



Theme: Indigenous Innovation and Leadership – Gender, Risk and Resilience

Title: Climate Change Adaptation and Gender Inequality in the Lake Chad Region

Paper #: 534

By: Maereg Adhanom (Ph.D.)

October 14, 2025

8:15 – 8:30 New Zealand Time

Introduction – The Lake Chad Area

- The Sahel region is among the **most affected areas by Climate Change**
- The catchment area is very big – over 40 million people; growing demands (population pressure, resource scarcity (water/degradation))
- Source of livelihood for over 3 million people (**farming, fishery, livestock and small businesses, employment**)
- Impacts of climate change- **rainfall variability, drought/flooding, variable water levels**
- **Cultural/religious** factors (especially for women, and other minorities) – access to resources & agency (decision making)
- **Aggravating factors**
 - **Conflict** (resource scarcity & extremism)

Objectives of the study

- Review **progress made in climate adaptation programs** (technical team, experts, stakeholders)
- Find out how **current climate adaptation programs fare** in terms of the **intensity of climate-related challenges**
 - **Economic performance** (agriculture, livestock, small businesses, employment)
 - Impacts seen through agender lens
 - Understanding on climate change and adaptation
 - Gap between rate of climate change impacts and communities capacity to catch up
 - Impact along gender lines
- Suggest recommendations

Methodology

The study combined:

- i. **Qualitative methods** (focus group discussions (FGDs); key informant interviews (KIIs))
- ii. **Quantitative methods** (HH interview using structured questionnaire) – 209HHs
- iii. **Secondary data analysis** (existing gender inequalities in relation to access to natural resources, land, education and current legislative and political frameworks)
 - Women and social affairs offices
 - Women's organizations
 - Sector Bureaus
 - From planning office

Findings

No	Impacts	% (HH)
1	Change in rhythms of seasons	24%
2	flooding	91%
3	drought	56%
4	Decrease in livestock yields	37%
5	Deforestation	23%
6	Decreased access to water	12%

No	Impact on communities	
1	Overall revenue decrease	87%
2	Decrease in production	65%
3	Decrease in meals/day	78%
4	Decrease in access to health services	59%
5	Impact on school	
	School dropouts (G/B)	22/24%
	Drop out due to early marriage	18%

Final points: Impacts of climate change on women

The overall impact of climate change on women manifests in the form of:

- Food and water insecurity (unreliability)
- Increased workload (increases during economic difficulties)
- Loss of education (widening economic gap)
- Displacement (further exposure to poverty and insecurity)
- Health issues (limits women/girls' capacity to engage in economic endeavors)
- Increased levels of GBSV (worsens with resource scarcity)

Reason:

- Women/Girls highly depend on natural resources
- Have limited access to land
- Exclusion from decision-making (resources and assets)

Significance of the Work for Policy & Practice

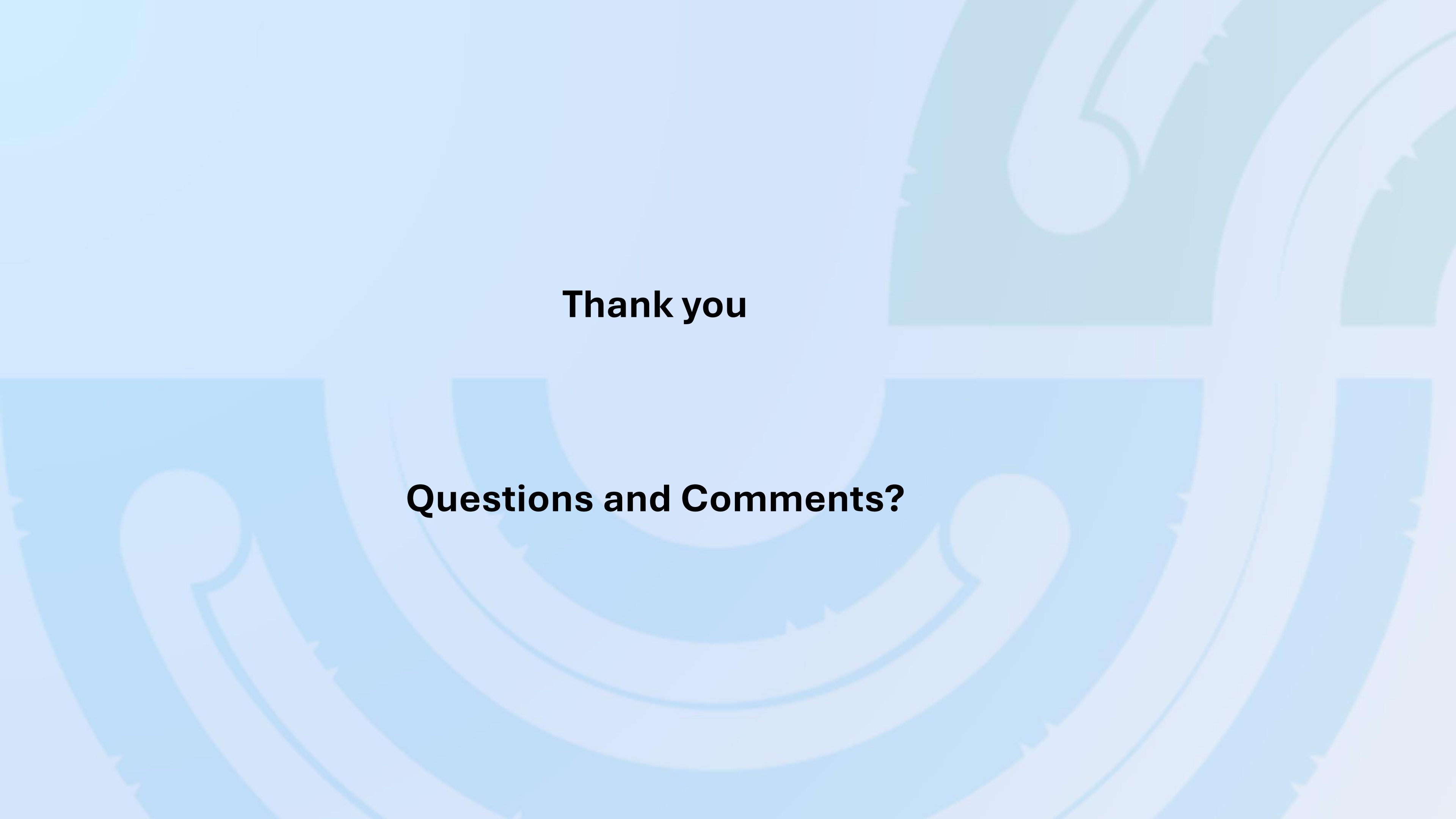
1. **Policy support to deal with traditions/cultures:** In the Lake Chad region, preexisting sociocultural conditions (patriarchal norms) and government institutions' lack of adequate policy frameworks and capacity expose women and girls to inequality and discrimination.
2. Preventing and/or quickly ending conflicts should be part of disaster risk reduction and gender equality agendas
3. **Transformative adaptation programs:** the results urge governments, policy makers, and donors to invest in approaches that transform lives:
 - Employ innovative approaches (doing the same things will not help) – solar-powered small irrigation schemes
 - Integrate appropriate technology (relatively educated youth)
 - Targeted climate adaptation solutions that address systemic gender inequities, promote youth employment (approaches should involve women & girls).

6. Significance of the work for policy and practice ... continued

4. **Integrate basic service provision:** interventions must provide comprehensive health services, prevent SGBV, and eliminate harmful practices like early and forced child marriage.
5. **Seize demographics as opportunities to transform:** The demography of the region is made up of a majority of youth (up to 25 years), and any intervention needs to take these dynamics into consideration:
 - Attractive to the youth educational and technological capacity
 - Innovative/transformative

6 Significance of the work for policy and practice ... continued

6. **Inclusiveness:** The establishment of **collaborative frameworks** for discussing, raising awareness, informing, educating and communicating on the impact of climate change on gender-based violence (GBV), education and child marriage with a view to obtaining buy-in from all stakeholders, including women and girls and vulnerable groups, to take part in actions to combat this scourge.
7. **Synergy:** reinforcing synergy and complementarity between the various parties, in particular institutional structures, CSOs, women's rights associations and influential community leaders involved in defending women's rights.



Thank you

Questions and Comments?