



Mind the gap: An analysis of the gender differentials in capabilities and responses to climate shocks in Ecuador

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The research is oriented towards identifying the influence of gender institutions on the ability of households to cope with climate shocks in rural communities of Ecuador. Gender system influences the adaptation choices within the household through material and non-material means, or capabilities, and therefore it shapes its ability to cope with extreme weather events. In other words, the mechanisms through which households confront climate shocks, using their available livelihoods assets and sets of knowledges, are expressed in the choices between different categories of adaptation strategies. The use of the capabilities approach in this model is based on Amartya Sen's assertion about how social equality and inequality questions are best raised in the space of capabilities. Livelihood assets limit or facilitate the resources that allows for recovery after shocks, or a better preparation that will diminish the damage level, while consideration of men and women's lived experiences affect strategies choices based on their different sets of knowledge and perceptions of what strategies are more effective. The influence of gender system occurs by means of the structure of men and women relationships, and the norms and rules that define that relationship. For instance, marital and inheritance regimes, posed by formal and informal regulations, affect men and women's access to materialistic resources required to cope with climate disasters and maintain their livelihoods, such as land or credit. In the same way, it can influence non-materialistic capabilities through the different ways men and women's experience past climate events, being in different positions of power and vulnerability to discrimination. Four rural resource-based localities will be selected, and the study will be focused n the adaptation practices used to confront a specific climatic shock during the past 5 years.

Examining responses to past climate shocks -that may or may not be directly related to climate change- can help formulating policy recommendations to reduce the limitations related to gender and to contribute to pro-equity climate change adaptation processes in the future. Mariela Ramirez is a master student at the Sustainable Development program at Utrecht University, awarded with a scholarship by the Chilean government to study in the Netherlands. She graduated as Agro-Resources Engineer, with a Diploma in Public Policies, from the Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile. Project coordinator of different initiatives related to production development with small farmers, in local NGO's in Chile– Poverty Alleviation Foundation and Norte Grande Corporation- and the Universidad Austral de Chile. She worked at Rimisp - Latin American Centre for Rural Development, where she worked as a researcher and led a project on Area Based Development and Climate Change Adaptation in Mexico. She was also member of the coordination unit of the Rural Territorial Dynamics Program, where she coordinated the postgraduate training component.

Remesas Sociales, Relaciones de Género y Empoderamiento de la Mujer

El caso de la comunidad transnacional boliviana/ Social Remittances, Gender Relations and Women's Empowerment. The case of the Bolivian transnational community

By María José Oomen Liebers y Sarah Kunz

La presente investigación tiene como objetivo explorar el intercambio de 'remesas sociales' entre la comunidad transnacional boliviana situada tanto en Bolivia como en España. Específicamente se enfoca en la transferencia de ideas y valores que tienen el potencial de cuestionar patrones normativos que estructuran las relaciones de género patriarcales que subordinan a la mujer. El estudio conceptualiza a la comunidad transnacional boliviana como un espacio situado en el imaginario de los bolivianos y bolivianas irrelevante de su posición física y temporal. Esta conceptualización tiene por objetivo incluir dentro de la problemática migratoria a aquéllos que han

dejado su lugar de origen en busca de nuevas oportunidades, tanto como los que han permanecido en Bolivia; específicamente los parientes y amigos cercanos de los que se fueron, bajo la premisa que la migración, el cambio de vida y locación física y temporal tienen el potencial de transformar la vida de estas personas. El término de 'remesas sociales' fue conceptualizado por Peggy Levitt (1998), con el objetivo de capturar el intercambio de aspectos sociales y culturales que conlleva la migración. A pesar de que la palabra 'remesa' no especifica la dirección de las transferencias entre migrantes y no migrantes, los discursos dominantes y el uso del término en el estudio de transferencias económicas ha hecho que adquiriera una connotación unidireccional, particularmente de migrantes a no-migrantes. Sin embargo, el término en sí no especifica una unidireccionalidad, y este estudio pretende alejarse de nociones que manifiestan la transferencia de remesas sociales como un proceso civilizador por parte de los migrantes hacia sus parientes y amigos en el lugar de origen. El estudio contesta la supuesta unidireccionalidad de las remesas sociales proponiendo que éstas son multidireccionales y producto de un diálogo que incorpora a migrantes tanto como no-migrantes.

This research aims to explore the exchange of social remittances among the Bolivian transnational community situated in both Bolivia and Spain. Specifically, it focuses on the transfer of ideas and values which have the potential of contesting gender norms that subordinate women. The study conceptualizes the Bolivian transnational community as an imagined community for all Bolivians irrespective of their physical location. This fluid conceptualization includes both migrants as well as non-migrants into the migration experience under the premise that migration, the change of location and lifestyle, has an impact on the lives of those who leave as well as of those who stay behind. The term social remittance was coined by Peggy Levitt (1998), with the aim of capturing the 'soft' side of migration, i.e. the socio-cultural transfers among migrants and non-migrants. The term 'remittance' in itself does not specify the directionality of the transfers, however as a result of its use in studies focused on the transfer of economic remittances, it has attained a unidirectional connotation, as transfers from migrants towards non-migrants. This study steps away from dominant notions which manifest the transfers of social remittances as a civilizing process on behalf of migrants towards their relatives and friends in the place of origin. This study therefore contests the supposed unidirectionality of social remittances and conceptualizes these as multi-directional transfers and the outcome of a complex dialogue among migrants and non-migrants.



Sara Koenders
The impact of favela 'pacification' on local relations, violence, and insecurity in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
By Sara Koenders

With the world descending on Rio de Janeiro for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, the urgency to address the high levels of violence, crime and insecurity is broadly acknowledged. In an effort to regain control over the favela communities controlled by illegal armed actors, the authorities have, at the end of 2008, started a process of 'pacification' through the installation of Pacifying Police Units. The purpose of this research project is to understand how residents and grassroots organizations perceive and respond to changing conditions of violence, insecurity and control brought about by favela pacification. More specifically, it will identify how social and political relations within communities and between communities and external actors are being articulated. Exploring these issues will critically contribute to our understanding of processes of urban violence, the changing role of the state and public security strategies, and the challenges of establishing citizen security in these areas. The project involves ethnographic field research in two different favela communities.

Sara Koenders is a cultural anthropologist with an M.A. in conflict studies and human rights from Utrecht University. This research project builds upon her over five years of experience with research

on urban violence and security in Brazil and is part of her dissertation research as an external PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam.