Coupling Women Empowerment and Climate Adaptation through Fruit Tree Intercropping

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SUMMARY

Though climate change is a global challenge, the adaptation needs of women at the local level hold potential for coupling responses with poverty reduction (SDG 1), food security (SDG2), gender equality (SDG5), decent work and economic empowerment (SDG 8). This paper builds on a spatial ethnography of 4,500 women engaged in fruit-tree intercropping in Nwoya District Northwestern Uganda, to argue that the intersectionalities across the SDGs are non-linear and the differences across the coupling of goals needs adquate consideration of local contexts to avoid spurious associations. The paper demonstrates that fruit-tree inter-cropping is often considered an agroforestry system that provides sustainable alternatives to forest-dependent local communities in south, but could condition a set of interlinkages between women empowerment and adaptation to climate change, particularly when women farmers and outgrowers schemes animate their positionality from the view of capabilities and not necessarily vulnerable beneficiaries in the operations of aggregators and impact investors. The paper concludes with a call for context-sensitive prioritization and measurement of the centrality of SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 13 on climate change in accelerating progress across SDGs.