Interviewer Name: Martin Nankunda

Transcriber Name: Martin Nankunda

Interview date: 04/10/2019

Respondents Name: Nazario

Household ID: 4190591

Age: 90

Title status: drop out

Occupation: Farmer

Highest level of education: None

Marital status: Widowed

Number of years lived in the village: 19

Number of children: 8

Number of people living in the HH: 3

Roof material: Iron sheets

House material: mud and poles

Interview start time: 11:30 am

Interview end time: 12:31 pm

Duration: 01:01:31

The interview took place inside the respondent’s house. He had two big plots of land that he shared out to his sons. He has small plot of land that he left for himself. It about half an acre. On this plot he has his home, a coffee plantation intercropped with a banana planation. He dropped out and did not receive a title. He insisted that the he doesn’t know why he dropped out. He claims that it the titling people that did not come back and they didn’t give him a reason. But at the start of the interview he told me he had give out all his land to his children because for him he is too old and doesn’t need the land. He is between poor and middle income judging from the structure of his home and some of his household items for example a set of chairs with cushions. He has a plastered mud and poles house with iron sheets.

He is widowed and staying with two of his sons and has all his sons staying around his home and take care of him. He had two wives and they all died. The last wife died three years ago. He was welcoming and cooperative though at first, he was not interested in the interview because he did not get the title. But I explained to him that it was important to talk to him and understand why he did not get the title. He had married a young wife but separated soon after and he did want to talk about issues concerning his wives

Warm-up

I: Thank for taking your time to talk to us today. But I’m requesting that we home and get where to sit and continue our conversation. So, remind me what year were you born?

R: I was born in November 1929.

I was born in *Kyizooba,* (subcounty in Bushenyi district in western Uganda neighboring Mbarara) and shifted to this place

I: You know *Kyizooba* was part of the greater *Bushenyi* and I’m also from *Bushenyi*

R: Up to now it is still *Bushenyi*. So, where in exactly in *Bushenyi*?

I: I came from *Kyamuhunga*

R: I have never been that side. My mother was from *Shema* (district in western Uganda neighboring Mbarara) and my father was from *Igara* (county in Bushenyi district) so, I was born there. So, I shifted from the in 1967

I: Could you be willing to share with me the reasons why you shifted from there, Mzee?

R: No, those reasons, you can not understand them as a young man

I: Maybe I can understand them but anyway, how do you find life in this village in general?

R: Life in this village, like you asked why I shifted to this village, I married a second wife when I was still in Kyizooba and the two wives wanted to kill each other, and I decided to shift. I married my first wife in 1949 and we had 9 children together. The ninth child was born the same month I shifted here, in February 1967. So, I left my first wife in *Kyizooba* but after 10 years and went back and I brought her here too. At that time, he had 4 sons and the are all here and have given them their shares of the land. So, I got my first wife some other land up there, I did not bring her in the second wife’s land.

So, what happened to the land you had in kyizooba?

R: I sold it and used the money to buy my second wife the land she was staying on up there. Isold it at 40,000 shillings

I: Which year was it?

R: I don’t remember the year, but I bought other 3 plots here at 1,200 shillings each.

I: That’s interesting that 1,200 shilling could buy a plot of land yet it’s very little money today

R: It was a lot of money then

I; so, tell me, how were you able to get this money at that time?

00:04:16

R: I was working from Buganda (central Uganda) up to 1960 that when I stopped working form there. But I had gone to work in Buganda 11 times because I kept counting the times, I left home to work there.

I: Ok, can you tell me the type of work were you doing in *Buganda*

R: We were working on coffee farm for *Baganda* (tribe in central Uganda) later in 1950 I worked in coffee farm in *Ssingo Sebanda*. That same year is when my son who has a house with red iron sheets you see there, was born.

**Background, family structure and land ownership**

Thank for explaining this to me, I would like to ask you about your household and your land.

I: Tell me about you household. How many people do stay with in this household?

R: On this whole plot, I have 8 sons and 6 of them have their own homes and are all married. The remaining two are not married and they are the ones I stay with.

I: So, all together how many children do you have?

R: So far, I had 9 sons on this land, and one died recently in February this year.

I: oh, sorry about son. In this house, how many people do you stay with?

R: I stay with 2 of my boys

I: But Mzee you are only talking about boy. I’m wondering, do you have any daughters?

R: I had one daughter I was staying with here but now she works as cook in a school in Shema district.

I: Ok, of the children that stay here, how many are in school?

R: None, the one refused to study, and this is his room the other one is old enough and is building his own house there.

I: So, Mzee, you have not mentioned a wife. I’m wondering, who takes care of you?

R: I had a wife, but we separated. We separated in November like three years ago so, I gave up on marriage.

I: So, I’m curious, was this your second wife you shifted here with?

R; No, this was a new wife that I had married but I couldn’t manager her and I chased her away. She was from the nearby village there in *Kanyara*. We only had two children together.

I: Would you mind telling me about your first wife.

00:08:54

R: She was the last one to die, she died like 3 years ago

I: Sorry about that, how about the second wife?

R: She was the first one to die, she died long time during the war. She stole kerosene from the airfield because those days there was scarcity of kerosene and she was selling it in the village. So, one day she was pouring kerosene in *akatadoba* (small kerosene lamp), I wasn’t around I had gone to visit my relatives who had shifted elsewhere because of the war. So, my wife tried to pour kerosene in *akatadoba* when it was lighting. We heard a big blast like a gun, only to find my wife burning, she ran out of the house on fire and it’s the neighbor that covered her with a blanket and the fire stopped but it was too late, and she later died

I: Oh, sorry about that, she had a painful death.

R: It was very painful, the whole body was swollen. I asked my neighbor how he managed to put off the fire because me I wasn’t thinking. People in the village thought we had been attached by soldiers because of the big blast

I: So, you had told me earlier that you gave all the land to you children, how many plots of land did you have?

R: I was buying small plot and adding them to his plot. I bought 14 plots, but I added them to this plot, and it became on big plot. And I have all the records for my land in my book and if I showed it to you can see. But like I told you when I brought was first wife here, I bought her another plot and it’s not part of this land. It across the trading center.

I: So, in general how do people come to own land in this village?

R: You can buy land, I don’t see any other way or maybe if you inherit land from your father because today there is no more get land for free.

I: Tell me about get free land, how was it happening?

R: You could see a land and just cultivate it as big as you can, and it becomes yours. For example, you find a bush, and no one wants to use it, if you could cultivate and plant like matooke, then it becomes yours.

I: Did you also have land that you just cultivated and became yours?

R: No, I have land that I had inherited from my father and the land I have here, I bought it

I: So, how long have you been staying in this house?

R: I have been staying in this house since 1967 when I bought this land. When I bought this land, I even went to *Rwanyamahembe* subcounty and got my receipt. It was a small white paper

00:14:59

I: Tell me more about this receipt

R: It was showing the amount of money you bought the land, the seller and the buyer. So, it was proof that you purchased land in this subcounty.

I: So, what are the different ways people gain access to land that they do not own? For example, could people rent land in this village?

R: Yes, people can rent land but these renting land has reduced. People use their own land.

I: Where people renting more land back in the day? Why do you think it has changed?

R: It not that people were renting more land, but people were not using their land. Now people have banana plantations and they don’t have land to rent out. They are few who have land and people go there and rent.

I: So, Mzee, what is family land in your opinion?

R: I think family land is land for an individual

I: Could you say that here where you stay is family land?

R: This is my land

I: I see, but I’m wondering, what the difference between individual land and family land

R: It all the same, if I have my land and share it to my children it becomes family land. For example, I have shared out my land to my 8 sons here and they all have their own land, wouldn’t that be family land? Even in *Kyizooba* where I came from, we were 4 boys and our father gave us our share of the land. Wasn’t that also family land?

I: So, your father share land to 4 boys, I’m wondering; did you have sister? Did they also share on your father’s land.

R: Young man, land was for the boys and that’s how it is.

I: Tell me more, why was land only for the boys?

R: Women were woman they had no authority over land. Their duty was to produce children.

I: Ok, tell me about the process of buying land back in the days.

R: It the same as today, you agree with the seller call a few people and make an agreement

I: So, where women involved in the buying and selling of land?

R: No, women were never involved because land was for the men

00:20:12

I: You see, today, for someone to sell their land, they need to consult their wives and they sign for them on the agreements.

R: No, why would you consult your wife to sell your own land. If the land is mine, I can sell it without consulting anybody.

I: What does land ownership mean to you? How is that you define your own land?

R: If your father gave you land and you marry and build there, then it’s your land for example, my sons here, I have given them their shares and they have emigorora on the boundaries on each of their land, then it’s their land?

I: If am getting you clearly, you have said that if your father gives your share, it means you own the land even when you do have any agreement?

R: Yes, isn’t it your land? Even us in *Kyizooba*, that’s why we were all able to sell the land we inherited from our father and go elsewhere, I was the last one to sell because the land was ours.

I: So, mzee, in your own view, are there any advantages including a woman’s names on an agreement? For example, when you are buying

R: What do you mean include a woman’s name on the agreement?

I: For example, the agreement saying that you and your wife have bought land from another person.

R: Not saying that I have bought land from someone as man, but you have a wife?

I: Yes

R: No, that’s not right

I: Can you tell me why you think it’s not right? What if you bought the land together with your wife?

R: If I buy land and I have my wife, the agreement should read that me the husband has bought land from someone and it boarders with these people. That’s all. That’s why you find people with conflicts in their marriages for example I always hear women say, that a man wants to sell my and land and eat the money, but all these are not right. If someone wants to sell their land, they should sell their land.

I: Did it even happen that you had disagreements with your wife about selling land?

R: No, I never had any disagreements with my wife because I left her with land and I shifted her but when we were here drinking with other people, there was a munyaryanda (native from Rwanda) who was selling land and the land was good land. We talked about it with the people, and they advised me to sell the land I had left with my wife.

00:26:09

So, I rode a bicycle and went back *Kyizooba* and in the morning, I told my wife that I want to sell the land and I sold it and brought her this side. I sold it at 4,000 shilling and bought the one here at 2,800 shilling.

I: So, you consulted other people before you sold your land?

R: Yes, so, I rode the bicycle with purpose to sell the land

I: So, would you say it good to first consult other people before selling your land? For example, your wife?

R: You see, these things started recently but in the past, if a person wanted to sell their land, they would sell the land. But now you could be having a misunderstanding with you wife and when you want to sell you land, she disagrees.

I: What do you think has changed?

R: The world now is for the educated and education has brought these changes we see today

I: Ok, what has education changed in terms of land

R: The educated people want to make wrong things right so that they can also get something out it. They were seeing things that were not right

I: Are you saying that selling land without consulting people was not right and now people are right because they first consult other people? for example a wife.

R: Yes and give a reason why you want to sell the land. Weren’t they wrong? Selling land just like that. But a woman could not talk about the husband’s land but now she can stop you from selling the land. You got to the subcounty and she wins the case, yet the land is yours.

I: Ok, does this mean there are laws that can stop a man from selling his land?

R: Yes, what if you are a drunkard and your wife notice you want to sell the land, she can report, and they stop you from selling the land.

I: Has it happened before in this village that the subcounty stops someone from selling their land?

R: It doesn’t get to that point buyers don’t buy the land if your wife disagrees.

I: Ok, thanks for explaining this to me. You have told me that you don’t own any land, that you gave all the land to your sons. I’m wondering, who has authority on this plot that you stay on?

R: If I gave to my sons, for example if you have meat and give to all your sons and each of them take their own share, do you still have authority over this meat

**Baseline awareness of titles**

00:30:25

Thank you for explaining all the above, I would like to change the topic and ask about your knowledge on titles and there is no right or wrong answer

I: So, what does it mean to have a land title?

R: Land titles came with education. The educated stealing the uneducated so if you don’t understand them you can make a mistake.

I: Tell me more. What do you think is the purpose of having a land title?

R: I don’t understand them but like I told you they came from the educated people. They look for ways to steal from other people and they steal.

I: Ok, I believe you were offered a title and perhaps initially accepted it, but then you did not receive it. I’m curious to know the reasons why this happened?

R: No, the titles had challenge

I: What challenges Mzee? Tell me more.

R: Challenges of people like you wanting to steal our land. Am educated, well studied so, I can steal your land and things like that.

I: Tell me more. What happened when they offered you the land title?

R: And now where is the person that offered me the title? this is what happens, they tell you, we will give you a title, and they don’t come back again, and they disappear like that. And sometime you people also be looking for things that benefit only you. For example, I see you having these paper are they all in English?

I: No, the latter I gave you is in Runyankole

R: How about the one you are holding? let me see, you see, I never went to school, but I taught myself how to read. But I can’t read any thing in this paper. When they brought education for all in Kyizooba, me I knew how to read a,e,i,o,u and told me to teach others so, I became a teacher but it also ended like that. But I know how to read but I can’t write. I could read a bible, only that now the eyes can’t see properly

I: Ok, it interesting that you could read a bible. I’m wondering, why you did not receive your title. tell me more.

R: That was done by you. But otherwise we should have our titles because it has been long since they told us that we were going to receive our titles

I: I see, but I understand you were offered a title and accepted but later you changed your mind

00:35:34

R: No, there is no one that refused the title. they told us that they would come and survey the land, but they never came so, I want to ask you, why didn’t we get own title?

I: I’m sorry about but that’s the reason why I am here today, to find out the reasons why you did not receive your title.

R: There are very many people that have been here asking about our land so, why haven’t we received our title?

I: That’s why we are visiting households that received the title and the households that did not receive the titles and get to understand why some of the households did not receive titles

R: It’s you the leaders that failed to bring the titles

I: You have told me you don’t own land, that you gave all the land to you sons and you don’t have authority over this land. I’m curious to know if this was the reason why you did not receive your title?

R: I would have the authority because there a small plot that I kept for myself so, if I said I wanted a title for it can’t I get it?

I: How big is the plot you kept for yourself?

R: It’s very small about quarter an acre where I have a few coffee trees and bananas

I: Did you explain to the titling people that you have your small plot, or you did not want to title it?

R: No, I did not refuse the title it but it’s you that made it not possible and these things happen a lot, even where you can from, they happen. Bushenyi right? Don’t you see them? Because this Programme started a long time but nothing happened

I: So, you are saying that you needed the title, but the titling people decided not to give it to you?

R: Yes, we have been in need of titles, but they were not given to us

I: So, If I went back and told the titling people that Mzee need his title, would you accept, and they title your remaining plot?

R: You see, also when we see educated people teaching us about getting titles, we also fear that maybe they want to steal our land.

I: I’m curious to know why you fear people who are educated?

R: Because you are cleaver and you have many ways of confusing us and stealing from us

00:39:29

I: Just wondering, is ever a case in your village that some educated people have stolen someone else’s land?

R: No, they have not happened, but we are afraid that they might happen

I: So, before you met the titling people, are there people in this area who were able to receive land titles?

R: No, I don’t remember. You see, at my age you easily lose your memory

I: In general, what do you think people in this village think about land titles?

R: People would all want title, but we fear like I have told you. For example, you have told me that you come from *Bushenyi*, what is your interest here in Mbarara.

I: Would you say that this is general thinking of most people on titles in this village?

R: Yes, we look at these things and don’t understand them.

I: But they are way of getting a title other that getting from us. Do people only fear getting titles from us.

R: I don’t know about the other ways, but I hear you need a lot of money to get a title

I: Like how much money Mzee?

R: I don’t know.

I: So, the last time the titling people visited this home, were you still together with your wife?

R: They have come here so many times and my wife was still around

I: Did you discuss about the title that was offered to you with your wife?

R: There was nothing to discuss with my wife. For example, the way you have come if you make us an offer for a title and we accept, we just wait for the title. Even where you come from, that’s how it happens. People makes an offer and you never see the them again. Because at 90 years and 50 years in this village, that’s what has been happening. They promise you things, but they don’t happen.

**Gender norms around land**

Thank you for explaining all this to me but I would like to change the topic and ask you about norms on land

We understand that most of the land is owned by men in Uganda. There are some aspects to this system that we would like to understand, especially concerning women. We do not have an opinion one way or the other, but we would like to know what you think on this subject.

00:43:10

I: Do some women on land in this village? how did they acquire the land?

R: They get land after their husbands die. Because I have seen women who buy land in this village.

I: Is there any other way?

R: Maybe if they inherit it from their fathers

I: Is there any example you can give of women who own land in this village?

R: Maybe my daughters that I decide to give land for example, there is my daughter Scovia, I gave her land from that side up to here and she’s next to her brother. The reason I decided to give my daughters land near their brothers so that if they get married, they can give the land to their brother.

I: Ok, in your view, should women in this village be allowed to own land?

R: Yes, it depends on how she got the land. For example, if she got the land from her father or the late husband. Because if the husband dies, she can take control of the land. But if the husband left her with a son, then the land becomes for the son.

I: So, do you think women want to own land together with their husbands or women prefer to own land separately from their husbands.

R: Like I have told you it depends on how they get land because women do usually own land when their husbands are still alive.

I: Tell me more. Why can’t women own land when their husband is still alive?

R: When you are married to man the land is for the man that’s how is has always been. When the husband dies, that’s when the woman can have the land.

I: What if they bought the land together?

R: The husband has the authority over the land because even the agreements are usually in the man’s names.

I: Ok, are widows generally allowed to stay on the land when their husbands die?

R: Yes, this what I have been explaining to you on how women get land. If the husband dies, where else do want the widow to go? Should she also die? She can stay on the land raise the children. if she also dies the land becomes for the children.

I: So, what if she didn’t have children, can she be allowed to stay on the land when the husband dies?

R: There is away how this can also be handled. The family of the husband can decide what happens on the land.

00:46:33

But she can stay on the land if she remarries in that family. But I have not seen this happen in this village.

I: Ok, what if she remarries outside of that family, can she stay on the land?

R: No, she can’t stay on the land, she should go to the new husband’s land

I: Is it common that sometimes widows remarry?

R: It not common for widows to remarry and those who remarry leave the land. Even those who remarry in the same family are no longer there. That was for long time ago these days widows stay on their land. Even men fear to marry women on the land their husbands left them.

I: Is it ever a case in this village that a male relative tries to grab land from the widow?

R: I hear them, but I don’t understand them. I hear they go up to court. But to me a woman has never had land

I: But Mzee, I wonder why you have insisted that women do not own land, can you tell me why you think women don’t own land?

R: That’s how it is. Women were created that way, to get married in other clans. And when a woman gets married in another clan, she does not own land in the clan she has left and will not own land in the clan she is married to because she doesn’t belong to that clan. It’s the children that she gives birth to, that belong to that clan and they are the ones that can inherit land.

I: But you gave your daughters land, don’t they own the land?

R: I have told you the reason why I gave them land. If they get married, they can give it to their brothers. If they don’t get married, they can stay on the land

I: What if they want to sell their land that you gave them?

R: Maybe if no longer a live but the are not allowed to sell the land.

I: They might get married and want sell, the land and buy near their husbands’ home.

R: They also fear that their husbands might take the land away from them.

I: Ok, has the treatment of widows changed in recent history

R: It’s the same, when widow is on their husband’s land, she doesn’t own it because if they have a male child, the land belongs to the male child. It’s the son that has authority over the land the

widow just stays on the land. So, when a woman gets married in the family, she doesn’t own land until she gives birth to a son. When she gives birth to a son that means she has given birth to the real owner of the land that will keep her on that land.

00:50:42

Even when a woman does not give birth to a son in that clan, she can not belong to that clan.

I: You have told me that a woman cannot own land. I’m wondering what happens to a woman who divorces or separates with the husband?

R: You give land to the children and it’s the children that can take care of their mother. Because it’s their mother and you can separate her from her children because it’s not possible. If it where you would they separate you from your mother?

I: In your view, what causes most separation and divorce in families?

R: There very many things in marriage that can cause separation but most importantly, it’s lack of disagreements caused by people who fail understand one another.

I: Tell me more. What do you mean?

R: For example, my former wife thought I was too old, and she started misbehaving and fighting with my other wive’s children over land generally over everything. I had to chase her a way. We have a son together who I have given land, if he wasn’t to bring her mother back, he can bring her.

I: So, why do think people generally want to include the wives’ names on land titles?

R: If they trust each other, they can do it like that but for me, they years I have spend on this earth if they register a me to give him a title, don’t you give to me alone? Why do you include a woman? Because it my title alone.

I: But Mzee, do you think that if women were able to jointly own land with their husbands, this would reduce conflicts within the marriage?

R: If a woman is married and does all the thing women do and has children, then there can’t be conflicts, but she can’t be on the title on the husband’s land. The woman has to obey, and you just have children. The land title is for you son, can you give it to your wife?

**Land disputes**

Thank you for all the explanation so far. I would like to change the topic and ask you about land disputes.

I: What is the common cause of disputes over land?

R: The common cause of land disputes is lack of understanding on how to wellbeing of people

I: Tell me more how do you mean by that?

R: For example, drunkards who drink all the money and become poor, and end up selling their land. For example, my son who is a drunkard sold off his hand that I had give him and now he’s remaining with a small piece of land and he has a cow that he doesn’t have where to graze it from

00:54:31

and is destroying other people’s crops, hence causing disputes.

I: Is there any other cause of land disputes?

R: Isn’t it the only one? What else? If a man married a wife, she doesn’t have to enter land matters. Can a woman talk about land? If a man wants to sell land, he can sell the land in case he has a problem, and the woman can sign just as witness.

I: So, what happens when there is a land disputes? how does it get resolved?

R: disputes with who?

I: For example, if a man is a drunkard and wants to sell land and the wife disagrees

R: If a man wants to sell his land, and the woman he married disagrees? But I had told you the woman has no right to get involved. A woman is a woman. If you marry a woman and she give birth to a boy, then the boy becomes an heir, but a woman has never been an heir.

I: Have you ever had any disagreements on land?

R: No

I: For example, a neighbor removes boundary marks and encroaches on you land?

R: I wanted to tell you, when my first wife died, my daughters and my sons connived with my neighbor to the land and shared the land to themselves. So, other people can and told me and I went there and when they saw me, they ran away. I reported the case to police in Mbarara and when they came to arrest them, they ran into hiding for almost a month and we could find anyone.

I: So, how did you resolve this conflict?

R: the police went back, and some people advised me that, instead of children killing me because of the land yet I have another plot of land, that I should let the have it. And I also let them take the land. And it now more that 30 years ago and I have never had other disagreement on land.

I: Ok lastly who do think we are?

R: I don’t really know who you are

I: Thank you for time and have a good day.

01:01:31