Unstable Landownership and Economic Differentiation Among Female-headed Households in Rural Area of Southwestern Uganda

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Abstract

It exists gender role among husbands and wives in African rural societies, they perform their own duties and try to secure their livelihoods. In recent years, the number of female-headed households tends to increase globally. Female-headed households are low socio-economic status than male-headed households. In Republic of Uganda of research country, female-headed households accounted for 30% of all households. This paper aims to clarify the economic differentiation among female-headed households focusing on the causes of separation from their spouses, the landownership and income and expenditure in households. Through field survey, it was clear to exist the gap of economic conditions among female-headed households, and the landownership was one factor to give raise to economic differentiation. The economic resources of the spouses and the separation from the spouses greatly influenced whether women can obtain the landownership or not. Landowing households engage in agricultural work and cash income-generating activities, and secure their own livelihoods. On the other hand, other women are unable to own land, and instead try to rent land. Even though women engage in agricultural work in rented land, it is difficult for them to cover the living costs. It suggests that the economic differentiations are expanding among female-headed households in this region. It must consider how to support vulnerable women putting into the lowest socio-economic position in society.

Key words: female-headed households, self-sufficiency, landownership, economic differentiation, Republic of Uganda

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I Introduction

In rural African societies, gender roles are still dominant, and men and women support each other by fulfilling their own duties. Women tend to produce food crops while men tend to produce cash crops via agricultural work (Jossy, 1996; Opio, 2003; Agea et al., 2007; Ogunlela and Mukhtar, 2009). In this study, I studied the Republic of Uganda, a country with strong existing gender roles for husbands and wives in daily life. Currently, Uganda is a multiracial nation with 56 distinct ethnic groups. Some ethnic groups comprise over 1 million people and occupy approximately 70% of the total population of Uganda. Sorensen (1996) reported that, traditionally, the husband’s role is to cultivate agricultural products for cash income and to engage in cash income-generating activities; the wife traditionally has the role of planting food crops and taking care of the house. Kirindi’s study (2008) referred to social norms for women in Ankore society. Ankore wives have a key role with regard to hosting visitors, but wives are prohibited from hosting men in the same room, with the exceptions of their husbands. Married couples living in rural areas have traditionally secured their livelihoods on the basis of these gender roles.

Globally, the number of households headed by women (female-headed households) is increasing (Wojtkiewicz et al., 1990; Bongaarts, 2001). Nearly one in four households in Africa are female-headed households1) and a high percentage of these households are considered poor (Chant, 1997). The female householders have various backgrounds and female-headed households may result from a number of reasons, including widowhood, divorce and de facto headship, the illness of a spouse, or a spouse’s migration to an urban area to find work (Horrell and Krishnan, 2007: 1351). In South Africa, females head nearly half of all households (Department of Health, Medical Research Council, OrCMacro, 2007). The reasons for female-headship in this region often relate to male labor migration to urban areas under apartheid and the death of a spouse from AIDS (Schatz et al., 2011). In Zimbabwe, female-headed households comprise 40% of all households; similar to South Africa, this is often HIV/AIDS-infected and male migrant workers. In Southern Africa, HIV/AIDS is a major contributing factor to the increasing number of widow-headed households. Other reasons why a woman might live alone include urbanization (instigated for the purpose of economic growth), and expanding their employment for cash income-generating activities.

In Uganda, female-headed households accounted for 30.1% of all households in 2010 (UBOS, 2010), and the number of widows is steadily increasing. According to Naybor (2015), widowhood had increased twofold by 2010 compared to 2005; the reason for this is that the number of husbands lost to HIV/AIDS is increasing (Ministry of Health and ORC Macro, 2006). The HIV prevalence rate in Uganda in 2014 was 7.3%, a high percentage compared to the average global rate of 0.8%. However, Uganda hit its peak level of HIV infections in 1993, when HIV prevalence was 18.5%. The impact of HIV/AIDS is still being felt by households.

In East Africa, women entering the workforce are a relatively new phenomenon (Robertson, 1995). By expanding their employment, and due to the increase in educational institutions in urban areas, it has become possible for women to earn cash income and secure their own livelihoods. Some such women accomplish

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economic independence, so that they do not require any financial support from men. As a result, the number of divorces has increased commensurate with the number of independent women. Women in Ganda society are taught to avoid marital conflict by suppressing anger or disagreement and to generally endure the hardships that marriage may bring (Nyanzi et al., 2005). Through urbanization and the increase in cash income for females, the gender role-based society of Uganda may undergo a great deal of change.

In this study, I examine the landownership of households in rural areas of Uganda. I also analyze the conditions of habitation of widows and divorced women, focusing on their economic activities and the causes of separation from their spouses. This study explores land area, agriculture, and the balance between income and expenditure in female-headed households, and verifies a method to establish women’s sources of livelihood in rural societies.

II Outline of the Rural Area of Interest in Uganda

1 Population in research area

The study area was “K village” located in the Malongo Sub-county of the Lwengo District of the Republic of Uganda, East Africa (Figure 1). K village, 200 km away from the capital city of Kampala, is situated in the

![Figure 1. Research area.](image-url)
westernmost part of the Lwengo District and is only 5 km away from the town of Lyantonde District. A concrete paved road from Lyantonde town to K village was opened in 2015. As a result, it is now easier for inhabitants of K village to move to or work in the larger town; it only takes 15 minutes by bicycle and 40 minutes by foot. Inhabitants take advantage of this increased access to Lyantonde by buying necessities and foodstuffs, selling agricultural products, and attending school. With regard to gender roles, men assume the duty of selling agricultural products, as there is a price difference between the town and the village. Men often visit a town to sell agricultural products and earn cash income.

In 2015, the total population of K village was 309 people, which included 141 men and 168 women among 66 households (Figure 2). Of the total population, 63.8% was under 20 years of age. It is expected that the total population of K village will continue to increase. Of the households in the village, 44 consisted of a husband and wife where the husband was the head of the household. Five of the households consisted of single men. There were 17 female-headed households, accounting for 25.8% of the total number of households.

K village has a multiethnic makeup, with the following seven ethnic groups represented: Ankore, Congo, Fumbira, Ganda, Kiga, Rwanda, and Toro. Ganda and Ankore ethnicities comprise over 80.0% of the total population. The reason for this high ratio is that K village used to serve as a boundary between the Buganda kingdom and the Ankore kingdom before independence was achieved in Uganda.

![Figure 2. Population pyramid of K village. (September 2015)](source: by author)
2 Transition of land tenure system in Uganda

In this section, I describe the transition of land tenure systems in Uganda from the former colonial period to post-independence. There were kingdoms such as Ankore, Buganda, Nyoro, and Toro in Uganda before the British protectorate. In the late 19th century, Britain colonized East Africa and the domestic land system in Uganda changed as a result. There are indications that K village used to serve as a boundary between the kingdoms of Ankore and Buganda. More specifically, K village was located inside the territory of the Buganda kingdom, and thus was subject to the land system of that Buganda kingdom. I will now describe the land tenure system transition.

In the Buganda kingdom, the king had dominion over each parcel of land, including their agricultural products, trees and minerals, as well as sovereignty over the people living there (Richard, 1973; Okuku, 2006). Heads of local authorities formed subordinate relationships with the king, and were given direct right of access to territory. They also had the right to collect taxes on commodities and conscript residents. In 1900, the Buganda kingdom and Britain entered into a treaty known as “The Uganda Agreement”. After that, other kingdoms such as Ankore, Nyoro, and Toro also entered into agreements with Britain. After signing the treaty, the Buganda kingdom was recognized as an actual “nation”, and also as the deputy enforcer of the British protectorate; i.e., it was granted sovereignty.

Land tenure systems in the Buganda kingdom were divided into two types. Lands belonging to the kingdom were called “mailo land” and lands belonging to the British protectorate were called “crown land” (Green, 2005). Under this land tenure system, landownership was clearly defined; in time, the system moved toward individual landownership. The Land Law of 1908 rendered it possible for people to buy and sell land freely, whereas before this had been prohibited. The British protectorate also measured land areas to confirm actual conditions of landownership. In 1913, local administrations started to issue certificates for individual landownership. In 1928, “The Buganda Busuulu and Envujjo Law” was enacted, which stipulates a tax scheme and the relationship between landlords and tenants.

The contents of the Uganda agreement in 1900 followed the Uganda Independence Act, which was issued following independence in 1962. The constitution was revised in 1995, and the Land Act of 1998 was enacted based on the new constitution; as a result, every parcel of land was now deemed to belong to the people of Uganda (UN-HABITAT, 2007: 12). While the Land Act of 1998 aimed to strengthen individual claims to land ownership via land registration, progress was limited due to high land registration fees (Mabikke, 2011).

3 Farming systems in southwestern Uganda

There are two patterns of farmland use in K village. In this region, bananas are a convenient staple food. People refer to banana fields as “lusuku”, and to other fields as “enimiro.” By adding the name of each agricultural product to the word “enimiro”, people are able to identify what is planted in each field. In Ganda society, people are happy to plant bananas as they have high social and cultural value (Tushemereirwe et al., 2001; Reid, 2002). Some households that own banana fields plant various other crops within the fields, and secure self-sufficiency in this manner. Bananas are also shade trees, which mean that households are able to plant cash crops such as coffee and sugar cane in banana fields. People sell these cash crops for income.
4 Landownership and livelihood activities

Inhabitants of K village refer to landownership as “kibanja.” In Ganda society, individual landownership is permitted. People can decide on a sale price of land through negotiation, but then need approval from a village headman, registered as a “LC1” (Local Council 1). The LC1 understands the overall land boundaries and relationships among landowners within a village. The process of seeking approval from the LC1 helps to prevent land grabbing, which is rampant in Uganda, especially in the urban areas. Even though buying and selling land is permitted, the LC1 plays a key role in proving that the buyer is the landowner.

The main livelihood of the inhabitants of K village is agriculture. First, people buy land and build a house. They then try to construct farmland around or beside the house. However, some people own an insufficient area of land for agriculture and therefore build only a house. Such people buy or rent a piece of farmland located at some distance from their house, and engage in agricultural work on that land. Inhabitants try to plant staple foods such as bananas, maize, cassava, or sweet potato, as well as a supplementary food crop such as beans or groundnuts.

5 Differences in land area among households

In September 2015, I conducted interviews with 66 households regarding landownership. In total, 37 households (56.1%) had the landownership, kibanja. Furthermore, 13 households (19.7%) used parts of land owned by relatives, especially parents. There were nine households that did not have the right of kibanja; they rent farmland from landlords. There were four kibanja households (6.1%) that rented farmland to other inhabitants of K village. One kibanja household used family land, and two households both used family land and rented out farmland. In K village, approximately 60% of households were individual landowners.

At the same time, I measured household land areas using a hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) device (Garmin Ltd, etrex20). One male-headed household owned 8.74 ha. This household took advantage of their property by using it as grazing land for cows. Another household owned only 0.02 ha of land, and built a house on that land. This household tried to engage in agriculture on their property. There were 37 landowning households that grew perennial plants such as bananas, coffee, mangos, and jackfruit. The average total land area owned was 1.2 ha. Every household owned their own house and farmland, which together represent the basis of their livelihood.

Although 60% of total households were landowners, nine households were not; these households were in landlord-tenant relationships, whereby tenants live on rented land and pay rent. Of these nine households, three were female-headed and the average farmland available to them was below 0.13 ha. The largest available land area among the nine households was 0.25 ha, with the smallest available area being 0.02 ha. The average farmland available to these nine households differed by over 1.0 ha from that of all landowners. When comparing
landowners and tenants, the land area available to tenants was smaller. Tenants are prohibited by landlords from planting perennial plants, such as bananas and coffee. Tenants try to plant annual plants such as maize, Irish potato, and beans twice in a year to ensure self-sufficiency based on agriculture. Tenants earn cash income by selling these harvested crops, but they have to allocate some of this income to land rent.

6 Correlation between migration year and landownership

I have already noted a high rate of migration and individual landownership in K village. I interviewed inhabitants of K village in the year of their migration and collected data for 50 households expecting 16 households to be using family land (Table 1). One landowning household migrated to K village in 1948. Mr. J, the head of this household, explained that there were bushes around K village in the 1950s and 1960s. After independence, people steadily migrated to K village. Of the 37 households owning land, 17 (45.9%) migrated to K village in the 1980s and 1990s. 12 households (32.4%) moved to the village after 2000, their average land area was 0.99 ha, which was below the average amount among all landowners.

Three households, containing nine tenants overall, were female-headed. These women had all experienced a divorce. After the divorce, they left their husband’s land and moved to K village alone, since they could not stay with relatives. Their land area in K village was small and insufficient for agriculture. There is also a large difference in available land area between landowners and tenants. The major factor underlying this gap is the year of migration, and as a result there was a land fragmentation in K village. Furthermore, some households migrating after the 2000s could not obtain any land.

In K village, there were 17 female-headed households. This paper focuses on three female householders in particular. They have diverse backgrounds about the separation from spouses and the landownership. One woman migrated before the 2000s and lost her husband, the second migrated to K village for marriage and subsequently got divorced, and the third was divorced in another place and migrated alone to K village after 2000. The next section describes their life histories, the conditions of their landownership, and the economic situation of their households.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of migration</th>
<th>Landowner</th>
<th>Landowner/Tenant</th>
<th>Tenant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>～1969</td>
<td>2 (5.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970～1979</td>
<td>6 (16.2%)</td>
<td>1 (25.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980～1989</td>
<td>9 (24.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990～1999</td>
<td>8 (21.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000～2009</td>
<td>7 (18.9%)</td>
<td>1 (25.0%)</td>
<td>2 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010～</td>
<td>5 (13.5%)</td>
<td>2 (50.0%)</td>
<td>7 (77.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37 (100.0%)</td>
<td>4 (100.0%)</td>
<td>9 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: by author
III Ms. V: Inherited Land from Her Husband in K Village

1 Life history of Ms. V

Ms. V was born in the Rukungiri District of western Uganda in 1958. She lived with her parents, four brothers and two sisters, and they engaged in agricultural work. In 1973, when she was a third-year student at primary school, she stopped going to school and moved to the capital city of Kampala to take care of her aunt, because her aunt worked at a government hospital and lived alone.

In 1981, a friend introduced her to Mr. C, and they got married in that same year. Mr. C worked as a doctor in the Masaka District on the east side of the Lwengo District. When they got married, her husband was transferred to a hospital in the Lyantonde District. After moving to the Lyantonde District, Ms. V had four girls and one boy. For 12 years, from 1981 to 1992, they all lived in hospital accommodation, sustained by Mr. C’s salary. At that time, the couple had never engaged in agricultural work, and depended on cash income from the hospital.

Mr. C was concerned that they would be unable to continue to stay in the town after his retirement, because the cost of living was relatively high. Thus, they planned on moving to the village for a new life. Then, a co-worker Mr. S approached them with an offer to sell his land in K village. In 1992, Mr. C and Ms. V purchased part of this land, and migrated to K village on Mr. C’s retirement. They built a house, prepared the farmland, and began to engage in agricultural work. In 2012, Mr. C passed away. After her husband’s death, Ms. V inherited his land. As of September 2015, she lived with her grandchild. She sustains her livelihood by engaging in agriculture on her husband’s land.

2 Livelihood activity of Ms. V’s household

Ms. V owned 0.7 ha of land, and used 0.47 ha for cultivation in 2015 (Figure 3). The remaining 0.23 ha is used

![Figure 3. Farmland and types of crops in Ms. V’s household. (September 2015)](image-source)
for houses and fallow land. On the farmland, she planted a variety of crops, such as bananas, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, cassava, yam, maize, beans, sugar cane, and coffee. Six of these crops are considered staple foods in this area. Ms. V plants these staple foods and makes an effort to be self-sufficient. Notably, banana field occupied 0.23 ha of her land, which was half of her total farmland.

Even though growing periods are affected by the amount of rainfall, bananas can be planted and harvested throughout the year. Ms. V plants bananas diligently to reduce the off-crop season. This enables her household to harvest bananas throughout the year. She also plants sugar cane and coffee within the banana field for cash income. By selling these two agricultural products, she can earn cash to buy daily necessities.

Ms. V discussed how much money she earned and spent for the 15-day period from the 1st to 15th of January; i.e., at the beginning of the dry season. Her total income for 15 days was 154,000 UGX. Ms. V earned cash income by selling agricultural products. She sold sweet bananas and beans to earn 54,000 UGX. The grandchild who resides with her is still young, so she engages in agricultural work by herself. Moreover, she receives financial support from her son. Since 2015, she has been building a new house inside her land, and her son sent her 100,000 UGX to help with the construction costs. Ms. V is building a second house within her land because she wants to prepare a place where her children and grandchildren can stay, because they currently reside far from K village. It was important to Ms. V to keep the house that her husband left; the house also plays an important role in her self-sufficiency, enabling her to support her children and grandchildren.

Her total expenditure was 187,400 UGX, representing a deficit of 33,400 UGX. She spent a lot of money to build the new house, which took her into the red; 164,000 UGX (87.5%) of her spending was necessary to buy nails and cement, as well as to pay for carpenters. Ms. V can cover her costs of living by selling agricultural products. Even though she lost the labor of her husband, she is able to sustain herself, not including the cost of building the new house.

IV Ms. G: Experienced a Divorce and Bought Land by Herself

1 Life history of Ms. G

Ms. G was born in the Sembabule District of central Uganda in 1970. She has one older brother and one older sister. Her parents divorced in 1976, and her father evicted her mother from his land with no inheritance. As a result, her mother returned to her home village and sought help from her relatives in the Lwengo District. After the divorce, Ms. G stayed with her father, brother and sister, and engaged in agricultural work on her father’s farmland. Her mother got remarried in a village neighboring K village. In 1992, Ms. G met Mr. J while visiting her mother and married him in the same year. Mr. J did not have the financial resources at the time to provide a bride wealth, but he promised to pay in future. In 2006, Ms. G’s father was given a bride wealth by Mr. J. He was already married to another woman; thus, Ms. G joined the family as his second wife and Ms. G and his first wife worked together on Mr. J’s land. In 2001, Mr. J divorced his first wife, and arranged a settlement of land for his wife and children; the children have the right to sell this land. After dividing the land, there was insufficient

2) One US dollar was equivalent with 3,468 UGX (January, 2016)
farmland for Ms. G to engage in agriculture.

In 2002, Ms. G moved to her husband’s aunt’s house to perform agricultural work. At that time, the aunt was living alone and owned her own land in K village, so she permitted Ms. G to move to this land. After separating from Ms. G, Mr. J stopped providing her with financial support. Ms. G sustained herself via the aunt’s land, and managed to save some money from the agricultural products that she was able to sell. When she visited the town to sell her agricultural products, she learned how to cook and process foods from agricultural products. In 2011, she bought 0.02 ha of land near the market inside K village. This market is called “kaembe”, at which some people sell daily necessities, agricultural products, and alcohol. Ms. G started to sell alcohol, as well as snacks made from bananas, and earned cash income from these products. In 2012, she purchased another part of a banana field from a household moving to Lyantonde town. She was able to meet her living costs by performing agricultural work and other cash income-generating activities. As a result, she decided to seek a divorce from Mr. J. In 2015, she purchased another piece of a banana field from another household leaving for a neighboring village. As of November 2015, she has begun to build a house in a part of this banana field. She has two means of acquiring cash income: performing cash-income generating activities and selling surplus produce.

2 Livelihood activities of Ms G’s household

Ms. G owns 0.24 ha, and uses 0.02 ha of all for her house and her shop, from which she sells alcohol and snacks. She has two banana fields. One banana field is 0.14 ha and the other is 0.08 ha. Ms. G purchased these lands separately and does not have any land for a home garden. Her lands are scattered around K village and a neighboring village. The total area of her banana fields is 0.22 ha, and she plants seven types of crop: bananas, maize, yam, cassava, pumpkins, beans, and ginger. Ms. G also plants various varieties of banana for cooking, eating, and cash income. Mr. J permitted Ms. G to cultivate 0.15 ha of farmland on the land inherited by his first wife and children, because his first wife left and never returned. Ms. G planted maize, cassava, and groundnuts on this land. She balanced agricultural work with daily cash income-generating activities.

Ms. G discussed how much money she earned and spent during the 15-day period from the 1st to 15th of January. Her total income in this period was 25,000 UGX. She sold mangos harvested from her farmland to earn 3,000 UGX. She engaged in cash income-generating activity on 3 of the 15 days, earning 22,000 UGX. On January 1st, 2016, Ms. G earned 10,000 UGX by selling snacks made from bananas. This was enough money to live in the village. On the other hand, her total expenditure was 145,400 UGX; i.e., a deficit of 120,400 UGX. The reason for this deficit was the construction of a house, similar to the expenses incurred by Ms. V’s household. This accounted for 138,000 UGX (94.9%) of her total expenditure, with that money being used to buy nails, building materials, and tin roof. Without the costs of these materials, her total household expenditure would have been below 10,000 UGX, at only 7,400 UGX (spent on ingredients for the banana-based snacks). In summary, Ms. G’s household earns money by performing cash income-generating activities, and saves money daily.
V Ms. H: Experienced a Divorce and Rents Land in K Village

1 Life history of Ms. H

Ms. H was born in 1968 in Ntungamo, western Uganda. During her early childhood, she performed agricultural work on her father’s land. In 1985, when she was 17 years old, a neighbor introduced her to Mr. W, who was living in the Lwengo District. They were married in that same year. Mr. W was born in Kabale district, and was able to inherit a piece of land, albeit small in area, from his father. However, the land was insufficient in size for agricultural work. Mr. W sold the land and bought another piece of land in the rural area of Lwengo with the proceeds of the sale. Ms. H worked for a living on her husband’s land from 1985 onwards, but, her husband never engaged in agricultural work and drank alcohol all day. As a result, Ms. H was forced to sustain their livelihood by herself. The economic situation of their household continued to worsen. In 2003, her husband sold his land without Ms. H’s approval to cover their living costs. After that, they rented farmland from a villager. However, her husband did not break his drinking habit. Finally, Ms. H couldn’t bear their increased cost of living anymore. They frequently quarreled about their poverty, and Ms. H was demanded to leave. Eventually, they got divorced.

After the divorce, Ms. H returned to her home village, where she could rely on her parents’ support. Her father had already arranged a settlement of a piece of land for his sons, which left him with only a small amount of land. Ms. H engaged in agricultural work on this land. In Uganda, discrimination is often directed towards divorced women. Ms. H experienced such discrimination in her home village. As a result, it was difficult for Ms. H to sustain a livelihood on her father’s land. In 2006, she moved to K village, where one of her relatives lived.

Her relative rented her a small house and she pays him 10,000 UGX per month. She also rents 0.2 ha of farmland from a household that owns a large piece of land, paying the landlord 50,000 UGX per season, including both the dry and rainy seasons. In December 2015, she planted only maize and beans on this rented land. Her children did not support her financially. Ms. H was unable to secure a food supply from her harvests, and thus faced serious financial problems. To earn cash income, she sometimes cultivated another household’s land. By generating cash income from agricultural work, she sustained her livelihood but was unable to save any money.

2 Livelihood activity of Ms. H’s household

Ms. H has rented farmland, 600 m away from her rented house, since 2006. She is not allowed to plant bananas, coffee, mangos, or similar perennial crops because the land is leased. Ms. H planted maize and beans on her rented land. A farmland area of only 0.2 ha is insufficient for Ms. H to cover her daily expenses, but she does not have enough money to rent the farmland needed to secure her self-sufficiency.

Ms. H discussed her household income and expenditures for a given day. At that time, she had no source of income. Her total expenditure amounted to 3,700 UGX, for buying foodstuffs. At the beginning of January, people in her area start to harvest maize and beans. From September to December 2015, the rainy season was lighter than usual and crop growth was poor throughout K village. Ms. H believed that the rainy season would be late, and kept maize growing on her rented land. However, her household was not able to harvest the maize so there was a serious food shortage at that time. Even though Ms. H can earn cash income from selling
agricultural products, she has to pay land rent, which makes it impossible for her to sustain her livelihood due to lack of funds. Because she cannot acquire the necessary amount of food from her farmland, she must purchase foodstuffs with cash, but does not earn enough to do so and thus suffers from food shortages. She lives in a state of constant poverty.

By penetrating the cash economy, exchanges can act as payment in kind. Therefore, people must have a daily income; if they are unable to earn cash, their living conditions deteriorate.

VI Discussion

1 “The haves” and “the have-nots” in rural society

The Republic of Uganda is a country experiencing remarkable population growth relative to rest of Africa. In 2002, the total population of Uganda was 24 million (UBOS, 2006), which had risen to 34 million by 2014 (UBOS, 2014). From 2002 to 2014, the population growth rate of Uganda was 3.0%. It is assumed that the total population by 2025 could reach 54.9 million. If the population continues to increase, it will become impossible to ensure adequate food supply from domestic production alone (Migadde, 2013). With this increase in total population, population density has also doubled, from 86 persons/km² in 1991 to 173 persons/km² in 2014 (UBOS, 2014); this has caused land scarcity in Uganda.

A similar situation has been developing in K village. As mentioned above, K village represents the boundary between the Buganda kingdom and the Ankore kingdom; originally it had a modest population density, until the colonial period began in Uganda. By becoming individual landowners, some households could not access land in their home village because of population pressures. As a result, people suffering from land shortages have continued to migrate to K village since the 1970s. K village had the capacity to accept migrants previously, but there has been no capacity for migrants to own land since 2000.

People living in rural areas accounted for 84% of the population in 2015, which is considered a large proportion. In K village, where individual landownership is legal, households with land rights have developed home gardens and engaged in agriculture. However, there is a significant difference in land area among land-owning households: some households own over 8.0 ha of land, while others own less than 0.02 ha. Commen-surate with the increasing penetration of the cash economy, more people sell and buy land with cash. The land area owned by a household also reflects its economic condition, leading to a division between “the haves” and “the have-nots”, in terms of land and wealth, in rural Ugandan society.

2 Benefits of individual landownership for female-headed households

In rural African society, landownership was a factor in increased economic disparity. Women in Africa have an unstable land rights (e.g., Tibajuka, 1997; Yngstrom, 2002; Deininger and Castagnini, 2006). The Ugandan Land Act of 1998 enshrined the rights of women to own land, and to inherit it in the case of spousal death or

divorce (Asiimwe, 2001; Mugambwa, 2002). However, women still only own 7% of all registered land (Asiimwe, 2002; Anthony, 2009), and it is much more difficult for women to access land than it is for men.

Landowning households can plant perennial plants on their land. They can increase their opportunities to earn money by planting bananas, which contribute to food security, and coffee, which generates cash income. Bananas are considered to be one of the most important food security crops, and they contribute a stable cash income (Bekunda and Woomer, 1996; Jossy, 1996; Tushemereirwe et al., 2001). For these reasons, people living in rural areas are able to live a well-balanced life for a long time in the same location.

For female-headed households that have limited labor power, perennial plants contribute to a reduced need for intense labor and increase opportunities to earn money. Ms. G cooked, and sold processed food made from bananas, earning cash income from this activity. On the other hand, households renting land are prohibited from planting perennial plants, so they try to sustain their livelihood by planting annual plants. These plants require intense labor, and they also produce an unstable yield due to seasonal variations. Therefore, there is limit to the opportunities for cash income more than there is for households owning their own land.

Although their land area is often small compared with male-headed households, it is possible for widows to own land in K village. It also is clear that it is easier for widows to own land compared to divorcees. Landowning women can sustain their livelihoods and be self-sufficient, as well as sell surplus products to earn cash income and save money daily. In spite of existing laws aimed at protecting women’s land rights in Uganda, some women are unable to exercise these rights in rural society.

3 Economic gap among female-headed households living rural areas

An economic gap exists among female-headed households. The economic resources of the husband, and whether the female householder is widowed or divorced, greatly influences the economic situation of the household. It has been reported that Ganda is a male-dominated society (Kasozi, 1994; Kirindi, 2008). For this reason, some women are required to leave their husband’s land if the husband dies or following a divorce (Asiimwe, 2009). In male-headed households, men traditionally engage in cash income-generating activities and women perform the agricultural work according to traditional gender roles; as a result, women have limited access to cash income (Nyanzi et al., 2005). Women who are required to leave their husband’s land tend to live in poverty, and often return to their home villages to seek financial support from their relatives (Varley, 1996).

Female-headed households are more likely to live in poverty and have a vulnerable position in society (Adoko et al., 2011; Evans and Day, 2011). Some women, such as Ms. V and Ms. G, have been able to sustain their own livelihoods. On the other hand, others are unable to own land, and instead try to rent land. These women are unable to save money because their outgoings are too great, on rent and foodstuffs. As a result, their living conditions tend to get progressively worse.

Previously, husbands and wives established their livelihoods based on traditional gender roles in rural societies in Africa. Nowadays, however, women may live alone for a variety of reasons and are therefore required to take on roles previously designated as male-only; thus, they must adapt and not behave stereotypically. If female-headed households lose male labor due to bereavement or divorce, they may struggle economically while engaging in agriculture and cash income-generating activities. This circumstance carries the risk of
expanding the economic gap among female-headed households in the future. To ensure the most vulnerable are not ignored, we must carefully consider how to support women experiencing a dire economic situation.

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References


ウガンダ南西部の農村における女性世帯の土地所有の脆弱性と経済格差

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アフリカ農村社会では，性別役割分業が存在し，夫と妻はお互いに与えられた役割を果たしながら生存基盤を確立している。近年，世界的に女性が世帯主の世帯（以下，女性世帯）が増加傾向にあり，女性世帯は，男性が世帯主の世帯と比較すると貧困に陥る傾向がある。調査国であるウガンダ共和国も，女性世帯が全世帯の30％を占めている。本稿は，女性世帯の配偶者との離別の経緯や土地の所有状況，世帯の収支に着目しながら，女性世帯間の経済格差を明らかにすることを目的とする。現地調査を通じて，女性世帯の間でも経済状況が異なっていることが明らかとなった。土地所有の有無は，女性世帯間の経済格差を生み出す要因のひとつであり，土地を所有できるかどうかには，配偶者の経済状況と離別のしかたが大きく影響していた。土地を所有している女性は，農作業や非農業就労に従事しながら，生存基盤を確立することができていた。一方，土地を借用している女性は，農作業に従事しつつも自給を確保するのは難しい状況であった。女性世帯のなかでも経済格差が拡大していくことが示唆される。今後，経済・社会的に脆弱で，生活が貧乏する女性を支援する必要がある。

キーワード：女性世帯，自給自足，土地所有，経済格差，ウガンダ共和国