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## **The Impact of Intra-Household Gender Relations in Accessing Agricultural Extension Services for Improved Livelihoods: The Case of NAADS Beneficiary Sub- Counties in Kabale District**

Peace Mbabazi<sup>a\*</sup>, Godfrey B. Asimwe<sup>b</sup>, Charles Tushaboomwe Kazooba<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Social Research Leader and PhD candidate, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies Mbarara University of Science and Technology, P.O Box 1410 Mbarara, Uganda*

<sup>b</sup>*Associate Professor and Dean, School: College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University, P.O. Box 72 Kampala, Uganda*

<sup>c</sup>*Associate Professor, Faculty of Business Management Sciences Mbarara University of Science and Technology, P.O Box 1410 Mbarara, Uganda*

<sup>a</sup>*Email: pmbabazi@must.ac.ug*

<sup>b</sup>*Email: god.asimwe@gmail.com*

<sup>c</sup>*Email: tkazooba@must.ac.ug*

### **Abstract**

This study explored the influence of intra-household gender relations in access to Agricultural Extension Services (AESs) for improved livelihoods as a pathway to long term poverty reduction. The study covered the four NAADS pioneer beneficiary Sub counties of Bubare, Bukiinda, Ikumba and Maziba in Kabale district. It analysed gender based relational differences prevailing between men and women in a household (HH) in the creation and recreation of secure livelihoods through AESs. A mixed method approach with cross sectional and exploratory research designs was used to collect data through documentary review, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), HH surveys, Key Informant (KI) interviews and observation checklist. The study sample comprised of 181 farmers' HHs and 14 KIs.

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\* Corresponding author.

The study results revealed that intra-HH gender relations among the Bakiga people of Kabale district are situated within a patriarchal setting which exhibit men's dominance over women's decisions in major spheres of life which affects equal access to AESs. Although AESs have been operational in the district for over a decade, their existence has not transformed farmers' livelihoods in which is majorly attributed to unequal gender relations with regard to gender roles and division of labour, resource distribution, ownership and control as well as decision making which are reinforced by the Bakiga's patriarchal system. Extension system is "gender blind" and NAADS agents/officials pay little attention to the gender relations which are skewed in favour of men, yet women are the key actors in agriculture production and reproduction. Micro, meso and macro level extension systems and structures were also anchored onto the patriarchal power setting thus obscure how women and men access production resources in their HHs in pursuit of livelihood streams. Thus, there is need for equitable technical advice to principle HHs members and examination of the composition of AESs structure as well as deconstructing HH power and control structure in pursuit of improved livelihood. This will empower women who are the linchpin of HH production and reproduction hence creating foundational pathways for improved livelihood.

**Keywords:** Intra-household Gender relations; Agriculture extension Services; Livelihoods.

## **1. Introduction**

The topic of gender relations at household (HH) level and how these relations influence accessibility to Agriculture Extension Services (AESs) is very pertinent in the development paradigms particularly in the debates of improving rural agrarian livelihoods. This is mainly because gender relations shape the gender roles and division of labour, resource ownership rights, decision-making power and freedom of individual actors ([2;1,12;3;22;25]). In the context of this study, intra-HH gender relations denote the in-house interactive power, capabilities and preferences that form a livelihood outcome which is in resonance with the interpretations of the trio aspects in Sen's framework [22]. How these determine access and use of AESs are pronounced at HH level where a man and a woman live together as husband and wife and not as merely male and female in the society. Gender relations determine what outcome of behaviors; both social, economic and political, especially if a person wants to engage in economic roles not consistent with the societal prescribed roles according to sex [13;22;9;15;3]. Thus, identifying the nature of gender relations not only provides a clear picture of intra-HH responsibilities but can also show us the levels of access, utilisation and affordability of AESs *vis à vis* HH livelihood outcomes. A livelihood comprises the capabilities, both material and social resource assets and activities required for a means of living. This analysis allows for investigations on how gender relations influence access to AESs among HH principle members.

Various discourses describe gender relations as the mutually constitutive symbolic and material relations of power and authority between men and women in the HH and wider socio-economic **settings** [26;12,3;18;11;4]. In the same vein, [16,5] define gender as the socially constructed roles and responsibilities between women and men. [9] links gender to sex and explains that gender is the characteristics and behaviours of a particular sex dictated by society. However, the aspect of gender relations of power between women and men is complex in nature to allow full understanding; yet, these relations affect socio-economic outcomes in diverse ways. The

complexity arises from its composition of both the material and the ideological attributes. Such manifest not only in the division of labour and resources between women and men, but also in ideas and representations, the ascribing to women and men of different abilities, attitudes, desires, personality traits, behaviour patterns among others [19;3;21;12;16]. Generally, intra and extra-HH environment is characterized by un-equal gender relations in form of gendered inordinate roles and accessibility to services essential for livelihood improvements; suggesting that efforts aimed at livelihood improvement benefit males and females differently.

### ***1.1 Contextualising Agriculture and livelihood***

The importance of agriculture sector is more pronounced in developing countries as one of the main thrust of national development and a suitable tool against insecure livelihood [1;6;2]. Agriculture has high potential for stimulating economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) [6;22]. The sector provides livelihoods for over 80% of the population [22;27] and accounts for 70% of employment, 40 % of exports and 33 % of the gross domestic product [27]. In the Uganda, agriculture contributes about one-third to national GDP, one-half of export earnings and employs four-fifths of the working population [24;27]. In an agricultural based economy country like Uganda, where 72%-80% of HHs derive their livelihoods from crop growing and animal keeping, secure livelihoods cannot be discussed in isolation of agriculture interventions[14;23].

In the Uganda's predominant peasant-based agrarian economy, access to AESs is paramount, is anticipated to increase productivity and hence improve livelihoods. This paper posits that, in any agrarian community, a HH is the major unit of production and consumption which sells the surplus through formal and informal markets for its reproduction [4]. A HH is, therefore, a site of social and power relations that influence any pro development initiative. In any agriculture oriented development initiative, the key concern is how principal members in a HH are: (i) positioned with regard to production processes and income from its resources and (ii) how this positioning is likely to affect the creation HH livelihoods. The differing rights and roles of men and women in HH livelihood creation and recreation are largely reflective of gendered norms, expectations and power structures both within the HH and the larger society [11].

Historically, gender relations and family livelihood creation have generically reinforced each other where women provide labour *vis à vis* men's dominance over resources [11]. In Kabale district, the HH's unequal system is embedded in the Bakiga patriarchal institutions that were continuously reinforced by the colonial and post-colonial structures [19]. Subsequently, the entire operational structures continued to be shaped by the unequal gender relations that are deeply entrenched in rigid institutional and ideological systems. This paper presents evidence from the four NAADS pioneer beneficiary Sub counties in Kabale<sup>a</sup> district of Uganda and is situated in the Social Sciences discipline secured after empirical assessments and visual observations. The study underwrites new empirical evidence and informs analysis on the HH gender relations in accessing AESs and how this translates into observed differences in agricultural production and overall family welfare in the district between 2000 and 2015 when AESs presumably took a new a shape.

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<sup>a</sup>*Kabale means "a small stone". It originated from a piece of iron ore that was so heavy that people used to come from far and near to see and feel its weight that was later taken to the Entebbe the then protectorate headquarters*

## **2. Materials and methods**

This study used cross sectional and explanatory designs with an intention of understanding the entire population and sub-set of that population to know the differences that exist [20]. Explanatory design formed an in-depth interpretation of the current information on the subject matter. The cross sectional design was employed to generate and triangulate from wider section of people within the community and variables as recommended in a mixed methods approach [20]. The quantitative approach was premised on using numbers through close ended questions which brought the descriptive statistics at HH level of small holder producers and the level of impact by AESs into limelight. It is associated with post positivist tradition where the researchers develop instruments to collect data, measure variables and assess statistical results [7;8]. The basis for employing this approach was to expand the breadth of research to offset the weaknesses of either approach alone see [8]. This framework enabled the collection of comprehensive data for generalization, validation of data and drawing of valid conclusions.

Material for this study was gathered through field work and district records. Primary data was generated from the interview guides, unpublished reports, FGDs and observation checklist. Additionally, secondary data was generated from existing records on AES policy, access and utilisation and rural livelihood spectrum. Specific focus was on extension implementation practice with regard to intra-HH gender relations versus access to AESs for livelihood improvement. Overall, the study used structured questionnaires for HH survey, interview guide for FGDs and KI's in-depth interviews augmented by observation guide. The survey instruments used were developed following exploratory visits to the district, sharing with development workers, and NAADS/OWC experts at the Sub-counties. This provided more insights on the type of data to be collected and the sampling procedure to be used. A pre-test of the tools was conducted with ten HHs in Bubare Sub-county to adhere to validity and reliability. Minor changes were made, and complete questionnaires produced. The missing gaps were filled by going back to the farmers and other stakeholders for clarity.

### **2.1 Limitations of the Study**

Since the study sought to explore how intra HH gender relations affect access to AESs, some respondents were not willing to release such information. That aside, some members of the HH were very suspicious of each other, and the relationship between some of them was constrained. Interviewing different members of the HH from one community and going to another for purposes of this research created a lot of suspicions and somehow affected the type of information obtained. This was solved by using the Local Council Leaders (LCs) in the different areas to clarify to the HH members the purposes of the study. Borrowing a leaf from [8], the researcher endeavoured to create acquaintance and trust and took a lengthy time with respondents to build confidence so as to enable them speak out naturally. Some of the respondents expected financial rewards before they could release any information. This was solved by clearly stating the purpose of the study and where the researcher is from.

The time spent in each village was limited and gaining understanding of certain aspects of couple relationships with regard to gendered roles such as contribution to house/farm work and decision-making, was very difficult.

To obtain an understanding of relational aspects like roles, rights and decision-making would necessitate spending a much longer time in a village, as greater insights and trust would need to be built up. Creating social ties with some residents made the researchers' return at a convenient to complement observable features and concealed behaviours.

Related to the above, respondents were quite uncomfortable answering questions about their relationships with their spouses, which made it possible to ask more in-depth questions. The study also incurred some non-response problem that is majorly synonymous with opinion surveys. There was the potential for non-response bias or possible unwillingness to respond to particular questions and a positive response bias; possible tendency of respondents to give the "morally correct" answer, or what they think the investigator wants to hear. To mitigate these potential sources of bias:

- 1) indicators of discriminatory behaviors were listed, as well as definitions for types of discrimination, on the instruments;
- 2) respondents were assured of confidentiality; and 3) data from other sources were triangulated to substantiate themes (FGDs, surveys, KIs, extension service Reports).

The extension services being primarily a government initiative, some respondents tended to withhold data on sensitive issues. This was minimized by creating a good rapport and informal probing with participants to win their confidence and trust.

### **3. Presentation of research findings**

#### ***3.1 Introduction***

The National Development Plan indicates that only 51% of women participate in decision-making at HH level, a reflection of their level participation in societal development generally. One in every seven HHs obtain their livelihood from subsistence farming with a majority (82%) based in rural areas [18]. Households that depend on employment earnings for their livelihood account for a mere (16%) while those that depend on commercial farming are only 2%. Systematic discrimination against women and girls is both a cause and a result of the inequality that drives insecure livelihood as well as long-term poverty. It can be exacerbated by class, ethnicity, wars and age, as well as religious and other fundamentalism. Women who respond to diverse deficiencies, defend rights to natural resources, campaign for freedom from physical and sexual abuse, and promote democratic participation often suffer physical and psychological ferocity. According to [25], 16% of men are in paid employment in comparison to 7.7% of women [25]. Of these, 10.6% females in comparison to 9.1 males earn less than 50,000 Uganda Shilling. 9.3% males in comparison to 2.5% females earn more than 500,000 Uganda shillings. Whereas majority females (81.3%) derive their livelihood from the agricultural sector in comparison to 70.2% males, 21.8% males in comparison to 17.4% females have access to credit. The deprived positioning of women deny them access to facilities which are crucial to access AESs [25].

The importance of AESs and rural development is widely recognized and so it is not surprising that agricultural

extension is noted prime on the international development agenda [6;1;26]. Agricultural development through advisory services has been a major concern for most developing countries in the last two decades due to its role in promoting agricultural productivity, food security as well as an engine of economic growth. Whereas the rural HH livelihoods of millions of Ugandans are essentially dependent on agriculture and related activities, agriculture innovations have not significantly improved incomes and livelihoods of small holder producers. This study argues that women who are the principle actors in a HH are marginalized from accessing AESs which are crucial in HH production and livelihood improvement. This marginalization of women from agricultural services is best understood from the broader patriarchal setting of the Bakiga community that promote male dominance in most spheres of livelihood creation, recreation and sustenance.

Earlier works on AESs provisioning in Uganda concentrated at meso and macro levels, highlighting institutional management related weaknesses; pointing out socio-political strands like kinship lineage, class, status and ethnicity in NAADs, but hardly focused on gender relations. At meso level, [1;3] illuminated on women struggles against socio-politically defined male domains and power in markets in central Uganda. In an earlier work [3] perceived marginalisation of women through economic dependence as connected to the need to control their sexuality. Other subsequent works were insightful on the traditional and colonial institutional interface of embedded gender inequalities [3]. Although there have been reforms since the 1980s, multi-level institutional transformation is still needed to attain a women's positioning with regard to resource control, division of labour and decision making as a pathways to secure livelihood.

This research indicates that gender relational inequalities in access to AESs have remained obstinate in Uganda despite efforts to eliminate them while insecure livelihood problem remain severe in rural agrarian communities despite the existence of AESs. Seventy six percent of respondents pointed out that gendered power derived from male dominance in resource ownership and control, decision making and access to services cut across intra and extra-HH environment which enforce multi-unit threaded women marginalisation vice as well as insecure livelihood. HH and micro-level extension structures were also anchored onto the patriarchal power setting thus obscure how women and men access production resources in their HHs in pursuit of different livelihood streams.

This paper posits that farming constitutes a major source of food and income for the district rural communities and plays a major role in livelihood sustenance. In general, 92% of the participants depend on agriculture for food and income. A HH is a basic production and consumption unit and an entry point for development interventions yet it is governed by unequal power. There is unequal distribution of resources and responsibilities among principle actors which affect equal access to AESs and this in turn has negative connotations on livelihood.

Even though women were influential in HH production for livelihood creation and recreation in Kabale small holder producer dominated community, it was mainly men who took major decisions on the proceeds from the crops and a few available animals. A respondent put it this way: *"It is " Omwaami wangye" ( my master/lord) who sells all the maize and apples harvested from our 3 plots. For me, I cook and provide labour with my children and the casual laborer; period. To be honest, it is my husband who has a final say on income and*

*expenditure in this house” (F/46) Kyebe, 05/4/2016).* Other women respondents summed it up that, they were servants under the command of the HH heads and to oppose may be an abomination to a cherished mukiga woman (Women FGD4, 25/5/2016). This universally accepted practice had negative inferences on women’s mobility and capital base that is required to access AESs for livelihood improvement.

### **3.2 Intra-HH gender roles and access to AESs**

This section analysed the in-house structural distribution of responsibilities and labour among principle members depending on positioning *vis à vis* and how this shapes access to AESs as well as livelihood outcomes. This was achieved by assessing the way HH and farm work are divided between men and women according to their gender roles and factors that conserve such a structure. Eighty two percent of the married women pointed out that unceasing couple conflicts with regard to socially constructed roles affect their access to AESs and HH production levels. This was majorly attributed to controlling husbands and misuse of proceeds by their spouses.

The study revealed that intra-HH gender roles and division of labour has a bearing on knowledge uptake, technology adoption, access to credit and input use among female and male participants. The determinants of the above were associated with marital status, family headship, couples relationship, occupation, distribution of labour and decision making. Uneven division of HH labour remains a major factor constraining the growth of small holder producers in Kabale district. In the Kabale peasantry agrarian communities the way HH labour is distributed becomes a pertinent question in terms of access to AESs, livelihood formation and sustenance owing that women who are the principle producers are marginalised.

Literature reveal that gender roles are a result of societal definition of masculinity and femininity and such determines the way HH labour is divided among different sex see [12]. The Kabale “patriarchal” peasantry agrarian community codifies norms that shape behaviors generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their sexuality. This paper suggests that intra-HH gender roles and division of labour are key drivers and maintainers of both women’s inaccessibility to AESs and HH insecure livelihoods in the area. For example, it is within the HH that social divisions such as gender and kinship operationalize systems of labour obligation, resource allocation and income distribution giving rise to inequities. This practice sanctions men’s supremacy as accepted by their spouses subjecting their access to AESs to the will of men. This study indicates that couple relations are not only vertical to the subordination of women and superiority of husbands as heads of HHs but they are also faced with significant levels of domestic violence whenever a woman acts contrary to her husband’s orders as voiced by one respondent;

*‘I was buttered into coma, sent home when I attended farmer training at the sub county without my husband’s permission. After being hospitalised for a month, was then sent back to my parents for disrespecting my spouse. Paradoxically when my husband came for me , my family and community elders judged against me and I was forced to buy a goat as a sacrifice to cleanse my sins so as to be accepted as repentant so as to return to my conjugal home. Since then I cannot dare to reach near extension workers or any of their gathering’ (F/ 43, Kahondo, 24/5/2016)*

The livelihood of both men and women varied due to their different roles and responsibilities within the HH. Women faced considerable gender related constraints and vulnerabilities as compared to men due to existing structures in HH and communities. The category of people who spend more than 8 hours of their normal day on farm work were majorly women (83%) compared to an average of 4 hours by men. The time women spend on housework- and farm related activities is strongly associated with their limited access to AESs. Significant associations were with access to social capital, new technologies and training in modern farming methods. Although men and women spend relatively the same time on farm work (48% versus 69%), women tend to spend more time on cooking, care for the children and the sick, cleaning, fetching water and firewood which reduce their time to engage with group members as well as extension workers. In most homesteads, women were often present since men were always away in trading centres and other leisure and redundancy escapades. This practice implies that even when women are off farm, they are occupied with home cores which give them an extra work burden resulting into time poverty with negative connotation on access to AESs. The table 3 below depicts presence by gender;

**Table 1:** Gender as observed (N=281: M=100: F=181)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	100	39.9	39.9	39.8
	Female	151	60.1	60.1	100.0
	Total	251	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2015 though 2016

Existing literature and the field data indicate that naturally, a wife holds a degree of authority inferior to the husband as shaped by societal constructed norms and behaviour [12;3]. The gender differences create diversity in expectations of what is ideal for each of the members of the family thus men and women hold different aspects of life. A man’s superior position gives him command over resources (natural, financial and human) and relieves him of domestic chores which is shouldered by women and their children. Women’s overwhelming burdens of house chores limit their opportunity for income generating work outside the home [22] hence less income. Majority respondents (71%) perceived that the position of a man as head defined by culture gives him a privilege over HH assets and relieves him of most chores. This corresponds to [5] assertion that gendered division of are typically shaped by gender role development and functioning in society which emphasize men supremacy over women thus limiting the latter’ access to diverse services. Paradoxically, the women conform to this edifice as revealed by the below narrative; “*Omusheija tarahinga kareng-neri, nobukwoba kurisa, eyo nemirimo yabaana nabanyina baabo*” literally meaning that no man can till land for a long time or look after animals since it’s a job designed for women and children (F/44 and M/53; FGD1; Birambo, (24/6/2016). Women’s acceptable HH work burden limits their mobility and social networks which in turn limit their inner ability/talent, information sharing and capital base formation that are necessary for accessing AESs.

**3.3 Resource ownership implications on access to Agriculture extension services for improved livelihood**

Reference [1] and resource as is a key determinant for accessing AESs; in the absence of which our interventions



may be unsubstantiated (KI 2, 25/5/2016).

Land was a HH production resource that shapes women's access to AESs decision-making. This revealed not only that land ownership privileges *per se* but other factors that surround use decision-making, its role as source of identity and the allocation of resources accruing from work expended on land. Focus Group Discussions revealed that resource ownership and control influence one's status in Bakiga community and provides avenues for social networks and credit acquisition that are instrumental to individual authentic empowerment as well as access to AESs. A HH as a production and reproduction unit determines the distribution of resources and other extra-HH development interventions follow the same structure. In the Kabale peasant agrarian community positioning to resource ownership is majorly shaped by patriarchal gender and power relations that relegate women and such continue to be reflected in HHs and governing institutions.

The Bakiga patriarch society's resource ownership and control is under the trust of men as *bone fide*<sup>b</sup> owners while women's access rights are through a male kin. This arrangement has negative implications on women's security, contribution, access to services and HH livelihood outcomes. In the same vein, HHs and interventions programmes are anchored unto a patriarchal system skewed in favour of men's control of HH resources which ultimately mediate access to AESs. AESs delivery approach obscures divergent intra HH dimensions by assuming a fair distribution of resources which impacts negatively on AESs. This paper argues that unequal access to agriculture support services remains a major factor constraining women's optimum performance in smallholder production in Kabale district

This investigation analyzed the relative positioning of men and women within HHs in response to AES access, uptake and outcomes in terms of livelihood transformation. Using a HH as a unit of analysis and differentiating principle members' positioning in resource ownership and control revealed how distribution trickles down to other family members. Resources like land and livestock came out prominently as key livelihood factors in the study area. Given the available dataset, three key gender indicators were used: (1) HH headship, and (2) who owns what (3) who has the right to make decisions on the land and livestock based on the question from the survey questionnaire: "Who in the HH has the right to decide what to grow on this land?" and "Who has authority to sell land or use it for collateral?" While it is acknowledged that the latter may be different than the actual decision maker on land, it can be a closer proxy for decision making to access AESs and the resultant livelihood outcomes. Inability to own resources by women constrains their ability to control proceeds from resources and such inabilities continue to prevent majority women from contributing more meaningfully and more effectively to the well-being of their and families.

In all the sub counties, the *de facto* Female Headed Households (FHHs) had the lowest land and income. Despite this low endowment, access to AESs and livelihood status was significantly better than in the higher endowed MHHs and *de jure*<sup>c</sup>FHHs which was associated to men's wasteful vice. The ability to access AESs in a

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<sup>b</sup> 'bone fide' resource owners denote rightful owners and controllers of productive resources as defined and acceptable by society.

<sup>c</sup> De jure headship implies that the legal head of household is a woman (Kennedy & Peters, 1992: 1077-1085).

relatively low endowment environment in the *de facto*<sup>d</sup> FHH is related to a combination of independent decision making power and other nurturing behavior. The findings suggest that interventions that exploit incentives to invest in AESs can provide more meaningful improvements in livelihood status where land is control controlled by women as well as sustained income growth is possible in the long term.

Men and women have specific rights that contribute to the formation of Bakiga culture which is explained by the linkage between patriarchal system and gender rights, HH relations, access and control of HH resources, particularly land and this determines trajectories to access other services. This study also takes into account institutional policy paradigms on family relations and women's control over family assets for the wellbeing of the HH. Although there have been some main stream reforms in gender perspectives, this have not yet achieved complete institutional transformation *vis â vis* equity among HH principle members. This study argues that legislative reforms alone are not enough to elevate the lives of Bakiga women when customary land rights and inheritance practices remain strong.

Land resource was found to be supporting both crop and livestock production that are basic for capital base formation. Results revealed that gender differentiated land ownership levels translate into AESs access inequality in addition to gendered differences in asset levels and livelihood improvement rates. Women are at greater disadvantage because they have relatively limited material assets and also more limited social capital (access to income, goods and services through social connections). The consequences of this disparity persist throughout a woman's entire life in diverse forms, in different areas and social structures with negative connotations on HH livelihood security.

In Uganda generally land is regarded not merely as a factor of production but as the medium which defines, binds and sustains social relations within and across generations. Land thus remains highly impulsive and a political issue and its control continue to be a critical factor in accessing AESs for improved livelihood. Land tenure system gives individual or group rights to own and access land for various livelihood while land rights sets standards of ownership and access use [25]. The land ownership systems that are recognized by Ugandan law are: mailo, freehold and customary tenure systems but then the trio are still mediated by a patriarchal setting paradigm. Land assets are important for the majority of agrarians in income generation activities for instance in the study area, 74% of HH income comes from sale of crops and 39% from livestock compared to 09% from salaried jobs. However women's land rights are limited in Uganda both by the inequitable legal structures and by traditional practice. Land size was also found to be significant with access to AESs, for instance, 67% of participating HH had more than three acres of land yet, of the 67% only 12% was FHHs.

Whereas land is a major factor of production in the Kabale agrarian community, the governing laws are not favourable for increased yields and tenable collateral for credit/loan. For instance multiple and contradictory land tenure systems often lead to land fragmentation, degradation, and insecurity of tenure. Related to this, high population growth at 3.4% is also decreasing per capita land availability for agricultural production in the area. As a result climate change effects are also adversely impacting on agricultural productivity and sustainability of

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<sup>d</sup> *De facto headship implies that male head of household is absent more than 50% of the time Kennedy & Peters, 1992: 1077-1085).*

farmers' livelihoods. In Kabale district, the high percentages of land ownership may not necessarily refer to having a legal title or registration which escalates insecurity. To ensure security of occupancy, the Land Act provides for spousal consent with respect to disposal of registered land on which the family depends for its livelihood. However this can't prevail in rural Kabale since land registration is not common. Secondly spousal consent is problematic in a context in which consent assumes equal rights of spouses and balanced power relations within marriage, which is largely non-existent in many conjugal relationships in the area. With the predominance of customary land tenure, owning land does not necessarily grant legal rights nor access to credit.

Uganda's land tenure system is characterised by overlaps and skewed land rights which have negatively impacted on different gender and long-term investments in the agriculture sector. Many landless potential farmers like women cannot easily access land due to the costs involved and cultural norms that prohibit women's land rights. Whilst women provide 70-80% of agricultural labour, a mere (07%) have rights to own or control use of land. According to the sixth draft of the Land Policy, the gender structure of the land rights varies across the country but in general it is highly imbalanced. For example, women work on the land more than men but men have up scaled land rights. The women's rights tend to be limited to access, while men are more inclined to enjoy indispensable land ownership rights [12] Statistics indicate that only 30% of women have access to and control over proceeds from land but ownership and control over land is ultimately with men [15] In general, women's access to land is usually through their spouse or male members of their family lineage [4]. In some instances, the loss of a spouse too increases the chances of violation of their rights to land. As voiced out by a victim widow in verbatim; *'Bakantuntumura nfeirwe omusheija, Nikwendandara Nsoya.....Literally meaning that I was banished out of my conjugal home after the death of my husband, that's how I have ended up wondering and begging here and there' ( F/ 61 Kigarama 12/7/2016)*. This alludes that women's access to land through their husbands per se does not grant them full say, their land access insecurity escalates with divorce or death of a husband.

In the Kabale peasant community, land is owned and disposed off in accordance with customary regulations which uphold male domination over women property rights. Although the land Act suggests spousal consent, this is not adhered to due structural dynamics. In the study area, men made 87% decisions regarding sale and purchase of land and only 13% was through spousal consensus. They also influenced 13% of decisions regarding allocation of HH income as a result of overdependence on men's land. The study realized that training women in good agricultural practices without working to strengthen their access to productive assets, to strengthen their participation in producer groups and community decision-making bodies, and to strengthen their voice in intra-household decision-making rarely has a long-term impact on productivity. For these reasons, creating empowerment pathways that go from the individual, to the community, to the wider spectrum is vital in ensuring that change cannot be undone, but rather is truly resilient over time.

Majority women (88%) felt more insecure on family land compared to men (03%) because in incidences of divorce, a man remains with absolute land right. Their insecurity pointed to inability to use land for collateral and unpredictability of their conjugal rights. The ability to own land and afford collateral for credit/loans was highly associated with access to AESs. Therefore, it can be concluded that women's lived experience of land insecurity undermines their prospects to access AESs for sustainable production needed for livelihood security.

Whereas land ownership, access and use commonly featured as major determinants of a HH's wellbeing, restricted women rights constrain their prospects for better bargaining and access to opportunities like group formation and credit facilities. The study argues that land ownership positions women in an inferior social carder with total dependence on male relatives for their land rights and this compromises their access to AESs especially credit which is crucial for expansion and improved production family livelihood.

The study revealed that most Kabale agrarian women have access (87%) to family land for agricultural production although limited control over income (13%) from agricultural proceeds. This situation compounded constraints that inhibit women from expanding livelihood activities like limited access to credit, AESs as well as being denied say in HH decision-making since men have the final say during the decision making process. Eighty five per cent of married women indicated that they were not secure on family land since they cannot guarantee permanency of their conjugal relationships. Being insecure on land also has negative outcomes on productivity levels. *“Torabikora nyensa bakakutuntumura”* literally meaning that; however hard working you could be, you can be banished any time as a key demotivator among many women, (F/45 Nyamabaare, 22/4/2016). Majority (74%) of landholding ranged between 2-3 acres but scattered across. Land size was reported to be influencing ones access to extension service but then stretched distance between plots compounded women work load and their chances of accessing credit services. This paper maintains that from a policy perspective, increasing women's access to a diversified resource portfolio is a critical component of rural livelihoods improvement since both women and men may share the returns to family assets. If women are able to capture the gains of asset over time, their ability to liquidate assets in response to shocks could greatly improve household welfare. To eliminate gender differences in access to AESs requires that social and government institutional policies should consider disparities inside a household unit as a basis of unearthing community, society and macro level challenges. Policies should ensure the development of technologies and services that reduce women's work burden and warrant them the same access to productive resources as men so as to increase yields on HH farms by significant amounts. This could consequently raise total agricultural output in Uganda, which in turn could reduce the number of rural poor.

### 3.4 Household gender dynamics in decision making implications on access to AESs

[a]re you suggesting that women should be given rights to decide over family issues? What do you expect? To wipe out all stable homes/sanity in human race? (M/57, FDG.3, Kav. ,28/9/2016). The above verbatim presupposes that a HH's stability as an institution hinges on the maintenance of unequal resource positions between women and men; and that decision making plays an important role in intra-HH gender relations, which would restrict women, freedom and mobility that are crucial to access AESs. In the 13% of HHs where husband and wife were mutually sharing resources, their livelihood were better than those where men took control over resources and decisions thereof as indicated in table 1 below;

**Table 2:** HH Decision making and livelihood

Decision category	Accessibility to services	Extension	Livelihood status
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Cooperative	High	Moderate	Low	Lower	Very good	good	fair	bad
Collective/Mutual (N=13)	10	03	01	00	00	09	05	00
Male dominated (N=83)	06	57	08	12	06	04	19	54
Female dominated N=(81)	54	22	03	02	05	12	44	30

The dichotomy among categories was attributed to capital base (76%), controlling husbands (20%) and discrimination (04%) and limited land (70%). Over all less access to AESs was highly perceived as a key driver of insecure HH livelihood owing that agriculture is the community’s bedrock for their survival. A wide range of factors determine intra-HH decision-making and resource allocation. Women’s bargaining power within the HH is largely determined by income, asset ownership, education, kinship and type of marriage, quality of relations and their overall social status. This study revealed that HHs that were governed by cooperation and collective decisions had fairly equal access to extension services and better livelihood outcomes. Intra-HH decision making power was significantly associated with access to resources and services. There was a causal relationship that greater access to resources implies higher decision making authority in a HH. Majority HHs (87%) decisions were by men while 13% was mutually made through couple consultation. Except for the rare couples that share common preferences and equal access to resources and information, the distribution of decision-making authority between spouses can be expected to affect the allocation of family resources and pathways to access AESs.

The Data set indicated that men make over 93% of all decisions regarding the purchase of land, 56% decisions regarding sale of land and only 05% of gardening decisions. The 56% decision on sale of land was attributed to the current governance system which demands the consent of women before any transaction. Gardening was a major land activity for most people in the study area. About 92% of HHs depend on agriculture and sale of farm produce as their main sources of income which may have a bearing on livelihood. Some men maintained that they were the HH heads, hence vested with the prerogative of how best to utilize their land and its proceeds. The less involvement of men influencing gardening decisions is an indication of the skewed division of labour within the HH which impacts on women’s mobility to access AESs. It has been pointed out in the literature section that farming has been perceived as a sole activity for women.

Although men and women are likely to spend relatively the same time on farm work, 62% of women time is spent on gardening as compared to 38% men; women have an added responsibility of housework. However, this study also found that husbands influence 92% of family income and resource decisions but only 05% of gardening. The implication for this outcome is that whereas women contribute highly to farm labour which is the major source of income, men control the incomes making no returns on HH’s wellbeing. Men tend to divert the income into alcoholism and polygamy leading leaving no capital for women to access AESS hence insecure livelihood. Gender relations are integral to power relations in the HH particularly with regard to decision-making power. Merely looking at who does what is inadequate to fully understand power relations in a HH and how these influence innovations for improved livelihood.

It is possible for access to AESs to improve the independent income-generating capabilities of women and in so

doing, also improve the care and nutritional status of children since a high proportion of cash income in the hands of women tends to be spent on family welfare. In situations where gender specific technology uptake is accelerated, human capital will have positive impact on general growth. Therefore analyzing how gender and livelihood interact provides a window for understanding the dynamics of human development.

Societal gender constructs influence gender roles and division of labour, resource ownership and control and decision-making processes in the home which are key contributory factors of livelihood which in turn limits the ability of women to access AESs. Existing obscure structures and systems restrain and shape the environment within which men and women operate. Underlying gender norms and cultural norms surround resource ownership and control which mediate access to credit and information. This is illustrated by men regarding themselves as legislatures of the households during training and offering collateral for credit services plus other revolving funds and as a result the extension agents reinforce these views by using biased recruitment methods. Policy reforms have not fundamentally transformed asymmetric structures. Whereas one strategy of successful policy intervention in agriculture could be empowerment and inclusion of women in development structures and processes, mere inclusion *tends* to gloss-over socio-economic structures, which are permeated by skewed gender power relations anchored by the patriarchal system. Besides reforms which aim at empowering women in extension services are superficial since specific patriarchal structures continue to influence the affirmative process. We maintain that although interventions are informed by notions of feminization of livelihood, the nexus between in house gender relations and livelihood needs to be better understood and operationalized. In the final inference, capital (both human and material) or the lack of them, are fundamental access AESs for livelihood improvement strategies, and for this reason projects that target families that already possess assets, are likely to improve the incomes of those who are already better-off and most cases would be men. Thus pursuing these results can contribute towards a greater understanding of intra-HH gender relations in the construction of gendered access to services for different livelihood streams. Their pursuit may reveal how ongoing but separate efforts at addressing gender roles, decision making, land and labour relations can be linked to engendered deprivation and how efforts at addressing gendered livelihood insecurities can be strengthened to ensure that they simultaneously reduce insecurity and enhance positive social transformation

#### **4. Discussion**

This study argues that AESs contribute to livelihood improvement of many rural HHs in the study area amidst gender relational challenges. Access to AESs for improved agricultural production is an activity greatly affected by the way in which men and women interact in a HH and at all levels thus, enabling them to interact in equal ways will free up important resources for food security and livelihood improvement. There is sequential linkage between gender roles and division of labour, resource ownership and control, decision making, access to resources and access to extension services and livelihood outcomes. Women's roles in HHs production and reproduction make them pivotal for micro-level transformation but they are deprived resources across generations. Their position and decision making in relation to HH resources varied from situations of mutual co-operation, pooling, negotiation on one hand, to subordination and struggle on the other depending on conjugal relationship. The study posits that agricultural interventions anticipate improved livelihoods through a bottom-up approach that provides a leeway for the success of micro, meso and macro level strategies. Equal access to

agricultural support services remains a major factor constraining the growth of smallholder agriculture in Kabale district. The study maintains that promoting equal access to AESs can be an effective strategy to reduce insecure livelihood in rural areas as evidence from other countries indicates that, with the extension support, farmers can contribute significantly to quality livelihoods by raising agricultural productivity and rural incomes. This role can be enhanced by making appropriate investments in the prime movers of agricultural development such as human capital, agricultural research, capital formation, and rural institutions because such investment portfolio have proved effective in other countries. Whereas the security of a HH livelihood depends on rights of both men's and women's access to and control over resources, women are marginalized. The study argues that HH livelihood outcomes depend on rewards of co-operation as well ideologies of common or divided interest and that equal gender relations in access to AESs translates into positive livelihood outcomes. This study posits that information, inputs and credit facilities will not fully achieve their goals unless women and men are on equal footing; able to make rational livelihood decisions unhindered by gendered interactive barriers. Whereas policy targets a composite and seemingly homogeneous HH, it overlooks the gender relations and power dynamics within them. However, within HHs variously positioned actors, differ on the basis of gender and age and other social parameters. Therefore, understanding gender roles and division of labour, resource ownership and decisions making at the HH level, on access to AESs would provide a leeway for successful AESs in pursuit of improved livelihoods. This study intends to investigate the influences of gender relations influence of intra-HH gender relations on access to AESs for improved livelihoods in Kabale District. In the study area of Ikumba, Bukiinda, Bubare and Maziba in Kabale District, the HHs' unequal setting is embedded in the Bakiga patriarchal institutions that were continuously reinforced by the colonial and post-colonial structures. Subsequently, the entire structures continued to be shaped by the unequal gender relations that are deeply entrenched in institutional and ideological systems. Agricultural extension services, therefore, are equally shaped by the patriarchal systems that marginalize women from accessing services thus impacting on rural livelihoods negatively. This study thus argues that there is need for extension systems to deconstruct patriarchal asymmetries in order for their services to reach women who are the principle actors in HH production for improvement of livelihoods. This study posits that fostering intra household gender equity in access to AESs improves not only women's lives, but overall HH well-being. It sets out an "improvement pathway" on several levels; the personal, community and the overall macro economy to ensure secure livelihood. Agriculture extension is one pathway for secure livelihoods in Uganda but with diverse challenges in spite of the government and non-state actor's commitment to promote technologies and practices. Beyond the technological focus, persistence variations in accessing the services are affected by core social factors at the HH level where the farming occurs most. Thus transforming intra-HH gender relations will help to make smallholder agriculture and associated development efforts more effective and efficient, with knock-on effects for a variety of livelihood outcomes. Improved livelihoods cannot be based on a narrow approach that relies solely on "rising incomes" or macroeconomic growth. Thus gendered division of household labour, allocation of household resources and submissive behaviour cannot be detached from women's living conditions, their households' wellbeing and national development strategies. We uphold that although women are the major actors in agriculture production in households; they are marginalized from major decisions and control of the resources that determine the access to extension services. Household decision structures and institutions are regulated by patriarchal power relations, and women's access to household resources is through immense struggle and

subservience

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

Whereas government established agriculture development initiatives to improve agrarian livelihood, gender subordination and low livelihoods have continued to reinforce each other in rural communities. This study concluded that in order to further improve equal access and scaling up of agriculture productivity, there is need to integrate intra-HH gender relations in agriculture initiatives towards livelihoods improvement. Failure to integrate them in the development activities has resulted into sterile debates about which factors are most responsible for livelihood insecurities and resultant poverty. Kabale agrarian women deserve better recognition and greater consideration in accessing AESs due their tangible contributions towards agriculture and rural development as well as food production. Development interventionism, therefore, must target institutional transformation and enhancement of the positive trajectories like conjugal co-operation and reciprocity in agriculture production and reproduction to attain a higher threshold. In the same vein, education and exposure of both males and females is vital for mutual respect and appreciation of women as men's partners not subjects, contributors not dependents and allies not threats to be suppressed. There is need for a well-packaged formative curriculum for sensitization of both boy and girl children aimed at de-constructing patriarchal perceptions, social divisions, prescriptions and fears that frame men's craving to control women. The study on intra-HH gender relations suggests that material and human capital are widely substantiated as a key to accessibility to AESs for livelihood improvement. Thus, the distributive delivery and quality of rural education and skills acquisition requires continuing analytical emphasis and as such enhancing the equal distribution of labour, decision making power, asset status of rural women merits special attention. This will improve their human capital, independent ownership rights over land and other resources and participation in social processes necessary to access AESs. Importantly, infrastructures like education, roads, power and communications has a powerful effect on women's mobility, choice and empowerment that merits priority in livelihood improvement strategy. Facilitating agrarian women to improve their assets, and to make use of those assets to best effect is another aspect to build their decision making capacity. The experiences of Kabale district, suggest that rural HHs do indeed engage in multiple activities for income portfolios due to climate change and limited land. In Kabale district, reliance on agriculture tends to diminish continuously as they opt to do petty trading which seems a better income portfolio for the rural HH. The study suggests that support systems like AESs if strengthened can highlight the different roles, rights which negatively impact on accessing AESs and productivity at HH levels.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Although it has not at all times been easy to translate issues arising out of research into recommendations for future action, this study attempts to give specific recommendations for deliberation. This study reveal that equal access and uptake of agriculture extension services is positively related to improved livelihoods. Thus the study provides a road pointer of interventions that could be further developed to close persistent gender gaps in accessing AESs, such as differential access to productive resources, credit, training, division of labour and



decision-making to attain secure rural livelihoods. Gender roles and division of labour should be aligned with functioning and capacity other than with the stereotyped social positions in that AESs for improving HH livelihood should emphasize people's participation as subjects rather than as objects of development. Since women are the major contributors in production and reproduction of income and food crops, their plight in regard to ownership and control of land should be paramount. Legal reform and literacy programs needs to be rather comprehensive since women's rights are determined by a complex system of rules and cultural norms. For instance, where family and succession laws restrict women's legal capacity and inheritance rights, a reform of land legislation to redress gender differences in land rights can only be effective if accompanied by a reform of these other related laws. This requires educating rural women regarding their rights, increasing their representation in decision making bodies, providing legal aid and addressing legal and cultural barriers to women's access to courts and other enforcement mechanisms. In house gender dynamics should be fully integrated in the planning and implementation of any development initiatives particularly AESs. Women ought to be empowered through training since they are the key linchpin of household production. Besides, the government should recruit and facilitate extension agents as well as integrate gendered information in disseminating agricultural technologies and services. The practice of organizing women should stem organically from specific unifying interests in order not to be seen as imposition to enhance coherence and sustainable human capital development. Ensuring twin tracking research and policy can be trajectories to improve extension services equity and accessibility in Uganda. Linking research to policy should take precedence over the research agenda, especially for the purposes of increasing knowledge and the capacity for research to influence policy and decision-making. The incorporation of a gender and sociological perspective in the framework of agricultural extension programming remains a necessity. The training of extension services staff to have a gender appreciation and improve the way they think and work should be addressed and the instructional material for extension workers should be reoriented to include gender. Extension services staff should acquire a new set of conceptual and analytical perspectives and skills in order to deal explicitly and effectively with gender relations. There is need for information dissemination on the effects of cash cropping e.g. the famous tea growing in Kabale *vis à vis* nutritional status and energy expenditure in the various types of farming structures or else politicking such a project will worsen the poverty situation in the area. Women should be encouraged and facilitated to form sustainable groups to create synergy, skills, self-confidence and a network of solidarity to tackle issues of insecure livelihoods and gender social discrimination that confronts them. Such groups should emphasize savings culture in the community to mobilize community savings and ease the availability of credit facilities needed to access AESs. There is need to institutionalise mechanisms of protecting women's rights and empowering them in the processes of co-operation, negotiation, struggle and navigation to vantage positions which can address gender-specific policies and legislation like land tenure law, inheritance law and constitutional arrangements of institutions. Caution should be taken not to reinforce or formalize existing inequities, and policies/laws should be suitable to the context in order to level the ground of productive resource ownership, control and decision making power. There is need to develop and disseminate integrated gender focused bi laws messages for better understanding and efficient use, preferably in local languages and through local media. All community members should receive training on gender mainstreaming and awareness and post intervention evaluation should be encouraged particularly to determine fundamental changes on people's livelihood.

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