



**GENDER DIFFERENTIALS IN LAND OWNERSHIP  
AND THEIR IMPACT ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY  
A CASE STUDY OF MASAKA DISTRICT IN UGANDA**

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## ABSTRACT

While women play important roles as producers of food, managers of natural resources, income earners and caretakers of household food and nutritional security they continue to face enormous social, cultural and economic constraints. Command over land assets is arguably the most severe form of inequality between men and women in Uganda today. Lack of ownership of land by women retards development and contributes to poverty and food insecurity. Despite its prevalence, gender differences in rights to land are one of the most poorly documented dimensions of gender inequality and figure in few statistical systems.

This study was done to assess gender-based inequality in ownership of resources particularly land and their impact on household food security. The study employed a three-stage sampling procedure to select 100 rural households in Masaka district. Univariate analysis (chi-square and T-tests) on descriptive statistics was done to assess the gender differentials in resource ownership. In all cases, a significance level of  $P \leq 0.1$  unless otherwise stated, was measured. To determine the impact of gender differentials in land ownership on household food security, multivariate analysis based on econometric methods was used. This involved the identification and prioritisation of the determinants of vulnerability of households to food insecurity. The weighted sum reflecting frequency and severity of household coping strategies was adopted as a proxy for the vulnerability of households to food insecurity.

Findings showed that households become less vulnerable to household food insecurity as the number of own, imported and exported labour hours, education level of household head, farm size, number of parcels owned and access to extension increased. On the other hand, the household became more vulnerable to food insecurity as the family size, dependency ratio, age of household head and distance from household's main parcel of land to nearest market increased. However, the key issues that influenced vulnerability of household to food insecurity in the study area, were land tenure security (number of parcels owned), household head gender and access to extension.

Furthermore results indicated that there were clear gender-based distinctions between men and women in terms of access, ownership and control of production resources; more especially land. However, even though the male headed households operated, owned and cultivated more land and had a significantly higher total value of production than the female headed households; the latter had a higher efficiency of land use. This suggests that all other factors held constant, if female headed households had increased land tenure security, there would be able to make management decisions on land such as what crops to grow, what techniques to use and the decision as to what to consume and what to sell and there by reap a timely and fair return which in turn would increase household food security.