



A PATHWAY TO FOOD SECURITY

Tackling the Issue of Land Rights as a Pathway to Food Security in Uganda

Amplifying the voices of women farmers is proving an effective way to help tackle gender inequality and promote agroecology, helping small-scale farmers take back power over their land.

In the Adjumani and Amuria districts of Uganda, women are responsible for 75% of agricultural labour. Only 30% have rights over the land that they farm.

Male ownership of property is culturally ingrained in these communities. Women only have secondary rights through their male family members, which are often lost through circumstances out of their control, such as the death of a husband or a family dispute.

With limited knowledge of the law, women farmers are vulnerable to both corporate land-grabbing and domestic violence. In turn, they are less likely to apply the sustainable agroecological practises that ensure greater food security.

Many turn to short term solutions that produce food faster. They reject indigenous crops in favour of new seeds and chemicals that create a lower yield, are detrimental to the soil and are less resilient in the face of climate change.

“If I don’t own the land, why do I invest time in improving or protecting the soil? They will take it away from me anyway.”



Chandiru Janat is one of the beneficiaries of the GALs in landrights model in Amuria district, Orungo Subcounty

A community-led solution

Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) has been working with Oxfam to implement a community-led initiative in the Adjumani and Amuria districts of Uganda to educate and equip women farmers to ensure secure access to their land.

The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) in Lands Right Model has a multifaceted approach that is deeply rooted in community relationships to empower women small-scale farmers to identify the key challenges and advocate for themselves in the community and the courtrooms.



Chandiru Janat having family moments with her sons whose well being endeavored her to register her land so that she protects them when they grow up.

Creating a vision - and then a call to action

The initial stage works as a reference for local farmers to identify the constraints of gender inequality in land rights and how, by overcoming them, they increase the opportunities for greater food security for their entire household.

In the second stage, small-scale farmers examine strategies for addressing land rights challenges by examining the causes of inequality and making a personalised plan of action.

Lastly, farmers are encouraged to create coalitions and land mapping institutions which are instrumental in allowing women farmers the chance to build connections with other stakeholders such as local, religious and traditional leaders.

“I got the opportunity to attend a training on the GALS in Land Rights Model, I involved my husband and it was an eye-opener for the both of us. He realised my rights as his wife, and our first priority was to register and process our land title.” - Angua Lucy, Adjumani District

“The process of land registration was one of my biggest challenges because the procedure was difficult and too corrupt, but I’m thankful for this training because it helped me map the various people I’m supposed to meet up to help me with the process without asking for any money”. - Chandiru Jane Amuria District.



Lucy showing the Vision Road Journey one of the GALS methodology tools which was one of the pathway to achieving their vision as a family

The power of peer-sharing

Raising awareness of land rights issues and advocating for greater protection for women farmers is integral to the project. Both districts have been creative in their approach by using storytelling, songs and dramas to influence local people and policymakers.

Importantly, there has been considerable success in men to men dialogues. By increasing male engagement - from family members to local leaders - the communities are breaking down the cultural norms about land ownership that are harmful and widely held.



A bright future for all

By gaining secure land tenure and food sovereignty, local farmers are increasing their agricultural production, resulting in better incomes that boost the local economy. Most importantly, it's providing long term security for small-scale farmers and their families.

So far, ESAFF has trained 60 small-scale farmers as champions in the GALS in Land Rights Model who, in turn, have supported over 400 households. Not surprisingly, 65% of those beneficiaries are women.

At the forefront of the agricultural sector, women farmers are instrumental in protecting their land and promoting agroecological farming. By taking the lead in addressing their land rights issues, they are tackling gender equality head-on and securing prosperity for both their families and their communities.

Akwiror Sarah from Amuria district presenting the freehold agreement of land allocation she obtained together with her late husband

“The title had my name as his wife together with all our children, both the boys and girls. I can say this land belongs to us as a family. I can use it to farm without fear.”



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Author: Namatovu Rashidah, Programs Officer – Livelihood Development, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) Uganda

Email: rnamatovu@esaffuganda.org

Web: www.esaffuganda.org

WHO IS AFSA?

AFSA brings small-scale farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, faith groups, consumers, youth and activists from across the continent of Africa to create a united and louder voice for food sovereignty.

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