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Women's Land Rights as a Pathway to Food Security in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Context and background

In common with other African countries, colonization had an important impact on land relations in Uganda. Land is an important asset for people's livelihoods and for economic development in Uganda, where the majority of people live in rural areas. Uganda's land reform was introduced with the 1998 Land Act, which aims at enhancing tenure security by recognising existing rights to land. Furthermore, the evidence of any links between the formalisation of land rights, investment and productivity under different tenure systems is inconclusive. Recent studies have affirmed the importance of women's asset ownership, including land, housing, and other assets, for economic development and social security. Despite a gender-sensitive legal framework, women have been discriminated against in both the customary and statutory settings. Improving women's access to land is important to achieving food security in Uganda.

Goal and Objectives:

The major objective is to improve agricultural production of small-scale farmers through increased access, control and ownership of land as a productive resource in farming communities. Other specific objectives include to promote a more systematic and practical approach that CSOs, small scale farmers and other relevant stakeholders can use in addressing land rights among communities; to engage with and gain obligation of stakeholders, policymakers and small scale farmers to develop win-win strategies which reinforce the positive changes among vulnerable groups and enable them to address land right issues in their communities.

Methodology:

Informed by already existing quantitative and qualitative research conducted in the study areas, two main methodological innovations were applied. The development of this paper involved conducting a literature review on the available information on food security and land rights in Uganda. Key informant interviews were conducted in Amuria and Adjumani districts.

Results:

Emergence of men champions on land in communities

Women have developed negotiating capacity, which they have applied in different areas of their lives.

Increased collaboration among different stakeholders

Increased awareness on land issues among small scale farmers, especially women

Increased platforms for women's engagement in policy issues

Keywords

Gender Action Learning (GALS), Land, Land Rights, Food Security,

1. INTRODUCTION

Land is an important asset for people's livelihoods and for economic development in Uganda, where the majority of people live in rural areas. Secure land rights for women small-scale farmers is recognized as critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and greatly contribute to eradicating poverty, ending hunger and achieving gender equality. In Uganda, women make up to 84 percent of the small-scale farming population and provide the most labour on farms, yet they have control of less than 10 percent of the agricultural farmland. Land is the most important asset that supports agriculture; land is also regarded as a source of political power, cultural identity. Studies have shown that women with secure land rights tend to produce adequate food and also engage in growing crops that take long in the soil; this is because they have decision making powers on the land. In Uganda, despite the presence of laws that protect everyone's rights, the land rights of women have continued to be trampled upon by the various cultural norms and religious beliefs which are prohibitive to women's access, control and use of land. Many small scale farmers lack knowledge on the existing laws and policies on land rights and land use management making them very vulnerable to abuse of their rights like land grabbing and conflicts both at the household and community level.

2. LAND SYSTEMS AND WOMEN LAND RIGHTS IN UGANDA

1. Land in Uganda

Uganda has an area of 241,550.7 square kilometres (sq. Kms), of which 18.2% is open water and swamps, and 81.8% is land. The altitude above sea level ranges from 620 metres (Albert Nile) to 5,111 metres (Mt. Rwenzori peak). A total of 42% of the available land is arable land, although only 21% is currently utilised, mostly in the country's southern parts. Land is fairly evenly distributed throughout the country, with the average landholding being about 1.6 to 2.8 hectares in the south and 3.2 hectares in the north.

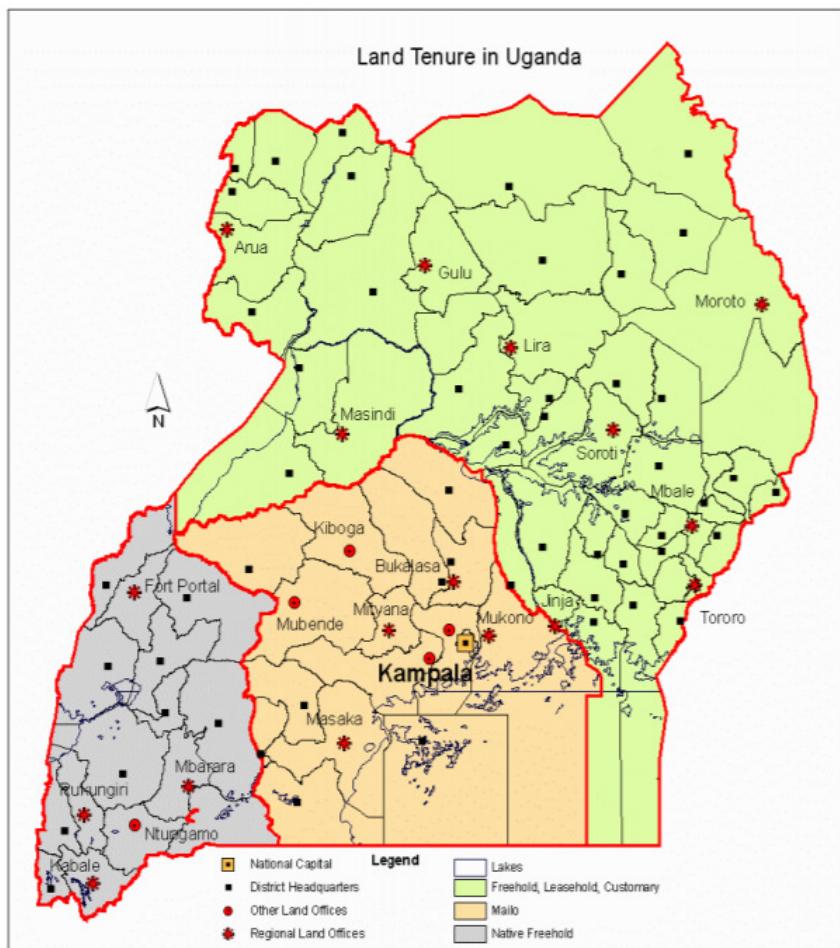
Land is a fundamentally important resource in Uganda and is the basis of income, sustenance, and identity for the majority of Ugandans. Agriculture dominates the country's economy and accounts for an estimated 80% of employment nationwide. Uganda's GDP is generated mainly by the exploitation of natural resources, and the whole agricultural sector (cash and food crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry) is based on using or harvesting the natural resources, especially land. Approximately 87% of Uganda's estimated 35 million people reside in rural areas, 85% of whom are involved in subsistence agriculture. Nationwide, 90% of all rural women work in agriculture, and women produce an estimated 80% of food crops and contribute 90% of all labor for food production.

2. Land ownership and gender

Land in Uganda belongs to the citizens and is vested in them in accordance with the 1995 Constitution (Article 273) and the Land Act 1998 Cap. 2004. Land tenure is the mode of holding rights in land and specifies how property rights to land are allocated. Land tenure systems differ across Uganda, and tenure practices are a mixture of traditional practice, colonial regulations and post-colonial legislation. These rules define how access is granted to rights of use, control and transfer land, as well as associated responsibilities and obligations. There are four different types of Land Tenure Systems in Uganda that is Customary, Freehold, Mailo, and Leasehold. Uganda's land management is dominated by customary and mailo land tenure systems, which do not confer freehold rights and engender fragmentation of holdings as a result of inheritance. The Central and parts of the Mid-western region mostly have Mailo tenure system; South-western has native freehold; leaseholds are scattered around the entire country and mostly in urban settings; while

customary tenure is more common in the Northern, North East and West Nile regions of the country.

Figure 1: Land Tenure system in Uganda



Source: PSCP II Baseline Evaluation report, 2007

Land is a synonym of identity, culture, power, development, food and human security. It can as well become a source of conflicts, a perpetrator of social inequalities and discrimination, and a vehicle for the depletion of natural resources. Uganda has diverse priorities for achieving national development such as eradication of poverty, food security, agriculture transformation, natural resources exploitation, preventing climate change, and sustainable urban expansion. Uganda is predominantly a patriarchal society, and the ownership of land is dominated by men, who dominate the majority of decisions related to land use and management, and the security of women's land tenure can be tenuous.

Women's land and property rights remain a challenge across the globe. In Africa, it is worsened by the social norms, beliefs and patriarchal attributes of land, legal attachment and recognition of land and property ownership rights. Uganda's policy and legal regime relating to access, ownership and control of land is adequate, yet this has not translated into an increment in women's ownership. While over 70% of women are engaged in agriculture, less than 20% of them have control over their agricultural output, and nationally only approximately 17% of the women own land, mainly through purchase. The efforts have been marred by limited resource allocation, corruption, mismanagement of cases, land case backlog, and cultures compounded with unequal power

relations. Protection of women's land rights in the formal law currently has limited impact: traditional norms and practices commonly work to impede women from realizing their formal rights to property. Women face significant obstacles in realizing their rights to marital property due to traditional norms and practices. Inheritance in Ugandan law is governed by the Succession Act (Amendment) Decree 22/72 of 1972, which restricts the application of customary law in inheritance cases, and explicitly recognizes women's right to inherit from their husbands. While these provisions, along with Constitutional guarantees of widow's right to inherit matrimonial property, would seem to provide ample protection, women's inheritance rights under the formal law remain tenuous due to incomplete legislation.

3. Gender issues and land rights

Gender inequalities are often critical to understanding and addressing the 'weakest links' within development interventions as well as poverty reduction. The different structural roles of men and women coupled with their equally different and unbalanced roles at the household level have called for more strategic measures in dealing with gender inequality. Women bear the brunt of domestic tasks: processing food crops, providing water and firewood, caring for the elderly and the sick, making the boundary between economic and household activity very fluid. This brings to light the problem of women's overburden and the strong imbalance in the gender division of labor as one of the major contributors to poverty.

Women's access to, use of and control over land and other productive resources are essential to ensuring their right to equality and to an adequate standard of living. Land demands particular attention. Land is key to a life with dignity and a basis for entitlements which can ensure an adequate standard of living and economic independence and, therefore, personal empowerment. There is an evident correlation between gender inequality, societal poverty, and the failure to respect, protect and fulfil these rights for women. This failure entrenches gender inequality by reinforcing women's dependence on men and prevents poor communities from finding a sustainable and equitable path to development. While there is a lack of secure property rights and access to adequate resources, women have less access to land than men. Women are consistently less likely to own land, have fewer rights to land, and the land they do own or have access to is of lower quality in comparison to men. It has always been said that when women own land, their purchasing decisions are likely to benefit the household's food security and their children's nutritional status. Therefore, when considering household well-being, it is important to consider who within the household manages the family's resources, including land, as women are much more likely than men are to spend income from these resources on their children's nutritional and educational needs.

Secure rights to land and property for women are widely regarded as fundamental to ensuring effective and sustainable human development. Rights to land include the right to own, use, access, control, transfer, exclude, inherit and otherwise make decisions about land and related resources. Secure rights to land are rights that are clearly defined, long-term, enforceable, appropriately transferable, and legally and socially legitimate. For women, exercising these rights should not require consultation or approval beyond that required of men.

Land is an important source of security against poverty in Uganda; unequal rights to land put women at a disadvantage, perpetuate poverty, and entrench gender inequality. Gender has become a critical issue in women's land rights because there is a direct relationship between accessing land resources, having secured land rights, achieving food security, and overcoming poverty. It is estimated that women produce more than 80% of the food in Uganda, yet they own only 1% of the land. Therefore, improving women's access to and control over land is crucial to the region's socio-

economic development since it has always been noted that improving women's access to and control over economic resources has a positive effect on a range of development goals.

While Uganda has achieved different legal and policy strides in addressing the land issue, studies have shown that even where laws are equitable, women may not know their legal rights. In addition, implementation may still be gender-biased, and law enforcement may be grossly inadequate or prejudiced against women. This needs a concerted effort and the diligent implementation of the land laws to benefit the women.

Uganda is a signatory to several international, regional and sub-regional instruments for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The Government of Uganda has thus taken various measures to protect and promote women's rights. Despite all these policies and mechanisms, land rights for women is still a myth rather than a reality hence generating a need for advocacy and capacity building focusing on women's empowerment and women's land rights with the aim of reducing poverty and ensuring food security; and promoting equitable access, control and ownership of land among women and men for improved livelihood.

3. FOOD SECURITY AND LAND RIGHTS

1. Food Security in Uganda

Establishing food security is a top priority of the Government of Uganda. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as "a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." Based on this definition, four food security dimensions can be identified: food availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization and stability over time," (FAO, 2017). Due to rising incomes and a rapidly expanding population, Uganda is facing a food-insecure future.

Hunger in Uganda has increased from 24 percent of the population in 2004 to 39 percent in 2015 (FAO, 2017). Combined with population growth, this translates to an increase of over 9 million people (from 6.6 million in 2004 to 15.7 million in 2015). The major factor contributing to poor food access is poverty, though drivers vary considerably by district. In 2012, nearly 64 percent of Ugandans lived below the international poverty line of \$3.10 a day, and 35 percent lived below the extreme poverty line of \$1.90 per day (World Bank, 2018). Poor households have limited access to credit and savings services, constraining their ability to acquire agricultural capital and technology inputs. Low levels of adult education and literacy compound the ability of the labor force to engage in higher-value activities.

2. Relationship between Food Security and Land Rights

What is produced and who consumes it depends greatly on tenure security. Clear and secure property rights for owners and users reduce the potential for conflict and the threat of eviction; provide incentives to conserve and improve these assets; encourage land-related investments; allow land rental and sales markets to transfer land to more productive uses and users; and, if coupled with cost-effective systems of land administration, reduce the cost of credit by leveraging these assets as collateral (World Bank 2008). A large proportion of the poor, however, lack adequate access to quality land, and when they do have access, they have limited rights to it. For example, they might be able to use land for cultivation but not be able to use it as collateral, rent it, sell it, or hold the land for a long enough period to recoup labor and capital investments. Others are unable to enforce the rights they do have because they are unaware of those rights, cannot afford the required paperwork, or because the legal or customary authorities do not recognize them.

Creating an environment conducive to agricultural growth and food security hinges upon the prioritization of securing land and property rights of smallholders, investors, and other resource users (USAID 2013). Today, a large proportion of the poor lack adequate and secure access to land and natural resources; global trends suggest that without adequate measures to respond to the growing demand for these assets, tenure insecurity is likely to become worse.

Efforts to secure land and property rights in an effective and inclusive manner must rely on multi-stakeholder partnerships between government, private sector, and civil society actors, and must operate at all levels, from the local to the global. The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (Voluntary Guidelines) emerged from these partnerships and offer a roadmap for action. The members of the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) unanimously endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines in May 2012. That same year, the CFS launched a multi-stakeholder Working Group to develop and negotiate principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI), which are expected to be completed and endorsed by the CFS in 2014.

3. Focusing on women land rights and food security

Women engaged in small-scale rural agriculture in Uganda for the purpose of household food security and/or income generation face a number of challenges to creating sustainable livelihoods. Women's ownership and control over assets can affect what households produce and how the proceeds from production are allocated within the family. Studies have found that increases in female landholdings are associated with increases in household food expenditure.

Despite their (potential) contributions to all three pillars of food security, women's roles in the agricultural system are often compromised because of their weaker access and rights to resources, including land. These disparities stem from the differences women experience between statutory and customary tenure frameworks. Women are marginalized in the agricultural development process when local authorities fail to recognize women as equally capable and deserving of support. Thus, to assess whether women's land rights are secure, it is important to pay attention to five dimensions. First, the degree to which a woman's land rights are legitimate depends on who recognizes these rights. Second, a woman's land rights are secure if they are not vulnerable to changes in her family structure or to changes in her clan or community. Third, for rights that are granted for a fixed period of time, the longer the period, the more secure are her rights. Fourth, a woman must be able to enforce her rights for them to be secure. Lastly, a woman's land rights are more secure if they can be exercised without being subject to conditions that men would not be asked to fulfil.

4. GENDER ACTION LEARNING SYSTEM (GALS) METHODOLOGY

1. Background on the GALS methodology

Since 2008 Oxfam Novib's WEMAN programme supported the development of an innovative Gender Action Learning System (GALS), building on the work of Linda Mayoux of creating gender awareness in pro-poor development strategies. As part of Oxfam Novib's WEMAN programme, the GALS approach was developed and piloted from 2007 onwards with partners in Uganda under two local partners of Green homes and Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Micro-Finance Ltd (Bukonzo Joint), Sudan, Pakistan, and Peru. The project under investigation in this report, 'Gender Justice in Pro-Poor Value Chain Development' (2009-2011), was co-funded by IFAD and developed with two local partners in Uganda, Green Homes and Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Micro-Finance Ltd (Bukonzo Joint).

GALS (Gender Action Learning System) is a community-led empowerment methodology that uses principles of inclusion to improve income, food and nutrition security of vulnerable people in a gender-equitable way. It positions poor women and men as drivers of their own development rather than victims, identifying and dismantling obstacles in their environment, challenging service providers and private actors. It has proven to be effective for changing gender inequalities that have existed for generations, strengthening the negotiation power of marginalized stakeholders and promoting collaboration, equity and respect between value chain actors. Rather than an alternative VCD methodology, GALS can be used complementary to other VCD approaches. GALS tools and participatory processes can be adapted to promote gender transformation and gender mainstreaming in any issue, including general life planning, livelihood and value chain development, financial services, environmental management, health, reproductive rights, literacy, civil society development, counseling and conflict resolution. The methodology can be used on its own or integrated into existing activities and programmes. The methodology forms a solid basis for enabling more inclusive, effective and cost-efficient democratic policy development and gender advocacy.

2. About the GALS in Land Rights model

In 2011 ESAFF Uganda with support from OXFAM NOVIB implemented the GALS methodology in three districts in the West-nile Region, building on the livelihood and monitoring tools from participatory Action learning systems (PALS) and the ILO manual "making the strongest links" L. Mayoux and Mackie a practical guide to mainstreaming gender analysis in value chain development: 2009. The project focused on farmer groups working on different value chains in maize, coffee and fruits. However, during the various engagements with small scale farmers, women experienced challenges in breaking through gender-based barriers and changing gender inequalities within the family, which prevented both women and men from achieving their vision. However, with the rise of land cases in the Teso region, ESAFF Uganda realized that there was a need for a more practical, efficient, and comprehensive approach that smallholder farmers could use in addressing land rights issues in their communities. Using the lessons and experiences generated from the previous GALS project that was implemented in Zombo, Nebbi and Adjumani district funded by Oxfam in Uganda, ESAFF Uganda developed a Land Rights Model. The model was developed in consultation with small scale farmers who were using GALS methodology in their daily life

The GALS in land rights model involves the use of gender action learning system tools to address land rights issues among small scale farmers in communities. The model is a community-led approach that enhances inclusion, and small scale farmers taking the lead in managing their land rights issues in the community. The model is supportive in developing action learning skills of vulnerable women and men in land rights and land-related issues to implement strategies for improving livelihoods, gender equality and decision making power. It's also been found to promote collaboration and respect between various actors and farmers for gender-equitable access, control and ownership of land resources. With GALS tools, we can engage skills, energies and resources of 'powerful' land actors to support pro-poor wealth creation in vulnerable groups as well as develop sustainable skills and structures for livelihood and change planning, communication and collaboration between stakeholders.

The major objective of the model is to improve the agricultural production of small scale farmers through increased access, control and ownership of land as a productive resource in farming communities. Other specific objectives include to promote a more systematic and practical approach that CSOs, small scale farmers and other relevant stakeholders can use in addressing land rights among communities; to engage with and gain obligation of stakeholders, policy makers and small scale farmers to develop win-win strategies which reinforce the positive changes among vulnerable groups and enable them to address land right issues in their communities and; empower

small scale farmers to use the GALS methodology to enhance their land rights and land use for economic development within household and community levels

3. The development of the GALS in Land Rights model

The development process of the GALS in Land Rights model involved engagement with communities to ensure the documentation of experiences, lessons learnt and challenges on land rights issues among small scale farmers in communities. A selected group of trainers of trainers was involved in giving input and reviewing the drafted GALS in Land Rights model. After finalising the model, piloting was done with selected T.O.Ts in various communities before it was rolled out in the communities using the farmer group members and local leaders in communities. In addition, various review meetings among farmer groups were organised to share their experiences and lessons learnt to inform the GALS in land rights model.

4. Tools used in the GALS in Land Rights model

The Gender Justice Diamond tool: the Diamond is used to engage the participants to open up freely on the inherent gender inequalities based on lived personal experiences in land issues. The participants are first asked to draw three things that they like about being men or women and three things they dislike. They are then put into two separate groups of men and women. In these groups, they then build the 'Diamond', which summarises their likes and dislikes as men or women categorized into 'best', 'good', 'bad' and 'worst'. In plenary the men and women then build together a 'Mother Diamond' with discussions of the different perceptions as they merge the men's and women's diamonds. The analysis of the mother diamond reveals the deeply held gender beliefs rooted in religion and culture through socialization on land. Thus heated debates usually ensue highlighting the gender gaps in land matters. Through role plays, role reversals and discussions, the issues of property ownership, division of labour/workload, poverty, domestic violence, polygamy and promiscuity and alcoholism are also discussed.

The Vision Road Journey: this is the first stage towards the individual multilane highway. It produces a plan to help people work towards one realizable element of their vision. This tool provides a reference point and rationale for examining gender issues, opportunities and constraints necessary to achieve their desired vision. An example of how the tool was used was farmers experiencing land challenges or conflicts would envision the future they aspire to, then assess the current situation, identify the challenges they would encounter in achieving their vision, but also look at opportunities they would use in achieving their desired goals. They would also look at different activities that would help them, such as working on relations in the household, or targeting of produce they sell to accumulate income.

The Challenge Action Tree: this tool tries to analyze the different land challenges emerging from the mother diamond identified that are collated and further analyzed using the challenge action tree. As a demonstration, a tree is drawn indicating the roots, trunk, branches and fruits. Participants were then appraised of the significance of the tree in analyzing challenges where the roots represent causes of the problem, the trunk the challenge/problem being analyzed, the branches the solutions to the problem and the fruits the actions/commitments for change undertaken by the partners/spouses in the household responsible for the challenge. The purpose of the challenge action tree is to move discussions of issues identified into possible solutions.

"An example of Chandiru Jane from Amuria district. Analysis of challenge action tree based on root causes of corruption in the in-land registration process one of the issues from the vision multilane high way with solutions in the branches and actions in the fruits."

The Social Empowerment Map; This is a preliminary mapping exercise that seeks to empower farmers by analyzing their relationships with other land stakeholders that they interact with at the community level. In this exercise, the farmers put themselves in the middle and identify all those around them and the nature of their relationship in terms of power, social/emotional (love) and economic (money). These three factors determine how close and strong the relationships are (shown by different coloured arrows where thick arrows depict strong relationships and thin or even dotted ones weak relationships, while double arrows depict mutuality and single ones the direction of benefit or lack thereof). This process begins to identify relationships that are strong and must be kept or weak relations that affect one's business and need nurturing.

The Vision Achievement Journey; this tool allows participants to visualize their future and draw in concrete terms what they would like to achieve and the timeline. They also analyze their current circumstances/reality and map possible income generation streams or activities that they can engage in to achieve their vision. The setting of achievable targets that can be measured is a key element of the Vision Achievement Journey. The Multilane highway combines the business plan as the top lane, the household gender issues as the middle lane and the social empowerment issues as the bottom lane. The top business lane links with the value chains as vision holders identify what livelihood systems they have comparative advantage and make more business sense to their circumstances. The 3rd lane naturally links the household to the collective as there are certain things that need a critical mass to achieve, such as taming a market. A farmer acting singularly will fail to make an impact in the market where economies of scale are the way to go. Issues like labelling are a case in point where the power of the collective is paramount.

4. METHODOLOGY

Informed by already existing quantitative and qualitative research conducted in the study areas, two main methodological innovations were applied.

The development of this paper involved conducting a literature review on the available information on food security and land rights in Uganda. Further review focused on the relationship between food security, gender, and land rights with a keen interest in women's contribution, especially those in rural areas. Key informant interviews were conducted in Amuria and Adjumani district in Uganda to collect voices of small-scale farmers, especially women, on the current issues affecting land security and land rights. These districts were selected because ES AFF Uganda implemented the GALS in Land Rights Models in the districts. Analysis was done, and results were presented in terms of the model's impact in ensuring land rights and security of tenure for small-scale farmers, especially women in rural areas.

5. RESULTS

Women are primary users of land and provide the bulk of "non-contractible" agricultural labour in Uganda. Despite this, men dominate most decisions related to land use and management, and the security of women's land tenure can be tenuous. There is a direct relationship between behavior changes at the household level and livelihood improvement, including better access to land for women leading to higher productivity, improved food and nutrition, and investment in roles for young women in terms of education. Women small-scale farmers engaged in the project have built strong working relations with their husbands, registered land in their individual or family name, started land rights women's groups in their communities and are enjoying secure land rights. Contrary to what was being practiced in their communities, a change of attitudes among men was noticed. An example was Angua Lucy in Adjumani district. She, together with her husband, was able to register despite the prior challenges she faced, such as her husband being alcoholic and domestic violence. Still, all this was gradually reversed when her husband participated in one of the trainings on GALS where he worked on behavior change and started working with Lucy to achieve their

family desired vision. Their land title now includes the husband, the wife and the children, including the girls.

Emergence of men champions on land in communities:

As a result of the interventions, there has been an emergence of men champions who believe that women should enjoy land rights. The men encourage other men in their communities to involve their wives and daughters on land issues. As a result of these actions, more men have joined the campaign to break harmful cultural norms in their societies. In some communities, men have gone as far as organizing and establishing peer to peer knowledge groups that survey communities to identify households with specific challenges on land issues, then look for avenues to help them.

Women have developed their negotiating capacity and applied it in different areas of their lives. Before the interventions, many women declined roles providing opportunities to access, control and own land due to patriarchal systems of community governance. Small-scale farmers have realized that they have the solutions to their problems; this has enabled them to implement sustainable strategies to increase their security on land and other resources for economic development.

Increased collaboration between different stakeholders:

Unlike other approaches, the GALS in Land Rights Model has created collaboration, respect and communication between members at both household and community level, thereby addressing gender inequality as an integral part of breaking cultural disparities and norms. This process has also created some multi-stakeholder consensus on the moral and business imperatives of promoting gender justice on land and prioritizing the needs and interests of the weakest and most vulnerable people in the community on land rights. Using the social empowerment map, many stakeholders identified by community members have been able to maintain their relationships by playing their roles. For example, the Area Land Committees took the initiative to work with community members who had land conflicts or who needed help to access the District Land Boards for surveying their land. With these linkages, some of the processes of registration were made easier for small scale farmers.

Increased awareness on land issues among small scale farmers, especially women:

This came about through training and capacity building in understanding land rights, as well as creating avenues for engagement, such as organizing talk shows on local radio stations.

Increased platforms for women engagement in policy issues:

Throughout the implementation of the GALS in Land Rights Model in communities, there has been an increase in meaningful women participation in engagement in public spaces with different duty bearers hence leading women to raise their unique voices on their needs in their communities. Further to that leadership roles have also emerged in communities. An example, in Gulu district, one of the women members took up a role as a member of the Area land committee, something that never happens in a male dominated and customary oriented area in the northern part of the country. With such platforms many women can identify with each other challenges and can work together to solve them. Their opinions are also taken seriously given the fact that they raise issues from an influential point of view due to the empowerment tools they have been provided with.

The Model empowers women small-scale farmers to identify key challenges, speak for themselves and lead in advocacy processes. ESAFF Uganda further created platforms for small scale farmers to engage with different stakeholders such as local leaders, cultural leaders, District Land Boards (DLBs) and media to influence change in practice and norms that are inbuilt in society through

organizing local level dialogues, community sensitization meetings, media engagements, land rights legal clinics and sharing information through Information, Education and Communication (IECs).

6. CONCLUSIONS

Nearly two-thirds of Ugandan households rely on subsistence farming as their primary source of income (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016). These subsistence farms (farms less than two acres) deliver 75 – 80 percent of the total agricultural output. Evidence has showed the women provide the largest part of the labour in the farms yet own less than 1% of the registered land. The GALS Methodology has proven to be good remedy to the land issues especially at household level hence the need for the methodology to be upscaled and adopted by other partners including the government.

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9. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

In the development of this paper, all the authors took part in the writing and review of the paper, literature review and proofreading. Rashidah Namatovu and Adem Andrew supported in the collection of data from the field that informed the results indicated in this paper.

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11. KEYWORDS AND DEFINITIONS

Gender: the characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed. Focus on the social roles by men and women in communities. These aren't biologically determined.

Land rights: these are the rights to use, control, and transfer a parcel of land.

Land tenure: is the ways in which property rights to land are allocated, transferred, used, or managed in a particular society. These tenures include customary ownership of land; Freehold land tenure; Mailo land tenure; and Leasehold tenure.

Land: any part of the earth's surface not covered by a body of water, occupied by continents and islands and distinguishable by boundaries or ownership.

Value Chain Development (VCD): a market-driven approach for creating sustainable, inclusive and economically viable supply chains among small scale farmers