantly burdened with worries about feeding my children and ensuring their health.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

J: Yes, women bear the brunt as when crops fail, it's the women who are tasked with finding alternative ways to feed their families, often walking longer distances to source water or firewood, which exposes them to various risks, and while men also confront challenges, notably in fishing, the immediate household pressures predominantly fall on women.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

J: Women have begun diversifying crops by adopting drought-resistant varieties, forming savings groups to collectively support one another during crises, and some have even ventured into alternative livelihoods such as craft-making to supplement their income.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

J: Absolutely, women, tasked with ensuring the family's well-being amidst escalating environmental challenges, find their roles growing more demanding, but paradoxically, they often lack an equivalent voice in community decisions.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

J: In our society, men typically make community decisions, while women take care of households; but because women often depend on men economically, don't own land, and have limited education, they are more vulnerable.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Ugandan government has implemented in response to climate change and have they been effective?

J: Here while tree planting campaigns and sustainable farming practices have been introduced, much more needs to be done to support the communities directly affected by these changes.

I: How can women play a more significant role in promoting sustainable and equitable climate action in your community?

J: We know our needs and challenges intimately, and with the right resources and training, women can spearhead sustainability efforts and educate the community on best practices.

(J=Juliet, I=Interviewer)

Interview 7: Juliet Nantongo, 29

I: Thank you for joining us today. Can you share your name, age, and what you do in your community?

J: I'm Juliet Nantongo and I am 29 years old. I am a farmer here in Uganda, trying my best to support my family.

I: Describe the climatic and environmental characteristics of your region.

J: Our region has been mostly fertile, with a mix of sun and rain ideal for crop growth. We used to be able to tell when it would rain, but that's not the case anymore.

I: Have you had any formal training or sessions on climate change and sustainable farming?

J: I finished secondary school and had the privilege to attend sessions by NGOs, which taught us about the impact of actions like burning trees for charcoal on climate change. They also introduced us to sustainable farming techniques.

I: Have you witnessed any significant environmental changes over the years?

J: The rain patterns are now unpredictable, sometimes there's too little, leading to droughts, and other times it's excessive, which causes flooding, leading to crop damage and our farms being washed away. It's made farming a lot more challenging.

I: How have these changes impacted your daily life and your family's well-being?

J: With inconsistent crop yields, there are times when we have to choose between affording food for our family or purchasing basic needs like sanitary products. Health concerns are also more prominent now, with changing weather affecting the spread of certain diseases like malaria and cholera.

I: From your perspective, do the impacts of climate change differ for men and women?

J: I believe they do. Men certainly have their own set of challenges, but women frequently find themselves at the crossroads of taking care of their families and dealing with the effects of environmental changes. This means that they often have to juggle their roles as caregivers, ensuring the well-being of their loved ones, while also confronting and adapting to the disruptions caused by environmental issues, such as unpredictable weather patterns, crop failures, or water shortage. This double responsibility adds a strain on the women in the community. Also, the decision between food and sanitary products, for example, is a uniquely female problem.

I: What strategies have the women in your community adopted to cope with these environmental changes?

J: Beyond sustainable farming practices, we've leaned on each other, forming groups to share resources and knowledge. Many have explored other avenues for income, like small scale businesses or crafts.

I: In light of these changes, do you see any widening of gender inequalities?

J: Climate change does seem to intensify the gender divide. As the primary caregivers, women find their roles even more critical, but our say in larger community decisions remains minimal. Women's opinions often aren't given much attention, but there's an exception for older women. People in the community listen to older women because they see them as wise from their many years of life. Another issue concerning women and girls specifically is that they are more than likely to be married off at a very young age so as to ease the burden on their families while also receiving a bride price. This means that young girls get pulled out of school and have to start taking care of their new family.

I: Are there societal factors in your community that compound women's vulnerability to climate change?

J: Women, often lacking property rights and dependent on their male counterparts, are in a tight spot. This dependency coupled with traditionally defined gender roles, makes it harder for us to adapt and mitigate impacts independently.

I: Are you aware of any government led climate action in your area? Has it been helpful?

J: The government has initiated some programs like promoting tree planting but these initiatives don't really help us with our unique needs of the community. I think the what would be helpful is if the government funded grassroots organizations since they know our specific problems.

I: Lastly, how do you think women can better drive sustainable and fair climate action in your community?

J: the most important thing would be empowerment them. When women are equipped with knowledge, tools, and resources and are informed and supported, they can lead the way in fostering a more sustainable future for themselves and others.

(V=Veronica, I=interviewer)

Interview 8: Veronica Natugonza, 35

I: Thank you for joining us today. Could you begin by introducing yourself and your role within your community?

V: My name is Veronica; I am 35 years old and I work as a fishmonger. I also look after my family with the money I earn.

I: Tell us about the environmental characteristics of your region, especially in relation to your work.

V: We live in an area with two rainy seasons, but lately, the weather has been so unpredictable. The lakes, like Lake Victoria, where we get our fish from, face

problems due to changing water levels. Another big problem is the water hyacinths. These plants grow so fast in the warm weather and stop us from catching fish. It's really hard.

I: What's your education background, Veronica? And have you ever received training about climate change?

V: I started secondary school but didn't finish. I haven't had any special training about climate change.

I: Can you tell us about any recent changes you've noticed in your environment due to climate change?

V: Apart from the unpredictable weather and the rising water levels, the water hyacinths are a big problem. They grow much more in warmer temperatures, and it becomes hard to fish. Once, there was a big flood that stopped our work. We tried to move our stalls to higher places to keep selling.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life and your family?

V: The flooding and water hyacinths make it hard to sell fish. When I don't sell, I don't earn. I've lost customers and sometimes couldn't afford things for my children, like their medical bills. Also, because many of the people living in this area drink directly from the lake there is an increase in cholera in the area. Every time it rains, I worry for my family as it could mean that I will not be able to earn money because of the floods.

I: How are you and the other women coping with these problems?

V: Some women and I have started a saving circle. When times are good, we save some money. Then, when there are problems like floods, we use that saved money to help our families. It's our way to be ready.

I: Do you think some things make women, especially in your community, more affected by climate change?

V: In our country, some men have more than one wife. Sometimes, like in my case, one family gets less help. I have to do everything for my children. So, when things go bad, like with climate change, it's very hard for us.

I: Have you seen any help or plans from the government about climate change?

V: They talked about building a market for us, but I think that was just talk for votes. They say there are plans to help with climate change, but I haven't seen any help yet. It would be good if they can keep the water from overflowing when it rains a lot.

(L=Lilian, I=Interviewer)

Interview 9: Lilian Tumusume, 31

I: Can you please tell me your name, age, and occupation or role in your community?

L: Hello. I'm Lilian Tumusume, 31 years old, and I've been a farmer here for most of my life. I'm also a mother and responsible for my family's well-being.

I: Can you also tell me about the specific climate and environmental characteristics of this region?

L: We're situated in a region that traditionally has had predictable rainy seasons. Before we knew when to expect rain so that we prepare our crops. But lately, the patterns have been irregular, which makes farming a challenge.

I: What is your academic background? Have you received any sort of training on topics surrounding climate change and environmental matters?

L: I attended up to secondary school. Recently, I participated in a few community workshops where NGOs educated us about climate change and sustainable farming techniques.

I: What changes have you observed in the environment in recent years that can be attributed to climate change?

L: The onset of the rainy season has become unpredictable. We've experienced more flooding, and dry spells are longer than they used to be. It's been a challenge to know when to plant our crops.

I: How have these changes affected your daily life, in terms of your work, health, and family responsibilities?

L: Farming, our primary source of livelihood, has become a gamble. Crop failures mean lesser food and income. Health issues arise, especially during floods which increase the risk of waterborne diseases. As a mother, ensuring my family's well-being amidst these challenges is taxing.

I: Do you believe that the effects of climate change have been different for women and men in your community and can you provide some examples?

L: Yes, especially for women who have to both care for the family as well as contributing to the household income. For instance, when crops fail, women often travel longer distances in search of water or firewood, risking their safety.

I: Are there any coping mechanisms or practices that women in your community have adopted to deal with the impacts of climate change?

L: Women have begun forming groups to share knowledge on drought-resistant crops. We've also started savings groups to pool resources and help each other during times of scarcity.

I: Do you think climate change has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in your community?

L: Absolutely, as our environment changes, women are shouldering more responsibilities, yet our voice in community decisions remains limited. The pressure has increased, but our say in the matter hasn't.

I: In your opinion, are there any social, cultural, or economic factors in your community that make women more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?

L: Culturally, women are primary caregivers, which makes them more susceptible to the effects of climate change. Economically, many women lack land ownership rights, limiting their choices and making them more vulnerable.

I: Do you know of any initiatives the Ugandan government has implemented in response to climate change and have they been effective?

L: There have been some tree-planting campaigns and a push towards sustainable farming, but on the ground, the support is often insufficient. More needs to be done to genuinely make a difference.

I: How can women play a more significant role in promoting sustainable and equitable climate action in your community?

L: By being empowered through education and resources. Women understand the unique challenges we face. With proper training and a platform to share, we can lead the way in sustainable practices and community building.

(M=Mary, I=Interviewer)

Interview 10: Mary Namale, 37

I: Can you please introduce yourself and tell me your role in this community?

M: My name is Mary Namale, a 37-year-old dedicated fisherwoman who has been religiously casting her nets into the expansive Lake Victoria for what feels like a lifetime. This endeavor is not just a mere occupation for me; it's a lifeline. With seven children whose daily sustenance, education, and overall wellbeing are intrinsically tied to the number of fish I manage to sell each day, the responsibility weighs heavily on my shoulders, making the waters of Lake Victoria a source of livelihood for my family.

I: Can you describe how the weather and the environment around Lake Victoria are usually?

M: Traditionally, the climate around Lake Victoria has always been a rhythmic balance of wet periods, characterized by generous rainfall, and dry spells where rain is rare. However, of late, this once-predictable rhythm seems to be faltering, throwing us off with unexpected downpours during what should be dry periods and glaring suns when we're yearning for rain. Similar to these atmospheric shifts, Lake Victoria too has been exhibiting erratic behavior; there are days when its waters rise alarmingly, and then there are days when it retreats.

I: Did you go to school to learn about these weather changes or how to handle them?

M: My formal education journey was brief, and certainly didn't delve into the intricacies of climate patterns. However, the invaluable lessons I've garnered come from my daily communion with the lake speaks volumes about the evolving environment, and being entrenched in this setting for years has given me an intuitive understanding of the shifts that are happening.

I: What things have you seen change around here that you think are because of the changing weather?

M: The aquatic life, particularly the fish population, seems to be what most affected by climate change. There are distressing days when the yield is dishearteningly low, a stark contrast to the past where our catch would be large and the fish would be big. Also, there were alarming instances when the aggressive waters of the lake defied boundaries, inundating our workspaces and even our homes, such events didn't occur in the past of our community.

I: How has all of this affected your daily life and your family?

M: The consequences are severe, leading to difficult days with little income that affects my children's necessities, increased illnesses due to lake's unpredictability, especially when it turned our homes into watery graves and constant worry about the future. Water hyacinths prevent fish from being caught and their growth is perpetuated by climate change as this plant thrives in warmer temperatures making them more invasive and fishing difficult.

I: Have the women in your community found ways to deal with these problems?

M: In the face of adversity, the women of my community, resilient and resourceful, rally together, pooling in collective wisdom to seek alternate fishing zones or strategically relocating our selling hubs in anticipation of the lake's behavior.