

## How can Uganda address gender data gaps in the land sector?

### Executive Statement

*Land is one of the most important resource held by Ugandans. However, the lack of real time, clear and accurate disaggregated gender statistics has repeatedly made it a challenge to develop policy responses to inequalities faced by women in Uganda. Indeed, reliable gender disaggregated statistics are fundamental in highlighting the disparities in land rights between men and women, and monitoring the progress of policy formulations for gender equality in the land tenure system. This brief illustrates the extent of gender data gaps with respect to land rights in Uganda. It underscores the urgent need for the Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) to capture gender disaggregated data on land ownership and utilization. The gender data gaps can be addressed through sensitization and capacity building of stakeholders on collection of gender disaggregated data in the land sector.*

### Introduction

Secure land rights for women are often correlated with better outcomes for them and their families, including greater bargaining power at household and community levels, better child nutrition and lower levels of gender-based violence. Although women account for the bulk of the agricultural workforce, they women's ownership of the land—the main agricultural resource—remains significantly lower than that of men. According to the 2016/17 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS), at least 27% of women own land as sole owners compared to 37% for men with the rest held under joint ownership. Lower female land ownership translates into lower household agricultural productivity, severe food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty.

This brief identifies the gender data gaps as well as disparities in the Uganda land sector. The brief used compiled data on land transactions registered at selected Ministerial Zonal offices (MZOs) to highlight the gender disparities and data gaps in relation to land ownership and registration. The statistics presented in this brief was obtained from the UNHS report 2016/17, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development data base on the Land information system, as well as the Gender and Land Rights Database by FAO. Particularly, gender land ownership was assessed by distribution of land ownership by sex, area and value. Consequently, the available data gaps/inconsistencies in the existing data were discussed. In regard to registration, the section highlights the benefits of land

registration and discusses the available gender disaggregated data and gaps in regard to land registration.

Traditionally, women's land rights have been examined using inappropriate indicators such as agricultural holders and landowners, which are interchangeably used as indicators of ownership. Landownership entails legal claims to the land, the right to sell, bequeath or mortgage the land while agricultural holders are managers of land who may not be the legal owners of land. These are components of land rights, but they are different and should not be confused with one another rather they should complement each other to enhance our understanding of rights to and control over land resources. Hence, women may be land owners but not land managers in a sense that that they may have access to land but they may not have the rights to make improvements to increase its productivity on it. On the other hand, they may be legal owners but without rights to use it because of socio-cultural norms and lack of empowerment commonly among customary land tenure system.

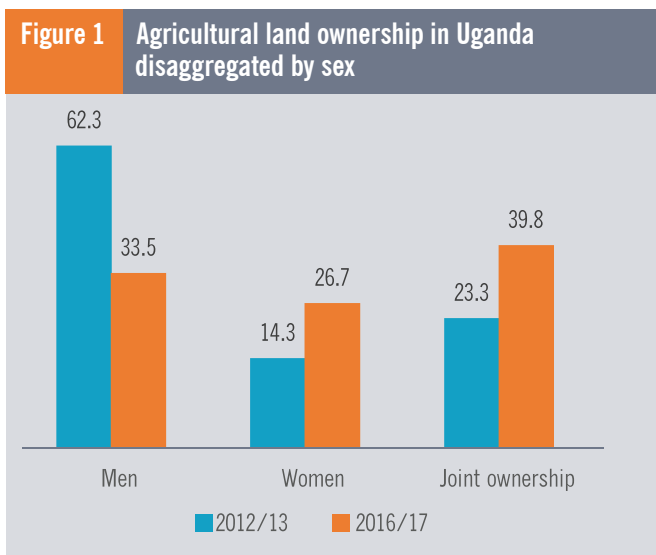
Given the above described complexities, reliable gender disaggregated statistics are fundamental in highlighting the disparities in land rights between men and women and monitoring the progress of policy formulations for gender equality in the land tenure system. The prevalent lack of clear and accurate statistics on land rights disaggregated by sex has made it difficult to develop clear policy responses to, and for monitoring of, inequalities faced by women and men in rural areas and urban areas. This brief therefore

discusses the data gaps existing in the land sector in relation to land rights and suggests new indicators that can be measured to effectively monitor gender disparities in land rights between men and women for appropriate policy formulation.

### Gender data and gaps in the land sector

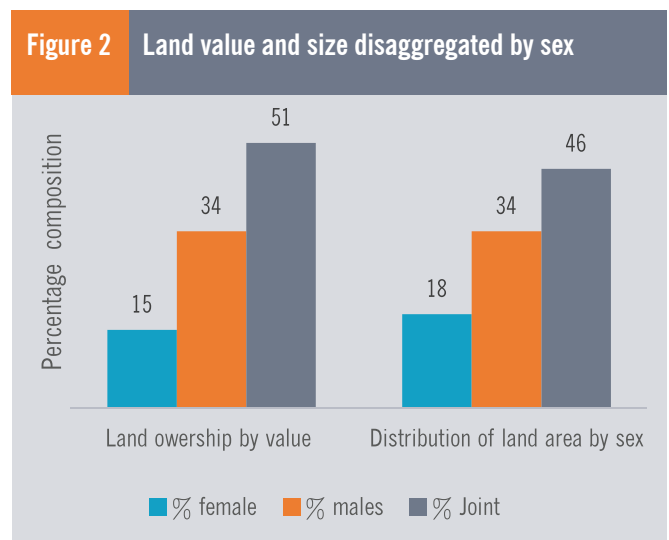
#### a) Land ownership data and gaps

**Most of the household land in Uganda is owned by men albeit with an increasing share of joint ownership.** Indeed, Figure 1 shows that there are remarkable changes in ownership of agricultural land, in favour of women. Of the households that own agricultural land, joint ownership by both men and women has greatly increased to about 40 percent in 2016/17 from 23 percent in 2012/13. Although more men than women exclusively own agricultural land, the gap in exclusive agricultural land ownership between men and women has greatly narrowed to 6.8 from 48 percentage points. While such gender disaggregated data in the land sector exists, gaps still exist as noted in the subsequent sub-section.



Source: UNHS 2016/17 Survey Report

Figure 2 shows statistics on land ownership, value and size disaggregated by sex as measured in the Gender and Land Rights Database (GLRD) by Food Agricultural Organization. Overall, land ownership among men by area and land value are higher at 34% each as compared to 18% and 15% among women respectively. This is an indicator that although land ownership among women has greatly improved as compared to men as shown in Fig 1, their land parcels are much smaller in size and in value.



Source: FAO, 2017

### Gender data gaps in land ownership

The analysis of gender statistics on land rights in Uganda reveals inconsistent and incomparable concepts, definitions and methodologies in both conducting surveys, censuses and administrative data compilation. We use the example of data/statistics on land ownership to highlight some of the sticking gaps.

#### i) Inconsistent definitions of land holding and ownership

The indicator measures the percentage of females and male agricultural landholders out of the total population of agricultural landholders. However this indicator does not capture the presence of men and women who separately own or manage few plots with in the holding hence a need to create separate indicators to capture disaggregated data at the intra-holding level on different rights on land. The indicator also considers land managers as land owners which is not the case hence the need to separate the two indicators

#### ii) Missing official data on key gender indicators

There is limited or no data on key land rights indicators such as gender disaggregation on land holding use, access, value and area at the national level. Yet these indicators according to the Uganda Land policy (2013) would reveal the prevalence of gender equity in the land sector in addition to land ownership. According to the Uganda National Household survey and Uganda Panel Survey land rights are measure by an indicator on land ownership between men and women but the survey does not investigate other land rights of the respondents. The Food Agricultural Organization reports data on these variables however they are not up-to-date and therefore can be used to monitor policies geared at addressing gender disparities in the land sector.

### Land registration data and gaps

Land registration is important in securing land rights key in addressing gender gaps in the land sector. Women are more harshly affected

**Table 1** Land registration for selected Ministerial Zonal Offices in 2017

Land system	Leasehold		Freehold		Mailo	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Kampala	4,061	1,030	917	187	32,012	14,547
Jinja	2,270	738	8,686	2,848	0	0
Masaka	10,599	717	4,043	674	33,264	7,654
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,930</b>	<b>2,485</b>	<b>13,646</b>	<b>3,709</b>	<b>6,5276</b>	<b>22,201</b>
<b>Gender Gap</b>	<b>85.3%</b>		<b>72.8%</b>		<b>66.0%</b>	

Source: The National Land Information System, 2017

by land tenure insecurity due to direct and indirect discriminatory laws and practices at the national, community and family level. Although, land ownership among women is 26.7%, their ownership of registered land is much lower at 16% hence them inferior in the matters of land use and development (Land Information System, 2015). This is mainly because the process of land registration is costly for women given their higher poverty levels as compared to men according to 2016/17 UNHS report.

According to the Ministry of land Housing and urban Development (MLHUD), the Land Information System (LIS) captures gender disaggregated data only on land transactions; specifically on titles registered (mailo, freehold and leasehold), searches, and mortgages. Table 1 indicates prevalent gender disparities, in favour of men in land registration across all ministerial zonal offices (MZOs). The gender gap averaged at 75% across all the three land tenure systems of leasehold, Freehold and Mailo

### Gender data gaps in land registration

Gender gaps in land registration exist in relation to the following;

*i) Data capture on Gender gap in exclusion of customary tenure land*

The customary land that accounts for 80% of the tenure system in Uganda is believed to have the highest proportion of gender disparities in regard to land rights however the land information system (LIS) only captures indicator data on three tenure system that is leasehold, mailo and freehold (see Table 1), excluding Customary land where gender disparities in land rights despite the existence of certificates of customary ownership (Kameri-Mbote, 2005; Kuusaana et al, 2013)

*ii) Gender disparities in land registration*

As observed in Table 1, more men than women have registered land across all the tenure systems. This is mainly because most women are disfavored by traditional land norms of inheriting land. In addition there are other factors that impede female registration of land for example high registration costs, tedious registration processes and evictions among others

### Recommendations

1. Sensitization and capacity building of key stakeholders, especially the personnel in charge of capturing data on the importance of Gender statistics in the Lands Sector. Capacity building should entail training on data collection according to national and international standards, strategies to communicate and disseminate statistics to a wide range of users, and establishing networks of different actors in various countries for generating and sharing comparable gender statistics.
2. Development of a Data Management System and Plan for the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. Land has direct linkages with the housing sector, physical planning and with the increasing urbanization trends, there is need for proper management of the data in each other three sub-sectors of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to inform policy formulation and decision making.
3. Conducting National Surveys in the data gaps highlighted in the survey. This will increase gender data in the land sector critical for monitoring policies aimed at addressing gender disparities in the land sector

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