

Exploring pathways for gender-responsive climate services in Rwanda

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Introduction

A recent study suggests that women are significantly less aware of climate information than men in all provinces of Rwanda (Coulibaly *et al.*, 2017). This gap may be associated with ownership of communication assets and participation in social groups as means of communication of the information where women are far behind men (Coulibaly *et al.*, 2017).

In Rwandan agriculture, women represent the highest proportion (90.8% by NISR, 2013), therefore increasing access and uptake of climate information among women will improve their planning and farm management decisions.



Site

Rwanda climate services for Agriculture Project that has the objectives of increasing farmers' resilience to climate risks was piloted in the first year in four districts namely Kayonza (Eastern Rwanda), Nyanza (Southern Rwanda), Burera (Northern Rwanda) and Ngororero (Western Rwanda) districts (Figure 1).

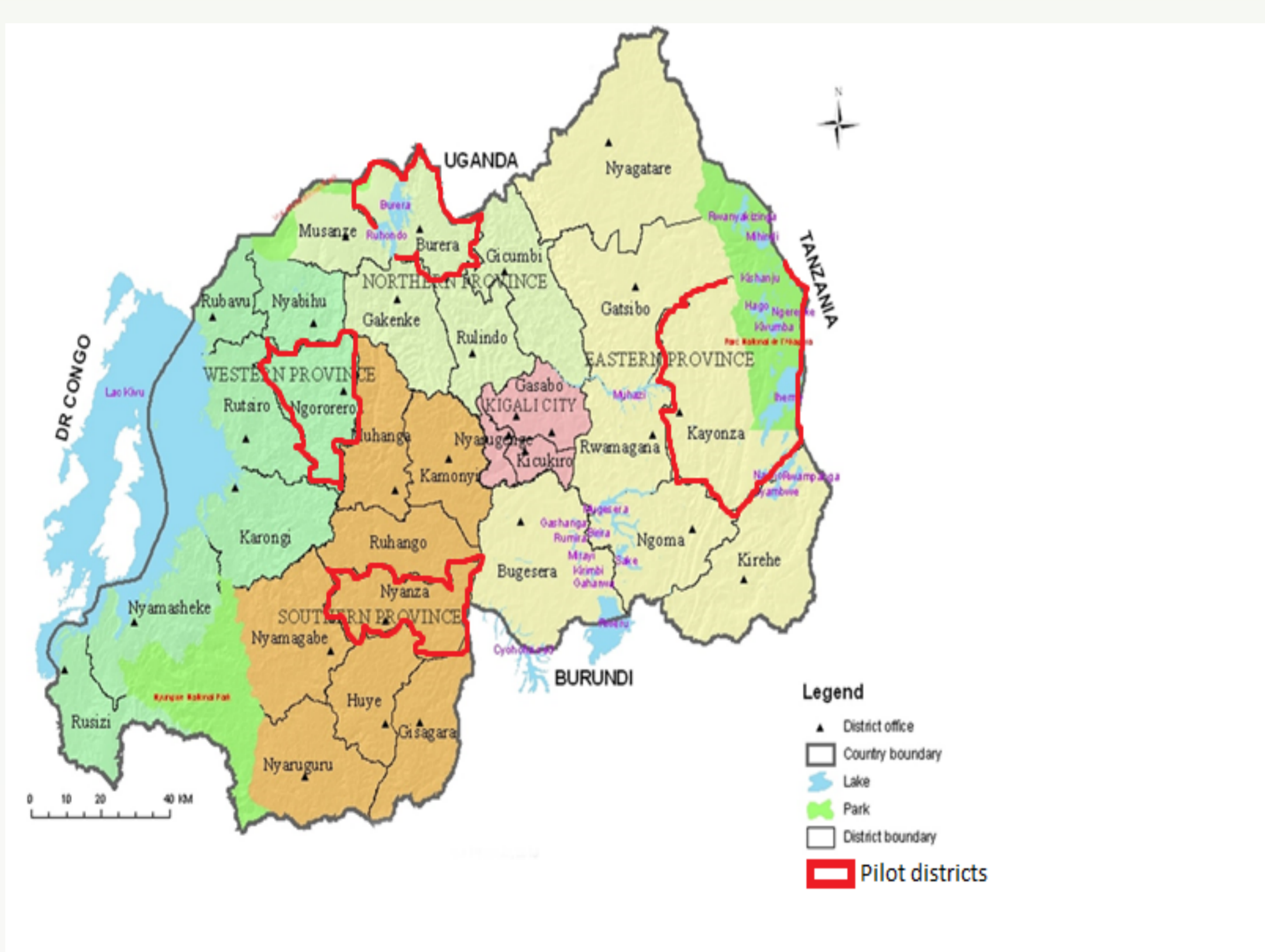


Figure 1: Map of Rwanda showing districts where PICSA was piloted.

Objectives

The main objective is to assess how the access and use of climate services information impact women farmers' decisions

Methods

Climate services information is disseminated to farmers through several communication channels including face to face trainings, media-based and ICT tools among others.

Face to face trainings are conducted using a Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA) approach. PICSA has been integrated with a national agriculture extension model known as *Twigire Muhinzi* in the national language. PICSA involves training that is cascaded through series of workshops. This process started with a training of experts senior staff from key government institutions and NGOs. These experts trained farmer promoters who in turn trained their fellow farmers in their *Twigire Muhinzi* groups. During each training of farmers, at least 30% are women.

A tool has been developed to capture access, use and changes from people who were trained.

A quantitative survey was undertaken with 214 trained farmers randomly selected among 2,559 trained farmers across the four districts. The survey was carried out in March 2017 using Open Data Kit5 software.



Photo 1: Farmers in Kayonza, Eastern Rwanda, discussing the seasonal forecast in probability of exceedance format

Photo 1 shows farmers discussing seasonal forecasts for agriculture, e.g. chance of sufficient rain (%) with full probability distribution, hence probability of any decision – relevant threshold. This can help inform more targeted agricultural and livelihood decisions.

Results

- In the four pilot districts, 2,559 farmers have been trained face to face with 43% women.
- From the survey, the vast majority (93%) of respondents made changes in their crops, livestock, or livelihood enterprises (Table 1) (Clarkson *et al.*, 2017).

Results continued

Among interviewed women, 91% mentioned that they made changes in their crops, livestock or livelihood activities as a result of the trainings received.

Table 1: Women made changes as a result of PICSA training

	Made changes	No changes
All (n=214)	93%	7%
Female (n=119)	91%	9%
Male (n=95)	97%	3%

- The initial evaluation suggests that women are very enthusiastic about the information received and are active participants. An average of 95% women use the information in their planning and decision-making.

Impacts

- Increased yields, increased income--- increased food security (more feed for the family)
- Help pay for school fees, pay for medical insurance (*Mutuel de Sante*), and also to invest in farming (by buying or renting land for further cultivation), and buying livestock (cattle, goats, pigs, etc.)
- Changes in farmers' lives

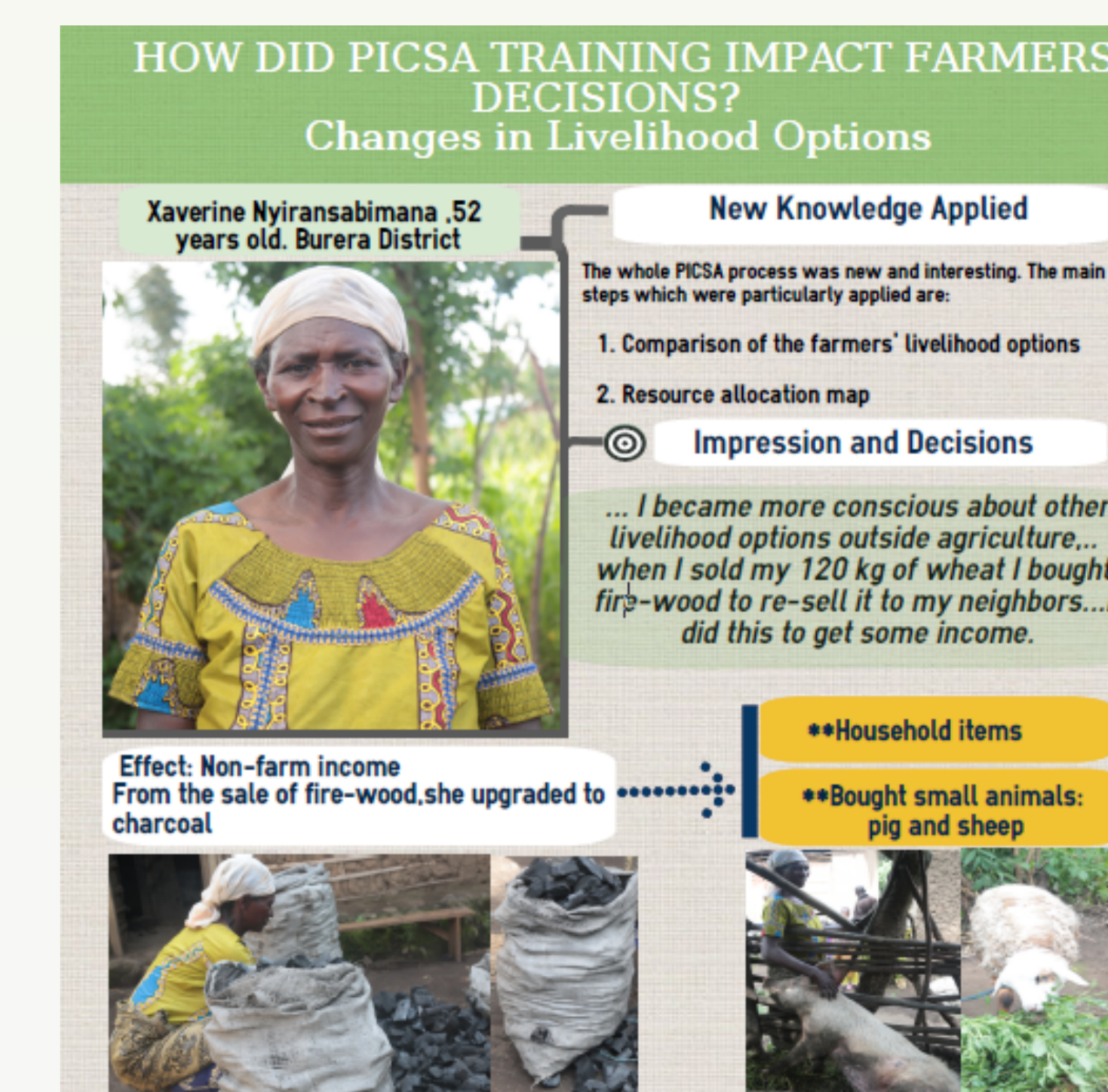


Photo 2: A farmer from Burera District, Northern Rwanda, explains how PICSA training impacted her household's decisions

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