Interviewer Name: Martin Nankunda

Transcriber Name: Martin Nankunda

Respondents Name: Lauben

Household ID: 5810092

Age: 57

Gender: Male

Occupation: Farmer

Second source of income: causal laborer

Highest level of education: None

Marital status: Married (Polygamous)

Number of years lived in the village: 57

Number of children: 16

Number of people living in the HH: 6

Roof material: Iron sheets

House material: mud and poles

Interview Date: 19/09/19

Interview start time: 10: 10 am

Interview end time: 11:25 am

Duration: 1:16:42

The respondent was waiting for us at his home. And the interview was conducted outside his son’s home next to his home because there weren’t enough sits in the house. He has mud and wattle house with iron sheets. The state of his house makes think that they are poor because they had only two seats in the whole house of which I took one and left the other one inside. The interview went well, but there were few interruptions with the passersby. To deal with this interruption, I would first pause the interview and wait for them to go and then we continue. He was cooperative, and straight forward. His main source of income is agriculture, but he also works as a casual laborer. He has two wives, each on their own plot.

The respondent constantly said he didn’t title because he had small land that couldn’t be stolen by anyone. In some way, he hoped and still feels that he should have been offered something else instead as told by the people that come to tell him about titling in the first visits after refusing to title.

**Background, household structure and land ownership.**

I: Let me start by thanking you for your time today. I would like to know how your normal day is like, consider a normal day to be one without special events like parties, burial, etc. so, how do you spend your day?

R: When I wake up, I first go and do my casual jobs around because I have a big family and this land can’t sustain us. Then, by 2pm I come back, have lunch and go to my banana plantation later in the evening. So, that is how I spend the day. Except Sunday because I rest.

I: What type of causal work do you do?

R: It’s mainly digging for a pay

I: So, do they pay you per day or per hour?

R: We agree on the amount of work and then how much they will pay me

I: Great, how about today, how is your day?

R: It is ok, but I didn’t go to work because I was informed that you were coming today so I took the day off meaning I didn’t go to work today.

I: So, again thanks for your time and for sacrificing your work which gives you your earnings today. Now I would like to know about your family. Can you tell me about your family and the people that live in your household?

R: I have two wives. The older one is the one you found me with here, this is her home then the younger one stays across in her home with her children. Here, we stay with my wife, my daughter and 3 grandchildren. Up her where we are now, is my older son’s home where he stays with his children.

I: How long has your son been here since he moved out of your house?

R: It’s been 5 years now?

I: Of the 4 children, how are boys and how many are girls? Are they in school?

R: They are two boys and two girls, and they are all in school.

I: How about your second home?

R: There are seven children and their mother

I: Of the 7 children, how many are boys and how many are girls? How many are in school?

R: I have one son and six daughters. And all are in school. The remaining children who don’t stay here, out of the 16, are married and have their own homes.

I: Do they all go to the same school?

R: No, they go to different schools.

00:03:01

I: Ok, so do you have children outside of your two homes?

R: No, they are all from my two wives

I: So, how many plots of land do you own?

R: I have 3 plots of land, this one where my older wife stays, another on where my younger wife stays, then another one which is a banana plantation where I gave a piece to my other son. Here where we stay is almost half an acre. But it was bigger like two or more acres, but when my older wife fell sick, we sold part of it. She was sick for a long time like 9 years and I had to sell in order to cover the medical expenses. But God helped me, and she became better and now she’s fine.

I: It’s great to know that she is now ok, could you tell me what she was suffering from?

R: At first, we thought it was witchcraft, so we first gave her herbs for some time but she couldn’t be fine. Later we took her to Mbarara hospital, and she was transferred to Mulago hospital in Kampala where she spent 6 months. The doctors said the veins in her legs had issues but as an uneducated man I didn’t know much

I: Great, so, how long have you been staying in this village?

R: I was born and raised here. This was my father’s land. And I have been married to my older wife for last 34 years and my younger wife for 21 years

I: Great, so, how did you acquire this land?

R: I inherited it from my father. He had over 60 children, and this land was divided amongst us after his death.

I: All the 60 children share on the land? Even the girls? How much land did your father have?

R: Those day the girls wouldn’t share on the land so, not all the 60 got land. This place was owned by my father’s family from that hill up to the other.

I: I can see it’s very big, how much of did you inherit from your father?

R: We had never measured but it was equivalent to approximately 5 playgrounds.

I: Ok, what does ownership mean to you?

R: Ownership means you control, and you are responsible for the land. You decide how to use it, and no one can claim it. Take an example of this house, it ismine and if I asked you to leave, you can leave.

I: Well, how would somebody tell that this is truly your land or your house?

R: Everyone knows it’s mine even the chairperson can confirm.

I: For example, do you have a written agreement that shows you own this land?

I: No, but I was born here, and everyone knows this was my fathers land and nobody can claim it.

I: Who works on your land? Are there people working on your land?

00:07:40

R: It’s me and my families. We are even more than the required number to work on the land and that’s why I go and do casual jobs elsewhere.

I: So, who makes important decisions about the land, such as what to plant and when to plant?

R: It’s only a banana plantation and we don’t plant anything else there. If I want to plant other crops, I rent land elsewhere and plant.

I: So, who decides that nothing should be planted in the banana plantation? Why?

R: We decided together with my wives that we maintain well the plantation but not to plant other crops because it’s the major source of food and income.

**General land**

I: Ok, I would like to ask you about land in general. How do people in this village come to own land?

R: Some people buy land in this area. If you have a job or save money from business or any other way, you can buy land and that’s how people come to own land in this village. Years back people could inherit land from their fathers, but these days fathers don’t have enough land to give to their children.

I: Are there other ways people come to own land in this village?

R: No, I can’t think of other ways.

I: So, what are the different ways people can gain access to land they don’t own?

R: They rent, that’s the only way

I: Ok, tell me more about renting land because you have told me you rent land.

R: I normally rent half an acre at 80,000 shilling per season, plant and after harvest, the owner remains with his land. And if you still want to use the land, you pay again.

I: Where is the land that you usually rent?

R: it’s in this village and its owned by the church.

I: So, do you sign agreement with the church before renting land?

R: No, we don’t sign agreements, after paying they simply register your name

I: Ok, if a person wanted to rent the land he owns to others, would he need to consult with anyone else in the village?

R: No, he tells people about the availability of land for rent and the price at which to rent. If you can afford you go and measure the land you need.

I: Does it make a difference what you want to use the land for, e.g. cultivation or cattle grazing?

R: No, it doesn’t matter but still we don’t have many people in this village who rent land for cattle grazing.

00:12:57

I: Why is that so yet I know in Mbarara there many cattle keepers?

R: Yes, that’s true but in this village, we are banana growers. Also the cattle keepers are the Bahima(a clan in western Uganda who are mainly pastoralists) but here we are Biiru( A clan in western Uganda who are mainly farmers).

I: Ok, if a person wants to sell the land he owns, would he need to consult other people in the village?

R: Yes, you must consult your family and give reason why you need to sell the land. You don’t have to consult people outside your home. You only consult your wife and children. If the reason is a bank loan, sickness or any other issue, it must be discussed with your family. You can consult with other people only when looking to market you land.

I: What if a person owns land but is not currently living in this village, does he maintain control of the land?

R: Yes, that’s possible. Because it’s his land. In this case he can put a caretaker or ask neighbors to maintain the land. If there is a house on that land, then he can get someone to live there and take care of the land.

I: So, what happens if someone else wants to use that land?

R: They can talk to the caretaker to talk to the owner of the land and if they agree then, someone else can use the land. And if the caretaker has the capacity to use the land, they can also use it. For example, my neighbor has given her land to a caretaker of because she no longer lives on the land, and he has planted millet this season. He will share the harvest with her.

I: Ok, what comes to mind when someone talks about family land? How do you understand family land?

R: Family land, is land for the husband, wife and children. If a man dies, it becomes for the wife and the children. Everyone with land has family land.

I: What if your wife had her own land would that also qualify as family land?

R: It is family land on her family’s side not her husband’s side.

I: So, can you tell me about the process of selling land since you have sold land before?

R: I sat down with my 2 older sons and we agreed. I explained to this to their mother who had been sick for some time and we didn’t have any other source of income, she agreed too. After agreeing, we sold the land. We took my wife to Kampala for better medication and she got better.

I: How do you get buyers?

R: I told some one that I needed to sell my land and get money for my wife and he was interested. So, we agreed on the price, called the chairperson and we made an agreement.

I: Was your wife included in the sale agreement

R: Yes, her name was included, and she signed as a witness.

00:18:10

I: In your view, how important was it that your wife was included on this transaction document?

R: It limits conflicts that would arise in the future for example, my wife cannot claim this in case I die. Even your children can’t claim the land since of both their parents signed the agreement.

I: How about the disadvantages, are there bad things if you included you wife on the sale document?

R: There are no disadvantages to me because it makes everything clear nobody can claim this land. Because the wife may in the future claim that she wasn’t aware of the transaction which may lead to conflicts. But with her name too, she cannot claim the land.

I: Ok, I would like to know about the land you inherited from your father, was its family land?

R: Yes, after our father died, this land was divided amongst us.

I: Tell me more, how did this go?

R: Our father had made a will that ten years after his death that the land be shared amongst his sons and we sat together as a family and the local leaders, shared the land.

I: Why do you think your father only gave his sons not the daughters?

R: That was the norm years back then, but it has changed over time

I: Why do you think it has changed or what has changed?

R: A lot has changed my friend. In our time, girls never used to go to school which has also changed because people are more educated than before. Girls were prepared only for marriage so that they could get dowry in form of land or cows. Even the laws have changed in favor of women. For example, in *Buganda* (the central region of Uganda. Kampala is also amidst this region) girls never used to be an heir for the family but for example in the case of the late former prime minister’s will, he chose a girl to be his heir. So, things keep changing.

I: Would you have a daughter as the heir?

R: Yes, it depends on who is more responsible in the family. Why should I have an irresponsible son an heir when I have a responsible girl that could make a responsible heir.

I: So, do you expect to inherit land?

R: No, I don’t expect to inherit land because I have already had my share.

I: So, do you have any document that shows you own this land?

R: No, but everyone knows it’s my land. After our father died, we sat as a family and everyone was given his share so, there no agreements or any documents to sign.

I: Thank you, so do people in this village fear losing their land? To whom?

R: No, most people in this village are born here and we all know the land each one of us owns in this village. So, nobody can come to claim someone else’s land.

00:25:40

I: Ok but am curious to know why people do fear to lose their land. Tell me more.

R: Some people have land titles especially those with big land, so they don’t fear. But even us who don’t have titles, as villagers we know who owns which land because most of us are born here, the chairperson also knows everyone who owns land in this village. Besides, we have had any scenarios of people losing land in this village.

I: Other than renting land, what other ways would you be able to access land?

R: You must buy land if you have money but unfortunately, I don’t have money to access more land.

**Base line awareness of titles.**

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

R: It means security for your land. With a title, it’s proof of ownership of the land. So, no one can claim your land.

I: Ok, what is the purpose of the land title?

R: Like I have told you, it’s proof of ownership of the land. Secondly, if you need a loan from the bank, with a land title it becomes very easy but a person like me, can’t afford a loan even when I don’t have a title.

I: Can you tell me the different types of land titles you know?

R: No, I don’t know any. I would be interested in knowing about land titles if I had a big chunk of land.

I: What about the difference between a title and a written agreement?

R: A written is at individual level meaning people agree amongst themselves while a title you must go to the subcounty, get surveyors and it requires a lot of more. But with a title, your land is more secure than a written agreement.

I: I believe you were offered a title for your land, but you declined the offer. If that’s the case I’m curious to know your reasons for declining the title. What are some of the reasons for declining the title.

R: A title is something I feel is very distant from me because I’m left with a very small piece of land. It’s not even half an acre but almost. Getting a title for this land I guess would cost about 7 million shillings, yet my land is valued at like 2 million. So, I told these people that instead of giving the title why can’t the give me the money they would use to acquire it to, I either buy more land or start a small business. And the gentle man said he will see. So, I think if this organization wanted to help me, a land title is not the help I need.

I: Is there any other reason?

R: No, that’s it.

I: Did you suggest to the person that came here, that would prefer something else and they promised to give it to you instead of a title?

00:32:46

R: Yes, I told him that the title doesn’t help me and if there is any other help, it would be better. And he replied, ‘we shall see’.

I: So, who made the decision not to title?

R: My wife or children wouldn’t have declined the offer, but I explained to them that the title wasn’t necessary, and they accepted that, instead of a title, if we could get something else.

I: Would you say the process of getting a title was well explained to you when the titling people came?

R: Yes, they explained to me and I also explained to them my reason not to title.

I: So, what do you think of others who decided to accept the offer to title.

R: Those who accepted the offer have big pieces of land. But me I was hoping to exchange the title for something else.

I: So, would there be anything that could happen that would make you decide to title?

R: No, I have told you how small my land so, there is nothing that can change that. If there is no other help they can offer, there is no need to waste money on this small plot. I would have accepted the title if I had a bigger plot of land.

I: Are there people who have land titles in this village?

R: Yes, those with big pieces of land for example the chairperson, but they are people like us only that those that have bigger plots of land should have a title. And there’s nobody with a small plot like mine that has a title.

I: How did they get the titles

R: You go to the subcounty and fill the form, then bring surveyors if you have money and get your title.

I: Ok, what do you think people in your community think about land titles?

R: You see a land title is proof of ownership, when you have it, no one can claim your land. And I remember when I was still a teenager there was a man who titled peoples land in this village without their knowledge. Then later they were given some time to leave the land because someone had the title. So, I think people now have thought about getting the titles especially those with big pieces of land but most of them haven’t got the money to title.

I: How do you think they got the title?

R: I can’t tell, I hear people sit in Kampala and make titles

I: How is that possible?

R: With the corrupt leaders we have anything is possible.

**Intra-household discussion and bargaining**

I: So, how long have you been living with your wives?

0039:27

R: The older wife, we have been living together for 34 years and the younger wife for 21 years.

I: Can you tell me more about your marriage especially with the older wife?

R: We have been well. She is understanding especially regarding to our income status and has been supportive throughout this time. She is happy with the little we have. I had told you how she was sick for 9 years, so that’s how we have been surviving with our low income.

I: Now, I would like to ask you about the discussions with your wife, if any when the titling people came. Was your wife present during that time?

R: Yes, she was present all the time.

I: so, would you say that your wife provides you with support or encouragement? How so?

R: A lot, like I told you she understands and accepts our income status and that the best support a man can get.

I: So, who makes major decisions for the household?

R: It’s me the household head that decides.

I: So, what was the last major decision made for the household by you, about?

R: It was about the schools one of my children goes to. I couldn’t afford it so, she had to change to a more affordable school.

I: Ok, so how much does your wife know about titling?

R: She knows what I know because our thinking is the same

I: Could there have been like an argument on the decision not to title for example your wife or children wanting to title?

R: No, there wasn’t any arguments we agreed as a family because at least the children are a bit educated and understand more than us, but we all agreed.

I: What would it mean to your marriage if you had a title with your wife’s name on it?

R: It would mean that we own this land together with my wife.

**Gender norms around land.**

I: Good, we understand that most of the land is owned by men in Uganda. There are some aspects to this system that we we’d like to understand better, especially concerning women. We do not have an opinion one way or the other but would like to know what you think on this subject. Remember there’s no right or wrong answers to these questions.

I: Do some women in this village own land? How did they acquire it?

R: Yes, some inherit from their fathers because these days girls inherit land. Others work, save money and buy land their own land. Other have land together with their husbands.

00:46: 47

I: Is there other ways how women come to own land?

R: They also get land after the death of their husbands that is if she has children.

I: So, let us assume a woman inherited land from her parents, does a man have rights on that land?

R: That’s her land and man must not be part of it. She can decide what to do with it. You can work it as a man, but you don’t own this land.

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

R: Yes, they are also human beings, why not. Women also want to do their own things for example acquire loan if the can afford so, they need to have their own land. If she bought it herself why not?

I: Ok, do you think women want to own land with their husbands? Do wives want to own their land separately from their husbands?

R: These days most women prefer their own land and do their own things but because they can’t afford to have their own, they must share with their husbands.

I: So, we had discussed about family land. well, in marriage, if a man wants to sell his family land, does he need approval from his wife? Does it matter the type of tenure he has?

R: Yes, you must consult your wife and elder children. These days even the laws don’t allow you to sell your land without your wife’s or children’s approval because they must sign on the sale agreements. If your wife disagrees, you can’t sell even if you have a title in your names. These days you can’t even sell a cow without you families’ approval unless if you not legally married.

I: So, are widows generally allowed to stay on family land after their husbands die?

R: Yes, they can stay on the family land and take responsibility like they have been doing with their husband if she has children.

I: So, what happens if she doesn’t have children?

R: If she doesn’t have children, it’s not possible for her to stay on the land and use it. The male relative take responsibility of the land in this case.

I: What happens if the husband had a land title and the wife’s name was included on the title, but she doesn’t have children?

R: That means she owns the land because her name is on the title. In this case she can stay on the land because she owns it.

I: So, what would happen if the woman also dies, what happens to the land in this case?

R: If there is a will, the heir in this case will owns the land because every land must have an heir. But if there’s no will, both the woman’s relative and the man’s relative can sit and decide what to do with the land.

I: So, do widows re-marry sometimes? If yes, can she stay on the land with the new husband?

00:56:26

R: Yes, these days they re-marry. But it depends on how old the woman is. If she’s still young then it is ok for her to re-marry but if she too old, most of prefer to stay alone.

I: If she still young and re-marry, could she bring her new husband on the land?

R: No, the new husband must provide land for her and their future children because this belongs to the children of the late husband.

I: Ok, have you heard of cases in this village where relatives try to grab land from widows?

R: They would be there, but the government has put laws that limit that. If the woman reports such a case even the local council level, they can arrest you.

I: So, in your opinion what happens to women once their husbands die?

R: Women must be left to stay on the land and take of their children and be responsible for the land as they have been doing together with their husbands.

I: Well, has the treatment of widows changed in recent history? Tell me more.

R: It has changed a lot because of the government laws that protect the widows land from grabbing.

I: What about those who divorce or separate?

R: If a woman divorces or separates with the husband, she has no right on the land and must go elsewhere. But if you had children and later the man dies, she can come back and claim the land because of the children. Or the children themselves can bring her back after the man has died.

I: Why wouldn’t she have a right when the man is still alive?

R: She has decided to separate with me why would she stay on my land? Its her fault maybe she’s the reason for the separation.

I: Would she have a right if it was the man’s fault that caused the separation or divorce?

R: In this case they can go to court and it decides.

I: But I would like to know your opinion if she has a right or not in this case?

R: If it’s the man’s fault, then she has the right and court can help her settle the matter.

I: In general, is the general practice by others in the village towards the widows ok?

R: It’s very okay now compared to the previous years. Now women can stay on the land and control it in case a man dies.

I: So, would you like to see something change on what happens to women who divorce or separate?

R: No, because the current laws are clear and fair to both parties in case of a divorce.

I: So, have you heard of villages where some women attempt to marry into because the widows can inherit land of their deceased husbands?

1:04:59

R: This is now everywhere due to government laws. It’s not specific to villages.

I: Can you give an example of such laws?

R: It’s now a law that a man can’t sell without a wife’s approval

I: Does such a law work in this village?

R: Yes, because buyers can’t buy if the wife doesn’t approve these days.

I: Ok, so what makes husbands generally want to add their wives’ names to Land titles?

R: To secure the land in case they die. Children may want to miss use the land after the death of their father but if you have your wife on the title, this can’t happen. secondly, the male relatives may also want to grab land.

I: So, if women were to be able to jointly own land with their husbands, would this increase or decrease conflict within the marriage?

R: Because of this, if want sell land and your wife disagrees, it can’t be sold. They become disrespectful because they know you can’t make any decision without their approval. Even selling other thing in the in the household these days without the wife’s approval is impossible. This leads to more and more conflicts. A year back I was buying and selling cows, but I couldn’t sell a cow without her approval.

I: So, did that cause more conflicts? How did you handle the conflicts?

R: Yes, there’s no way other than keeping quite and choosing to live in peace.

I: Don’t you now think that’s how it is supposed to be?

R: Yes, but as a man you should have more say?

I: So, what is the most common cause of dispute over land?

R: In the family or with the neighbors?

I: Generally, what is the common cause?

R: You see land is the source of income, food to poor people. Therefore, for some to tamper with land making and encroach even if it an inch into my land, I would fight to the last. Therefore the most common cause of conflicts is people who uproot emigorora(Local land making) and encroach on other people’s land.

I: How do land conflicts get resolved within the family?

R: First, when the dispute is with the family, a meeting should be held with family members and try to resolve it. If not, the local leaders get involved and lastly the courts of law. If the dispute is outside the family, the local leaders should resolve it and if it can’t be resolved then you can proceed to court.

I: in general, what do you think should be done to help with problems of land security?

R: The only solution is to get land titles if you have a big plot of land.

01:13:14

I: There those who can’t afford titles but what should be done to help them with land security problems?

R: I think its government that can help them through local councils and courts

I: So, have you ever had a disagreement over land?

R: No, I have never had any disagreements

I: why do you think you haven’t had land conflicts?

R: It’s because we make decisions together as a family. I can sell land without consulting my wives and giving a good reason why I want to sell.

**Messenger identity**

I: lastly, I want to ask you about people that came here and offered you the title. Who do you think they are?

R: You have told me that your work for an organization, but I think the government has sent you as leaders to look for poor people and give them help. But also, as an organization, you might to understand some things or want to be appreciated in one way or the other for helping poor people. So that your organization can have a good name and grow. People who wouldn’t want to join it can joint because it’s helping poor people.

I: Tell me about the people that came here, what did you discuss?

R: The first people that came aske very many questions about the household, my income, household items, how is use my land, what plant etc. they were very many. You have also spent the same time they spent here.

I: What year was that?

R: I don’t remember the year. You know when you not educated you forget many things but the last person who offered me the title came like a year and a half back. He was a young man like that on who came driving you.

I: what did you discuss with him?

R: He offered me the title and I told him straight that I don’t need it. Maybe if they can offer me something else or give the money, they would use to get the title and I build a new house, start a business or buy more land and he said he will see.

I: Well, thank you very much for time. That’s all I needed to discuss with you today.

01:16:23