CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AS A PROJECT OF GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF SEA DEFENSE SYSTEMS IN THE KETA MUNICIPALITY OF THE VOLTA DELTA, GHANA

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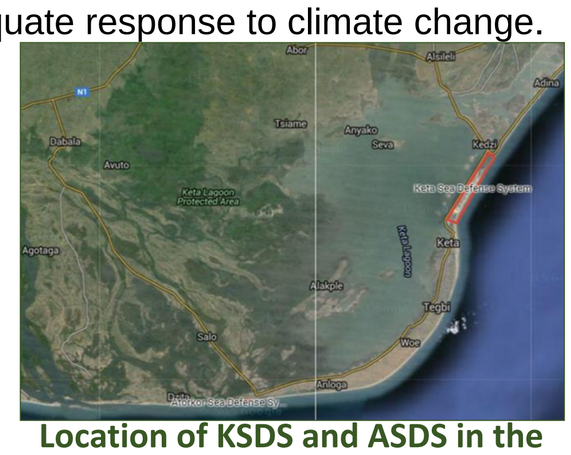
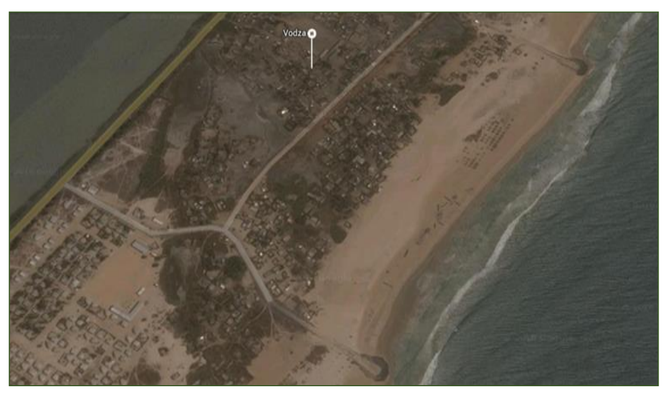
INTRODUCTION

This research views sea defense systems as an adaptation to climate change as a project of governance - that is an expression of the interests, desires, and aspirations of various stakeholders to climate change adaptation projects at different administrative or political levels of society. Sea defense systems are often a combination of coastal infrastructure and technology constructed along a receding shoreline to combat erosion. The Volta Delta of Ghana currently possesses three such systems with the dominant technology being groins-rocks that are piled perpendicular to the shoreline at regular intervals in order to facilitate the reclamation of sand between the rocks by wave action. Two of these three systems in the delta have been constructed within the Keta Municipality. These two systems are commonly referred to as the Keta Sea Defense System (KSDS) and Atorkor Sea Defense System (ASDS). This research asks what the perceptions are of community residents, municipal government officials and national government officials on the KSDS and ASDS. The purpose of such an analysis is to assess the acceptability of adaptation projects and to identify strategies for creating a shared sense of an adequate response to climate change.

Keta Municipality outlined in red



Location of KSDS and ASDS in the Keta Municipality

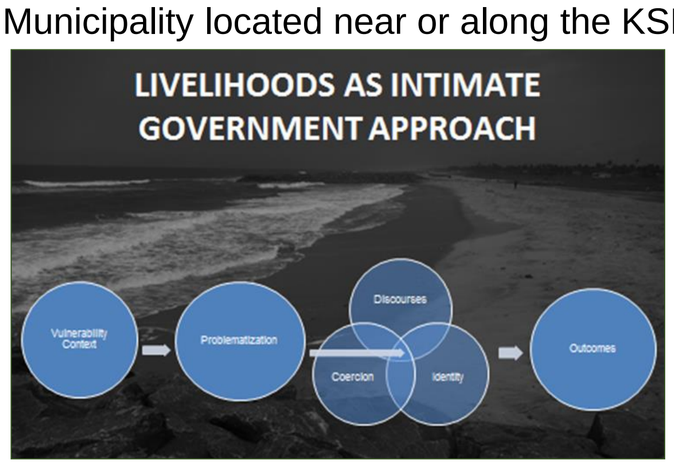


Aerial view of KSDS

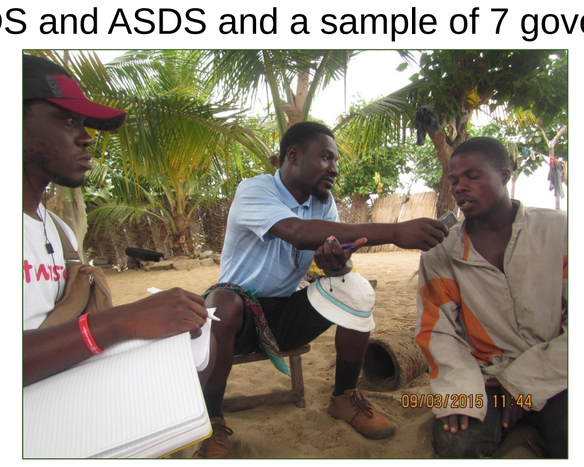
Aerial view of ASDS

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This study was conducted using both a data collection methodology and interpretive framework known as the Livelihoods as Intimate Government (LIG) approach. The LIG approach seeks to understand decision-making in light of competing goals and interests. Therefore the phases of LIG approach: the identification of the Vulnerability Context, followed by the Problematization as a point of entry for Strategy Formation (Discourses, Coercion, Mobilization of Identity), and ultimately ending in an analysis of Outcomes; is indeed a useful framework for a broad scale analysis of sea defense systems intended to adapt to climate change as a project of governance. The methods that operationalized the LIG approach involve literature reviews and content analysis of relevant information sources, semi-structured interviews and focus groups, and site and participant observations. The information presented in this poster is from a sample of 52 residents (48 % who are male and 52% who are female) in communities of the Keta Municipality located near or along the KSDS and ASDS and a sample of 7 government officials (5 municipal level and 2 national level).



Phases of LIG approach

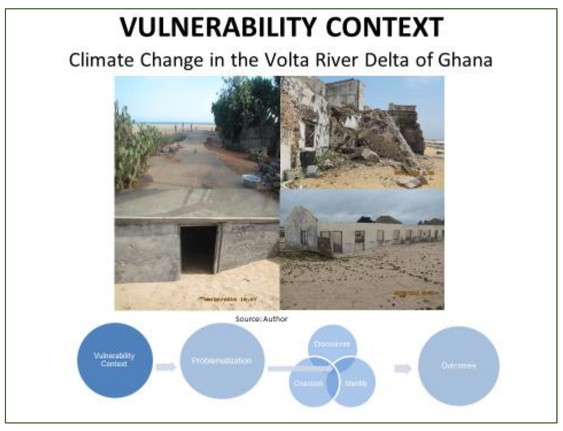


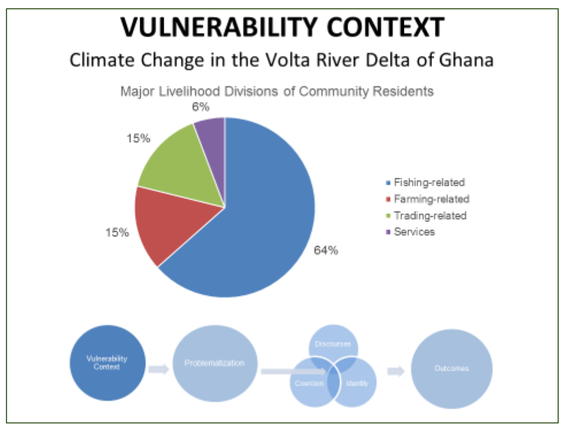
Interviewing a Community Resident

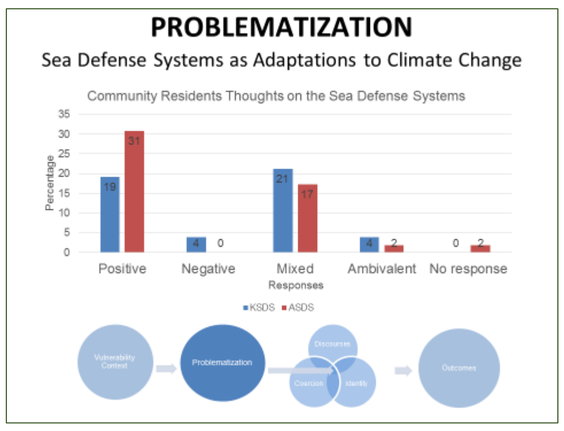
Sorting and Sale of Fish near KSDS

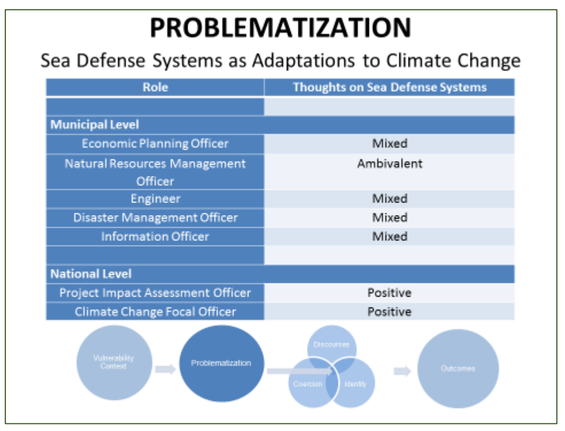
Inspection of Base of ASDS Groin

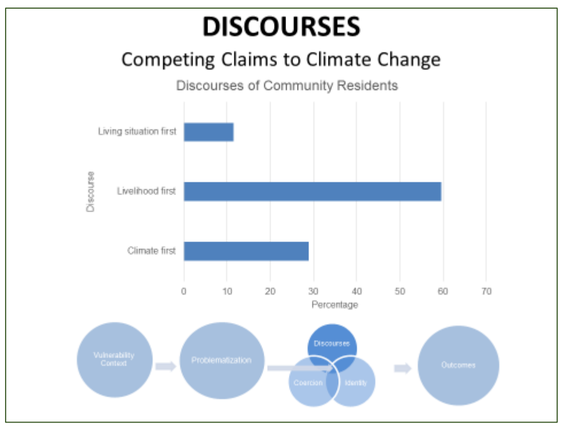
FINDINGS

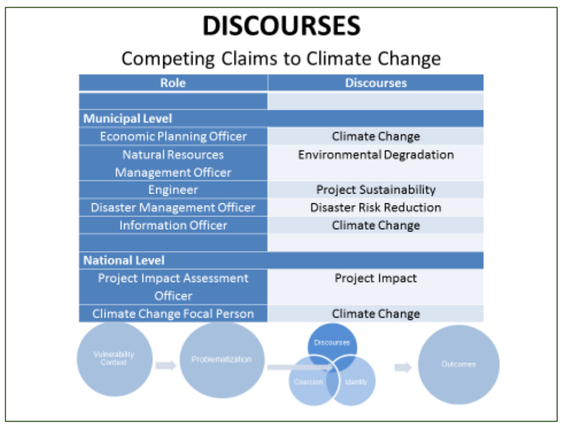


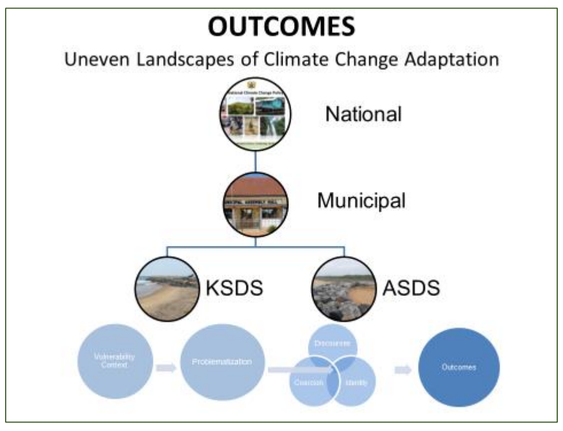












CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates how the LIG approach can be used in a step-wise manner to assess the perceptions (and some of the reasons for these perceptions) of different stakeholders on climate change adaptation projects. The projects of sea defense systems demonstrate how in the Keta Municipality of the Volta Delta, both community residents and municipal officials are not uniform in their views on the benefit of sea defense systems while at the national level, the view of government officials are altogether positive. Further research is needed into the phases of LIG such as identity (e.g. the possible gendered, age and livelihood influences of community resident views) and coercion (in this case the resettlement program) to better understand the reasons for these varying views. Such an understanding will help identify strategies needed to help facilitate a more unified acceptance of both climate-related needs and the projects designed and implemented to deal with these needs.

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