



AMPLIFYING

**WOMEN SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' VOICES
IN CUSTOMARY LAND SYSTEMS ACROSS
THE WEST NILE REGION**

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BACKGROUND

This documentation explores how land governance and administration, cultures, traditions, and norms are contributing to gender injustice and inequalities in land access, ownership and control in Uganda, particularly Northern Uganda for women. This has increased poverty and vulnerability and less enjoyment of women in agribusiness value chains and farming as a business.

Conscious that land is a fundamentally important resource for agricultural production and is the basis of income, sustenance, and identity for most Ugandans.

Aware that agriculture dominates the country's economy and accounts for 80% of export earnings and an estimated 80% of employment nationwide. Approximately 87% of Uganda's estimated 42 million people reside in rural areas, 85% of whom are involved in subsistence agriculture.

Acknowledging that nationwide, 90% of all rural women work in agriculture, and produce an estimated 80% of food crops, contributing 90% of all labor for food production

Recalling the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030); AU's Agenda 2063; the Maputo Protocol; The Africa Framework & Guidelines on Land Policies in Africa; the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of

Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Conferences on Financing for Development; the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Land, Fisheries, and Forests.

Concerned that, despite enactments, proclamations and declarations on the universality of human rights, the rights of women to acquire, hold/control and deal in land among others in Uganda is limited by social, economic and political factors.

Bearing in mind that whereas women form 80% of the agricultural labour force in Uganda, there is increasing feminization of poverty attributed to lack of access, control and ownership of land and other productive assets. Only about 16 percent of women own land. Their ownership of registered land is even lower at 7 percent because their rights to ownership, are restricted in the homes they are born in and in the families, they are married into, much more so, in the rural parts of the West Nile region of Uganda, as told in the tales in this book.

WOMEN SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' STORIES

Grace Acirocan, (41 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Zombo District

She comes from a polygamous marriage in which her husband has two other wives. Grace claims that when she first married her husband, she had more access to land for growing a variety of crops for production. However, because he married two other women, her access to land has been hampered, making it difficult for her to pursue farming as a business.

❗ **I have six children and two grandchildren to support, but my husband has sold off a large portion of the family farm, leaving us with almost nothing to grow crops for even food." I'm concerned that my husbands' greed for money will drive him to sell even the remaining land, abandoning me and the children.** ❗

Acirocan has informed the elders and clan leaders of her situation to protect her access to land. However, the elders did not come to her aid, and she is now hoping that the leaders of the Local Councils (LCs) will intervene to allow her and her children to keep the remaining land.



Amiliano Nyapamba, (78 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Ocello Parish, Alala Sub-County, Nebbi district.

In 1969, when Nyapamba got married, her husband inherited a big chunk of land from his grandparents. And as a wife, Nyapamba cultivated the land, growing a range of crops for both commercial and subsistence purposes. But all of a sudden, Nyapamba recalls, her husband became an alcoholic. He always wanted money to buy brew, which forced him to start selling off bits of their 3-acre land.

■ ■ But when I tried to resist this, the man turned violent and started beating me to near death. I had to leave the home and the land on which I had built a good livelihood for our children because my husband would harass me every time, he found me cultivating the land. ■ ■

Right now, Nyapamba lives on her own, as does her husband. They are separated. And for her to grow any crops for commercial purposes, she must rent some land. And considering how costly that can be, she does not have enough resources to rent a big piece of land for bigger returns.





Joyce Akumu, (48 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Jupugwang village, Ramogi Parish, Kucwiny Sub County, Nebbi district.

Akumu is a mother of eight, all girls. She is also one of two girls that their father had, before he passed on six years ago. But before he died, he left Akumu and her sister 10 acres of land, as their inheritance. This was indicated in his final will for which Akumu and her sister have copies. Funny as it may sound, one of their late father's brothers has been putting pressure on them, to relinquish their inheritance to him. He claims that the land their father gave them is their family land, which was originally owned by their father, Akumu's grandfather.

However, before their grandfather died, he gave the 10 acres to Akumu's father. And according to their uncle, their suggestion is that women have no rights to land ownership, and therefore, they should hand over the land henceforth. Akumu noted that according to their culture and traditional practices, women have no rights to property. Worse still, at this juncture, Akumu and her sister do not have money to pursue land ownership matters in court. In fact, she added that their lives can be brought to a sudden end if they are seen to be fighting for their land according to their mother. Even though their fathers will clearly give Akumu and her sister this land, they do not have any protection from the extended family. In addition, they have not even reported to any district or land officers about the matter,

because their uncle warned them against making a private family matter into a public one.

Nonetheless, Akumu and her sister have dug their feet in, and are not willing to surrender what their father gave them at this point despite the continuous threats they have got.

“ But I and my sister still live in fear, because we feel our lives are threatened and are at stake despite our insistence to continue cultivating the land. Only God knows anyway. But we will not give up on what our father gave us. ”



Harriet Wanok, (44 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Jupugwang village, Ramogi Parish, Kucwiny Sub County, Nebbi district.

In 2006, Wanok bought two acres of land with her husband, and they cultivated it together until 2020 when the husband passed on. But no sooner had he passed on, than Wanok started getting challenges over her land.

■ ■ **The brother to the man from whom we had bought the land started questioning my ownership of the land, something he had never done when my husband was still alive. He began asking me for land agreements that proved I owned the land. He asked for the land agreements that show that his late brother sold the land to us, which unfortunately my husband did not leave me with before he died. ■ ■**

In turn, Wanok told him that she was not under any obligation to show him any land agreements, because she did not know him, and she did not buy the land from him. But that did not stop the man from disturbing

Wanok. He kept hounding her each time she was in the garden, which stopped her from cultivating her land.

In the end, Wanok took the matter to the village elders, who advised her to remain on her land and cultivate it. But thereafter, other village elders advised her to give up the land for her safety, because they knew the man as one capable of be-witching her. Soon after, Wanok realized that the same man had rented out her land to someone else. In Wanok's mind, she knows that the intruder on her land decided to steal her land, because she is a woman, and therefore perceived her as incapable of defending her rights to this land. Wanok insists that;

■ ■ **if my husband was still alive, I would never have been subjected to such treatment of perpetual harassment. ■ ■**

This is forcing her to quit her hard-earned land. Now Wanok's hope is in the intervention of ESAFF, whom she believes that through legal means, they can help her regain her land.



Sofia Adhoc, (65 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Ocello Parish, Alala Sub-County, Nebbi district.

▼▼ **Death did not only rob me of my husband but my livelihood as well.** ▼▼

Sofia adds that, because of the patriarchal society that we live in, my in-law came and claimed the land that my husband had left me. On it, I grew crops for some time, before I was evicted. This was done in total disregard for me and the children I had born with their brother before he died. Some of my in-laws told me that the land is for my deceased husband's brothers and male cousins.

▼▼ **I am so stressed by the fact that I have no land on which to cultivate food. It has become difficult to survive. Worse still, I do not know anything about women's rights, let alone the rights of widows; that is one area ESAFF Uganda ought to intervene in.** ▼▼

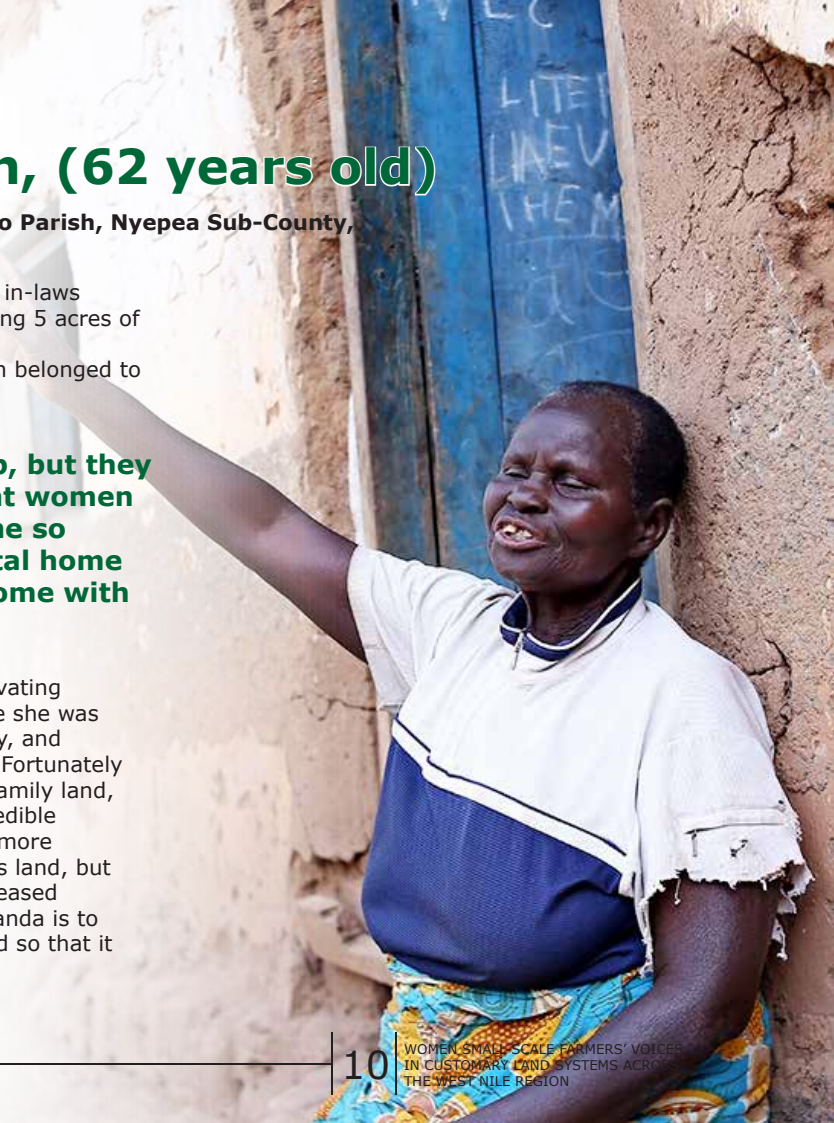
Christine Amondirwoth, (62 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Okebo Agore village, Oyeyo Parish, Nyepea Sub-County, Zombo district.

When Amondirwoth lost her husband back in 2009, her in-laws raided her home, and grabbed all their property, including 5 acres of land, they had worked so hard to acquire. Apparently, Amondirwoth's in-laws insisted that the land she was on belonged to the clan, and therefore had no right to it.

I asked the cultural leaders for help, but they sided with my in-laws, insisting that women cannot own land. My in-laws became so aggressive; I had to leave my marital home in 2011, to return to my parent's home with my children.

Amondirwoth used to earn a living off this land by cultivating (maize, beans, and ground nuts) on this land. But since she was chased away from it, she has struggled to have a penny, and keeping her children in school became a big challenge. Fortunately for Amondirwoth, her parents gave her 2 acres of the family land, where she grows food now. She also boasts of the incredible support her brothers have given her, to make the land more productive. However, she gave up on her late husband's land, but only hopes her children are allowed access to their deceased father's land soon. Meanwhile, her appeal to ESAFF Uganda is to help avail her of information on how to register her land so that it belongs to her forever.



Gloria Acen, (39 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Oyeyo Parish, Nyapea Sub-County, Zombo district.

My biggest problem thus far as a farmer is that ever since I bought land a few years ago, I am still struggling to get proper documentation for it.

■ ■ **Considering the troubles, we face as women on land ownership rights, this situation gives me sleepless nights on whether it is safe and secure.** ■ ■



Santa Limtho

A small-scale farmer in Akwanji village, Nyapea Sub-county, Zombo district.

Limtho could consider herself privileged when her father gave her 3 acres of land. Her livelihood was supposed to be formed on this land. But then she is faced with a problem of encroachment from her neighbors.

■ ■ This has caused so much wrangling because I have had to engage the Local Council officials, village and cultural elders in the matter, to get it resolved once and for all. But at the same time, this has affected my concentration, to make the land productive. I cannot grow crops for commercial purpose the way I would love, since I spend a lot of time battling the encroachers. ■ ■

Limtho realizes that the only lasting solution to this is to go to the land offices, so that her boundaries are well demarcated. But the entire process is costly too, and therefore Limtho feels cornered in a way. Notably, she highlights that the people, who are encroaching on her land are men. And she believes these are bullies targeting her, because she is a woman, and they are taking advantage to intimidate and exploit her. But she is not ready to give in.



Robinah Kayeny, (51 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Oyeyo Parish, Nyapea Sub- County, Zombo district.

It was all fun for Kayeny, growing up in an all-girls family. Their father had five daughters that were proudly the band of five. They had no issues since their father treated all of them equally, to a point that he gave them 10 acres of land to use. But then Kayeny's uncles did not take this well.

They have been confronting our father and engaging him in endless arguments, questioning his decision to give his daughters all this land. So, what happened, my father took the matter to court in 2021, to get his brothers off his back and leave us alone. But the court is yet to make a ruling on the petition.

But then, the court stopped Kayeny and her sisters from using the land until the case is heard and decided on. As a result, the five sisters have now been forced to hire land to do their small-scale farming, which is so costly. Kayeny believes their prospects and incomes have been affected by male chauvinistic tendencies aimed at subjugating them, because they are women.



Lusiana Olaripou, (68 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Akwanji Upper village, Nyapea Sub- County, Zombo district.

When Olaripou's husband died in 2010, she stood on her own, trying to fend for her rights as a woman and a mother. Her in-laws saw the demise of Olaripou's husband as a jackpot won. They began claiming the 7 acres of land that Olaripou and her deceased husband had acquired through their sweat. They took over it and pushed her and her children to the periphery of the land.

■ I reported the matter to the cultural leader, who evicted the land grabbers. Unfortunately, when he died too, the land grabbers returned to reclaim their loot, leaving us deprived. My dream of doing large-scale farming went up in smoke. Instead, we were left with a small piece to just grow food to eat. ■

Irine Acan, (38 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Rola Village, Abeju Parish, Zombo district.

Unlike the norm, that it is usually men, who deprive women of their right to own land, Acan faced a different kind of problem, when her co-wife subjected to the most hostile of treatment. That followed the passing on of their husband back in 2017.

■ ■ **My co-wife ganged up with her children, who were much older than mine, to take every piece of land, including the share my deceased husband had left me with the five children we shared. Because of their pressure, we vacated the land, and it remains redundant. ■ ■**

This followed the matter being taken to the Magistrate's court. And until the court petition is dispensed off, no one is allowed to use the land. This has proved to be a huge setback for Acan, because she had hoped this land would be productive enough, to enable her to educate and feed her children. Acan has no qualms about sharing the land, because now they are vulnerable and live a destitute kind of life of need all the time for as long as the land is inaccessible. Irine further attests that the process is taking too long, costly and uncertain of the outcome of the judgment.



Christine Ayikoru, (34 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Elefe Village, Terego district

Ayikoru believes that men are the primary custodians of land who have full rights, while women are seen to have partial or secondary rights.

■ **Men have the full rights over land and this makes our rights limited. We can't assume a higher role on land than them. We just follow their lead. Women have no full right over land in the rugbar clan and I hear even in Alur". Ayikoru further intimated that "by the fact that she got married in the clan, she gained some little right over land use in the clan to feed her children.** ■

Women whose husbands are still alive in most of the clans, their voices are not heard concerning land rights.

■ **If a woman tries to raise her voice on land related issues, she is despised as a mere woman who was just brought here and cannot have land rights herself.** ■



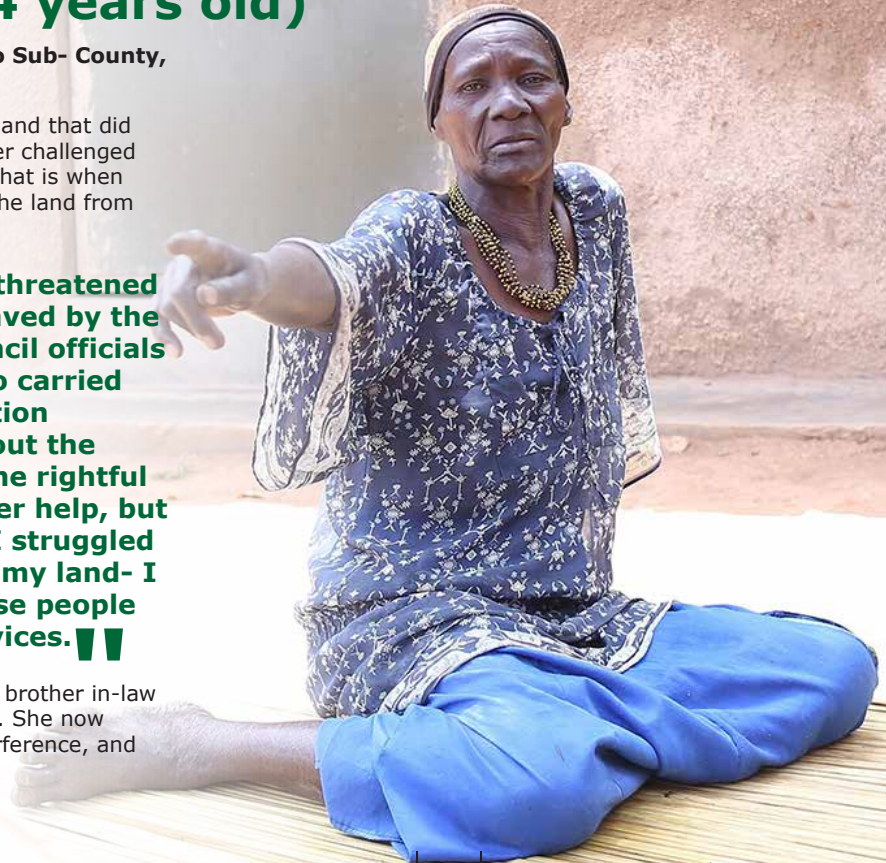
Alima Fuathum, (64 years old)

A subsistence farmer in Rola Village, Oyeyo Sub- County, Zombo district.

For many years Alima and her husband owned land that did not have proper documentation. But no one ever challenged them about it until her husband died in 1999. That is when her brother in-law saw an opportunity to grab the land from her.

■ **He started harassing me and threatened to kill me. But my land was saved by the intervention of the Local Council officials and area land committee, who carried out an independent investigation regarding the background about the land. They learnt that I was the rightful owner, the committee can offer help, but they asked me money which I struggled to get so that they could visit my land- I pray government support these people financially so that we get services.** ■

This marked the end of Alima's troubles, as her brother in-law was swiftly pushed off the land he had grabbed. She now grows her coffee and bananas without any interference, and she is thriving again.



Jane Ogonya

A banana and coffee farmer from Abeju Parish, Nyapea Sub-county, Zombo district.

Ogonya used to be a blossoming banana and coffee farmer until some men started encroaching on her land recently.

■ ■ **We are being disturbed seriously by people to the extent that the crops we planted were cleared down by them. So we are planning to do the same to them when they plant in those gardens. With this trend it looks like death is going to occur in the land...** ■ ■

This has destabilized her planting programs and harvesting in the process, because those encroaching have destroyed parts of her farmland and plantations.

According to Ogonya, the worse part, is that the LCs and the law enforcers, say the Police, have not been empowered enough to protect women like her from such violations.

■ ■ **I have reported those trying to encroach on my land, but the Police has not stopped them, even in a situation, where my land has stone markings, that show where my land starts and stops.** ■ ■

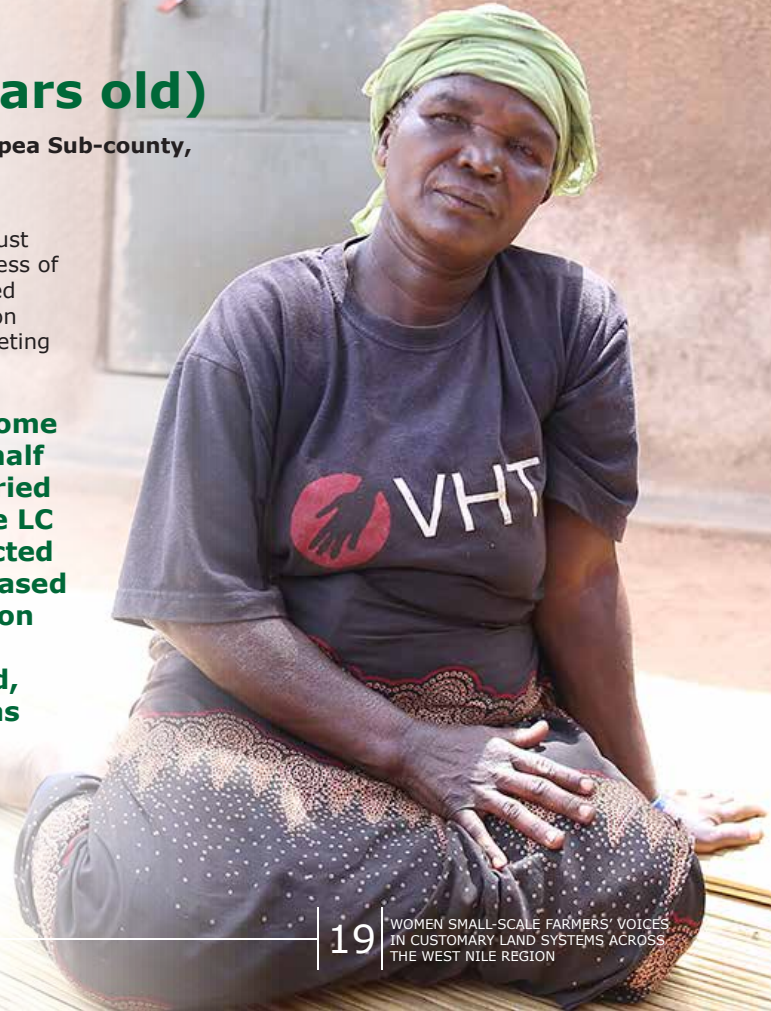


Fraswazi Ocida, (59 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Akwanji Lower Village, Nyapea Sub-county, Zombo district

Based on her experience, Ocida advises women, that whenever they are trying to acquire or buy land, they must ensure that they do due diligence; follow the entire process of legitimizing you as a landowner by getting all the required documents, that prove ownership. Also, it is incumbent on one, to have the village LC officials present, when completing a land transaction.

“ I was almost becoming a victim of some crooks. I bought land of the size of half an acre from some individual, who tried to grab it back. So, when I ran to the LC for assistance, they came and inspected the land and drew the boundaries, based on the initial measurements agreed on between me and the seller in the agreement. Once that was concluded, the grabbers backed off. But that was because I had my documents, that ascertained I was the owner. ”



A woman, Santina Didio, is seated outdoors under a large tree. She is wearing a blue and white patterned short-sleeved shirt and a blue and white patterned skirt. She has a black headband with a red stripe. Her hands are clasped in her lap, and she has a distressed expression on her face. In the background, other people are visible, and the setting appears to be a rural area.

Santina Didio, (47 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Olea Village, Odupi Sub- County, Terego district

When Didio lost her husband in 2012, she got married again, this time to his uncle. He was attracted to her. But at the same time, by design, her in-laws approved his approach towards Didio, because they believed that when a man dies, the widow can be inherited by their male relative from a brother, cousin to, as in this case, an uncle.

▼▼ So, after marrying my deceased husband's uncle, we started getting disagreements a few years into the marriage. He sent me away from our home, and claimed the land, I and my deceased husband had acquired. ▼▼

The reason for chasing Didio off her land started at the point where her in-laws alleged, she was planning to kill her second husband, as she had done the first one. As she continues to rue the fact that her land was taken, Didio's biggest pain, is being separated from her children. Her hope is that ESAFF Uganda engages government to come up with a law protecting widows and their children in case of divorce and succession mostly when the husband dies.



Zabella Andrezu, (42 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Olevu Village, Orivu Parish, Odupi Sub- County, Terego district.

As a qualified Primary school teacher, Andrezu supplements her monthly salary of Shs 450,000, with a side business of selling fish. This is all geared to ensuring that she can sustain and educate her five daughters, especially after her farming prospects were frustrated. It all begun in 2019, when her husband and sixth daughter were killed in a road accident. This turned out to be a tip-off of her in-laws, who raided Andrezu's home, and started vandalizing her property. They wanted to take over their 2 acres land too on which they had planted eucalyptus trees. But because Andrezu was not about to give in, her in-laws decided to destroy her plantations during the dead of the night. She would wake up in the morning only to find her eucalyptus trees cut down and stolen.

▼ They would leave me messages reading that I should get off the land that I and my deceased husband bought. They added that I should take my forks, referring to my daughters. I was subjected to a lot of harassment and psychological torture, which made it difficult for me to continue cultivating the land. I deserted my maize and beans planting programs. ▼

Considering that, Andrezu revealed that in the Lugbara culture, they do not value the girl child. As such, she has been forced to hire land elsewhere, which is costly, especially considering that she must educate the girls.



Charity Munguci, (29 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Aligo Village, Ombokoro Parish, Terego district.

▼▼ When I married my husband some time back, my husband never pays dowry and I was being commonly regarded as temporary member of the family and frequently reminded of being imported, and this same thing happened even when I was still at home. ▼▼

After separating with her husband in 2018, Munguci was denied any access to the land on which she used to grow food

▼▼ My husband would go on to ask, “Is this your land? Did you come with it from your father’s house?” No, I thought. But still the land should be left for me and my children. ▼▼

This came on the back of her giving birth to a baby girl. Now, she is raising her daughter alone, depending on her small-scale business in produce.

▼▼ Government should help educate men, to stop them abusing their wives, because of sheer ignorance about biology. The sex of the child is not determined by the mother. ▼▼

While the Local Council also intervened to resolve this misunderstanding, they concluded that he is a mature person, who cannot be forced to have a mindset change.



Gertrude Yaku, (40 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Orube Village, Orivu Parish, Terego district

Despite sharing five children with her husband, Yaku was stopped from tilling their land, and sent away out of the blue by the marital relatives of her deceased husband alleging that she was going to sell their family land.

▼▼ **As a woman I wanted land not to be sold but used for livelihoods like farming. I could sell the produce to pay school fees. It is the role of a woman now to look after the children, so I cannot sell off the land because it may become a routine, that after finishing all the money I should sell land. Instead of that I would rather carry out farming in the land rotationally in order to raise the children. Rugbar land should not be sold. Even if it is small it helps us to feed our children. It must be protected and remain as customary land so in the future children can farm it to get food.** ▼▼

▼▼ **I hope government comes up with a law that empowers women to inherit land from their husbands and fathers.** ▼▼

Otherwise, at this rate, women in her home area are being pushed from one piece of land to another, not being allowed to settle anywhere, which is counter-productive to the land too.

Evelyn Lekuru, (43 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Erefe Village, Ombokoro Parish, Terego district.

Lekuru was in a polygamous marriage until her husband died in the year 2000. As a mother of two girls, little did she know that she was disadvantaged? Following her husband's passing, the sons of her co-wife attacked her while she worked in the garden, sowing seeds

They destroyed my garden and other utilities like hoes, spades and rakes. They impounded the seeds I was going to plant. It was their signal to me, that I should leave the piece of land.

Lekuru tried to contact the cultural and family elders for help, but every effort they put in to solve the matter, was futile, because the children of her co-wife did not heed to what the elders advised. Without any sense of security, Lekuru decided to quit the land. She has given up on crop growing right now, and instead is focusing on making local brew (Malwa) even though the income is not enough. Her prayer now, is for government to come up with some arrangement to support women in their fight to have more access to land.





Paulina Ayikoru, (38 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Okpotani Village, Orivu Parish, Terego district.

The aspect of a growing family can exert undue pressure on a land commodity that does not expand. Ayikoru recalls, that when they had just bought their land with her husband many years ago, it was sufficient. Yet now, with all their five children grown, the land, which is 2 acres cannot suffice, to satisfy all their needs for cultivation. This is land that Ayikoru's husband inherited from his late father. Unfortunately, even Ayikoru's in-laws stay on the same land. By and large, what was left of this land, is where Ayikoru's family house is seated, and therefore they can hardly do any agribusiness.

■ ■ We sought extra land from a friend of ours a few years ago, which he duly provided. But when he died, his children attacked us and chased us off the land. ■ ■

As much as Ayikoru and her family tried to plead their case on the matter, they received no help from the village elders, let alone the Local Council officials. And this is where she calls upon the government to come up with a law or policy, to protect people, who are given land by individuals. But then later, those individuals' families take advantage to grab it back, once they are dead.

Sabrina Wadiko, (52 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Orube Village, Odupi Sub- County Terego district.

Life has been a real hustle for Wadiko, and to make true meaning out of it, she has not only had to suffer indignity, but also struggled to remain afloat. Wadiko got married to a drunkard, whose only focus, was having money to buy his next drink.

This turned out to be the beginning of her nightmare. Her husband used to constantly beat her, as she tried to resist his attempts, to sell bits and pieces of their land. This was land on which Wadiko used to grow crops, including maize, cassava and beans. And the income generated was used to run the home affairs and educate their five children. A lot of the produce, she would sell in the market.

However, the matter of this land became heated by the day between me and my husband. As I insisted on cultivating on it and stopping the sell, my husband turned violent. At one time, he almost killed me, after he assaulted me terribly.

Immediately, Wadiko retreated to her parents' home, to recover. While there, they gave her a portion of their land, for agribusiness. But then, when her brother returned from Kampala, where he had gone to do business, he pushed her off the land, insisting that she needed to depend on her husband. Because she was long married off, the family land was off limits for her. Now, the future is bleak for Wadiko because she has no land to cultivate anymore. As a woman, she feels she has no say on land ownership matters anymore.



Julie Ezatiru, (48 years old)

A small-scale farmer in Orube Village, Odupi Sub- County, Terego district.

Ezatiru looks back on her marriage with fondness. She recalls with a grin what a wonderful time she had with her husband, cultivating their 3-acre land, while it lasted. And indeed, it did not last long, because her husband passed on close to 10 years now, which marked the beginning of her woes.

My in-laws insisted that I was surplus to requirements since my husband had died. I was ordered off my land with my four sons and three daughters. But I fought back, and refused to leave my house, even as my in-laws decided to take over our land.

While Ezatiru had built a reputation of being a successful farmer, who generated good incomes for her family, her productivity has gone down. This has made life hard for her and her children. Her call now is for laws to protect women, where they can access and inherit land from their husbands.



Ketty Akayo, (50 years old)

A local beer brewer in Ediofe Village, Orivu Parish, Terego district.

For Akayo, all hell broke loose, when her husband passed on. Her mother in-law started selling off almost all the land they used to grow crops on. She did not value their well-being anymore according to Akayo.

Inevitably, educating her six children has proved very difficult without an extended income. When she used to cultivate the land and grow crops on it, they used to make enough money to sustain them and pay the children's school fees.

Right now, Akayo makes local brew, to try and make ends meet. But it is not even a fraction of what she used to make from agribusiness. Notably, Akayo said:

Since government knows that agriculture is a big earner for most communities, they should ensure that it is safeguarded, by helping us women access land. Laws should be put in place to make sure of that.



Lucy Onziru, (48 years old)

A small-scale farmer from Terego district.

Onziru has been in the business of renting land, to grow crops for commercial purpose, primarily. However, recently, as Onziru was sowing her seeds, the son of the man from whom she had rented the land, attacked her.

“ I was really frightened by this man. He was wielding a machete in my direction. I thought he was going to kill me. He did not want to see me growing food on his father’s land. Yet, I was just a tenant, and I had paid for the land I was cultivating. ”

Fortunately for Onziru, the Local Council officials intervened, and the matter was resolved, after they declared that she had not been doing cultivation on the land illegally. Right now, Onziru is generating an income from the land she rented. But she is probably one of the lucky ones, because there are so many women chased off land, and they never get any help. Instead, they remain landless.

In fact, at one time, I had no land to cultivate. When my husband passed on four years ago, the children of my co-wife took over all the land, because they were many and had clocked adulthood unlike my children. They chased me and my four children off our land, and we remained stuck without any food to grow.



Women Small-scale Farmers from West Nile Regional Districts Call on Government, NGOs, Traditional Leaders and Development Partners to:

1. Fully implement Article 26 and 33 of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda which uphold and protect rights to own property and land for all.
2. Improve access to justice for women small scale farmers and provide universal legal aid for women to seek redress for any violations of their land rights.
3. Fast track the Succession Amendment law and implement all relevant decisions of the Constitutional Court on succession and divorce etc. Laws including the Marriage and Divorce Bill must be urgently adopted to increase protection of women's rights.
4. Empower women small scale farmers economically so that they can buy their own land and facilitate access to statutory and customary land administration institutions and dispute resolution mechanisms.
5. Support education of girl-children and women in general to improve their economic situation, facilitate their knowledge of land law and demand for their land rights and access to land governance and dispute resolution mechanisms.
6. Sensitize clan and traditional leaders on the rights of women and vulnerable groups and the responsibilities of family heads holding land in trust as referred to in the National Land Policy.
7. Build the capacity of clan heads and appropriate customary leaders (training, sensitization and the provision of basic materials, i.e. appropriate statutory land regulations, and, ADR resources), establish efficient mechanism to resolve conflict and maintain records in cooperation with relevant government institutions as stipulated in the National Land Policy.
8. Documentation of customary land tenure rules including the Principles, Practices, Rights and Responsibilities (PPRR) for the various ethnic groups across the country in cooperation with relevant government institutions as stipulated in the National Land Policy." This will also assist with the implementation of the National Land Policy according "precedence to indigenous principles of and practice in dispute management institutions in respect of disputes over land held under customary land tenure.
9. Assist with the capacity building (training, sensitization and the provision of basic materials, for instance ADR, land statutes) of targeted government institutions such as the District Land Boards and Area Land Committees for the effective implementation of land governance.
10. Sensitize the population on the importance of preparing a will in advance of death to minimize confusion and conflict relating to the inheritance of land.

About ESAFF Uganda

Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda is a small scale farmer initiated and farmer-led movement formed to facilitate processes through which small-scale farmers' development concerns can be solicited, articulated and ultimately addressed through local, national, regional and international policies and programmes.



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