

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in West African Semi-Arid Lands Facing Climate Change

Authors : Mamadou Diop, Florence Crick, Momadou Sow, Kate Elizabeth Gannon

Abstract : Understanding SME leaders' responses to climate is essential to cope with ongoing changes in temperature and rainfall. This study analyzes the response of SME leaders to the adverse effects of climate change in semi-arid lands (SAL) in Senegal. Based on surveys administrated to 161 SME leaders, this research shows that 91% of economic units are affected by climatic conditions, although 70% do not have a plan to deal with climate risks. Economic actors have striven to take measures to adapt. However, their efforts are limited by various obstacles accentuated by a lack of support from public authorities. In doing so, substantial political, institutional and financial efforts at national and local levels are needed to promote an enabling environment for economic actors to adapt. This will focus on information and training about the threats and opportunities related to global warming, the creation of an adaptation support fund to support local initiatives and the improvement of the institutional, regulatory and political framework.

Keywords : small and medium-sized enterprises, climate change, adaptation, semi-arid lands

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