

Gender, land rights and fragility in Northern Uganda: the case of Amuru District

Laloyo Stella Apecu, Gulu University

Abstract: Armed conflicts globally create social and economic shifts that affect women's and men's claims to land. Jacobs (2012) explains that land is crucial to the livelihoods and security of many rural women. Asimwe (2001) and Tripp (1997) note that land rights in most parts of Africa are passed on from the male lineage and women who have lost their lineage ties through widowhood, divorce, not having sons, and separation become vulnerable and may be excluded. . This paper discusses struggles over access, control and ownership rights in relation to land among women and men in Amuru district Uganda. This article is a result of a qualitative study that conducted 10 focus group discussions with 40 women and 40 women in Pabbo, Amuru and Lamogi sub counties of Amuru Sub County and 4 focus group discussions with Area Land Committee members in the above sub counties. My findings indicate that ethnic based land tensions fostered insecurity and instability in the Amuru as people could not walk around freely, access their gardens, were displaced and this in turn affected their ability to make a living through accessing the land. I also found that many women had relational access to land through their marriage and relationship with male kin and this seemed to give them fragile land rights. Men on the other hand had firm control over land and made final decisions relating to sales and land use.

Keywords: Gender, land rights, livelihoods, fragility, Uganda.

1. Introduction

Northern Uganda experienced a two-decade long conflict in which an unprecedented number of girls and boys, women and men were abducted and disappeared. Millions were displaced both internally and others became urban displaced persons and others refugees. Omona& Aduo (2013) and Amone (2015) note that assets, livelihoods, community, oral history, morality, spirituality, reciprocity, human capital were lost as a result. Mazurana and Proctor (2013), Meintjes, Pillay and Turshen (2002), Greenberg& Zuckerman (2009) make clear that armed conflicts shift demographics with more female than male population leading to more female headed households. They further explain that there is also the destruction of family assets, planting of land mines on productive land as well as the breakdown of safety nets for vulnerable persons due to many years of displacement and weakening of kinship ties further accelerating feminized vulnerability. Cornhiel (2005: 1) notes that female-headed households are on the increase because of civil wars and violent conflict, migration, disease and epidemics, and male parental abandonment.

As I began to write this paper, a wave of violent evictions was taking place in Apaa parish in Pabbo sub-county, at the height of a planting season and it is almost certain that the families affected would turn out to be food insecure. The National Media Group NTV Uganda reported ethnically -based land clashes between the Acholi and Madi in June 2017 in Apaa Amuru district which included threats of forceful surveying of land by government in the name of "development" this made land rights fragile.

Most armed conflicts depict women as passive victims; Annan, Blattman, Mazurana and Carlton (2011) demystify the image of male fighter they note that although the iconic image of the combatant at war was a young man with an automatic weapon and women are typically depicted as victims; women and girls have fought or provided military support in most conflicts.

Women are active agents during war, after war and greatly shape the reconstruction agenda one of which is land reform. This article discusses struggles over access, control and ownership rights in relation to land among women and men in Amuru district Uganda in a post-conflict

context.

Pankhurst remarks that during war, women tend to bear a much greater burden than men for taking care of survivors, as well as children. They also carry the main burden for ensuring food provision, while keeping social and political activities going when men are fighting away from their homes. Pankhurst (2003: 159) argues that the shift of social responsibilities from men to women is common, despite the many different contexts in which conflicts occur, from remote rural villages, to big cities where all kinds of resourceful innovations are developed by women to ensure that families have enough to eat and are otherwise well taken care of. Ahikire, Madanda and Ampaire (2012), Anderson (2009: 65) and Kindi (2010: 16-20) argue in the case of northern Uganda that household provisioning has shifted to women during the post-conflict period and for the urgency of secure land rights for women. Sørensen (1998:26) in addition argues that the economic reconstruction of a country emerging from war is crucial and shapes women's post-war livelihoods. She further notes that while national authorities and external financial institutions play a crucial role in the recovery of economies shattered by war; post war economic life is vibrant with individual men and women who develop individual and collective strategies to survive.

Given women's increased burdens of household provisioning, how does the insecurity of land tenure coupled by the apparent land grabs prevalent in Amuru impact on their livelihoods. Okoth Oghenda (2002) argues that if powerful actors can construct land as an under-used commodity then it provides justification for governments, investors, foreign corporations, and development banks to argue for its "redistribution", acquisition, or investment. The commoditization of land and perception of its abundance in Amuru has heightened interest in land in the district compounding on the already existing tensions.

2. Basic theoretical tenets

The Uganda Land Policy reinforces that land is a vital resource that defines the livelihoods, identity and relationship with ancestors of people. Agriculture is the backbone of Uganda's economy and accounts for 37% of its Gross Domestic Product. Amanda, Manuel and Blackden (2005) explain that almost 70% of the Ugandan labor was employed in agriculture related activities by 2003 and that had not changed much for over a decade. They explain that women provide the bulk of this labor but lack control over land. Yngstrom (2000: 26) notes in general that African women gained most of their access to land through marriage as wives; they acquired both the right and the obligation to cultivate land as a result of marriage. They may also be expected to fulfill certain other labor obligations, commonly existing in food provisioning. Custom and culture of a community in relation to land tenure are very strong factor that weakens or strengthens people's land claims. This research is underpinned by customary laws, norms and values towards land distribution. Chanock (1991) sees custom as a weapon in the battle against the economic independence of dependants; these include rights claimed by elders over the labor of the young and by men over that of women. Chanock quotes the colonialist Lugard's description of land use.

In the earliest stage the land and its produce is shared by the community as a whole; later the produce is the property of the family or individuals by whose toil it is won, and the control of the land is vested in the head of the family. When the tribal stage is reached, the control passes to the chief, who allots unoccupied lands at will, but is not justified in dispossessing any family or person who is using the land (F.D. 1922: 280-1 in Chanock 1991: 69).

In this excerpt, the land was vested in the head of the family and at the tribal level to the clan head that were all male. Women were invisible in land administration and governance right from pre-

colonial times.

Parwez (2011), in the case of India, also noted that in most of the patriarchal and patrilineal tribal group's inheritance and succession rules followed the male line. Women married or unmarried did not have the right to inherit clan property. Gender inequalities were very prevalent in Amuru district where this research was carried out. It was evident that in the favoritism of boys over girls in education, women lack voice over assets and reproductive rights, invisibility of women in leadership at community level, therefore making women's land rights farfetched and fragile. Land rights are supposed to be enjoyed within the framework of the broader bundle of human rights. These structural inequalities were usually rubber stamped by custom which was used to justify why men needed to make major decision pertaining to land. Grabe, Grose and Dutt (2015) explain that women are rarely consulted about decisions that related to disposing off or selling land, transferring land and distributing land. Any attempts by women to raise their voices could result into gender based violence and fragile familial relationships.

3. How women access land in Uganda

Tripp (2004) identified five strategies that women used to strategically claim their land rights in Uganda; these include women's purchase of land, obtaining titles to land, taking claims to courts, organized collective protest around legislation and daily acts of resistance that include stripping that has been recently seen in the Amuru land grabs. These strategies have been used with certain levels of success and failures in certain parts of the country and not others.

Adoko, Akin and Knight (2011: 3) note that in most of rural Uganda one way women access land is through marriage. A woman's marital status is very important in determining how she will be affected by land registration; widows are particularly vulnerable because land is generally registered in the husband's name and upon death of their husband they are not considered heirs. In Uganda, there are gender inequalities in land acquisition and ownership; women are likely to be left destitute even within a joint ownership of land in the case of divorce or separation, as culture perceives that the land is the husbands. Gray and Kevane (1999) explain women's vulnerability in Africa from the standpoint that women's rights to land are associated with their position to men as mothers, wives, sisters and daughters and as such, men use their position of dominance to expropriate women's rights to land. In addition women's independent rights to land through the land market policy of willing buyer or willing seller are not entertained as women are expected to be under the man "who has paid bride wealth for her, and considers her his property" (FGD, Pabbo).

Asiimwe (2001: 174) argues about the obscurity of women's land rights in Uganda and highlights that though statutory law does not bar women from owning property, the reality within which they live effectively denies them this right. She realizes that there are many socio-cultural practices that discriminate against women, discouraging women from owning land or sanctioning them for it. She cites the paying of bride wealth and polygamy as some of the practices that reduce women's security on land thus denying women their right to land. She further argues that payment of bride wealth works to deny women their land claims; a woman may be viewed as the husband's property, nullifying any claims she might have to land and transferring her property rights to her husband. My study substantiates this claim and found that men had strong sentiments about unmarried women whose bride wealth had not been paid making claims and decisions about land. The Acholi custom viewed unmarried women as visitors who could not lay claims on land even if they had born children in that family.

Adoko and Levine (2005: 10) while examining land rights in Apac district in northern Uganda, noted that the main difficulty relating to customary rights was the erosion of the authority of customary elders, and the ability of individuals to by-pass the checks and balances in the system.

They noted that land had become a marketable commodity with a cash value in its own right, rather than a family heritage whose value came from the rights to use it. They further argue that a woman's vulnerability stemmed from the idea that under customary law, the woman did not own land in her own right. A woman's claim to land still relied on her parents until she married, thereupon her husband, and if he died, on her children. This meant that she was always dependent.

3.1 Gender and land rights in post conflict Northern Uganda

Women in Acholi traditionally have had some limited rights over accessing land and controlling certain pieces of land designated for subsistence; clans protected vulnerable women. However, the post-war period has seen a more commercialized attitude towards land and an upscale in land grabbing. The social and cultural institutions that protected women in cases of land grabbing are defunct, leaving women especially without a male head particularly vulnerable. These cultural institutions include Rwot–Okoro which was the female authority in charge of land boundaries and conflicts. In the post-conflict period, women are more organized in microfinance and village saving groups locally referred to as “boli-cup” for economic organizing and even if I did not explore the role of these groups in securing women's land rights these groups are powerful enough in their own right to achieve this.

Land conflicts in Acholi Sub-region have intensified during the post-conflict phase, as other assets like cattle and livestock disappeared with the war. United Nations Peace Building Program Study (2011: 25-56) on land conflict resolution in Acholi, claims that customary law also grants women significant land rights, and that approximately one third of the members of traditional court committees across the region were reportedly women. In addition, a vast majority of traditional leaders interviewed in that study suggested women had a role in the mediation process relating to land disputes. Hopwood (2016) in addition argues that customary tenure land holding system in Acholi gave women strong land claims, and that women's land rights were more favorable under it. I am reserved about these claims because my findings revealed that different categories of women, that is: married, unmarried, single mothers, elderly, disabled had different privileges and challenges in asserting their land claims. Women were positioned differently in relation to land based on how custom valued that position; therefore it is too early to conclude that women are better off under customary tenure until a more longitudinal and in-depth study is carried out in the district.

Verma (2014: 53-54) highlights land grabs as a growing phenomenon that is impacting on land rights in East and Southern Africa. She argues that as powerful global forces and elite actors were increasingly engaged in land grabs, social justice, gender equity, environmental sustainability, and customary institutions were pushed to the periphery. As a result, women and men are dispossessed of their land, livelihoods, and access to critical natural resources, thus experiencing acute hardship, loss of livelihoods, gender insecurity in tenure, and landlessness. NTV (2017) reported land grabbing in Amuru district where soldiers were deployed to guard the 10,000-hectare land in Lakang supposed to be taken over by Madvani Group of Companies. In that broadcast, the Lands Minister Betty Amongi was accused by Acholi Members of parliament as spear heading the land grabs in the district and she in turn accused the Members of Parliament of making deals with the company. Amidst this controversy and blame game thousands of families have already been displaced.

4. The study area

Amuru district is one of the recently created districts in west Acholi in northern Uganda. It was carved out of Gulu district and had remained reliant on Gulu for a number of services that included: the judiciary: police, teachers and others but currently infrastructure and many services are now

functional. The district has had many land related conflict: these conflicts have included acquisition of large tracks of land for development, and land grabs as a case in point being the Madhvani group of companies. Rugadya & Kamusiime (2010) note in the case of Amuru that there is the unresolved issue of the East Madi Game Reserve and the migratory route for elephants including that of the black gold that is believed to lie in the plains of Amuru. *The Sunday Monitor* (11/6/2017) clarifies that as of June 2017 there have been violent clashes in Apaa in Pabbo Sub County that are believed to be fueled by politics that will deepen ethnic tensions between the Acholi and Madi. In most of these clashes, women and children are the most affected.

4.1 Methods and data

This research was carried out in Amuru district northern Uganda in May 2017. It mainly employed qualitative research paradigms that used in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to understand the discourse. Three sub counties were purposively chosen in the district based on their characteristics of violent land conflicts, cross-district conflicts, rampant and massive land sales and displacement resulting from inter-clan conflicts.

These were Pabbo, Amuru and Lamogi sub counties. In all the sub counties, I engaged with 40 Area Land Committee members (30 male, 10 female) to provide me with the nature, trends and dynamics of land conflicts. In addition, I held focus group discussion with 40 men and 40 women in separate groups in each of the parishes mentioned above. Borrowing from feminist ethics, I had separate groups for men and women; this was critical given the gender and power imbalances in those communities that would render women voiceless and men positioning themselves as spokespersons.

4.2 Why land conflicts are on the upscale among families in Amuru District

Each sub county chosen had specific dynamics in relation to land conflicts, Amuru Sub County had lots of rampant land sales with one land being sold to multiple owners, Pabbo Sub County was characterized by intense inter-clan land conflicts where clans displaced other clans and took over their gardens. Lamogi Sub County had low intensity but had many cases of widows fighting more pronouncedly for their rights. These different dynamics will be explicated below.

4.2.1 Land sales

There are massive land sales generally in Amuru district. This was more prevalent in Amuru sub county but, however, is a wide spread problem in the whole of the Acholi region. Many youths especially were reportedly selling away large tracks of land for little money just to be able to buy motorcycles for business. The conflicts start as they sell land without the consent of the parents or family and to multiple buyers. It was reported that in many instances the same piece of land could be sold to as many as three people. This has created fragile land rights for the persons the land is sold to, and yet ironically the local council represented by one and two chairpersons would all be present at those land sales and sign off as witnesses to collect “their percentage”. This shows the level of corruption of some of the local leaders who do not care how many people have bought the same piece of land but instead how much they can collect from each sale. Many men were also selling off land without the consent of their wives and many women said that if they asked the men would retort “I just brought you to my home therefore you have no rights to ask about the land, you are like property and can be taken back. You have no voice over this land” (Focus Group Discussion, Women Apaa).

This is similar to the case in Sierra Leone where Millar (2015: 425-453) found that women were not informed about land lease agreements because they were just married into those communities and had no rights or decision making power. Therefore, it is almost conclusive that

in most parts of rural Africa men are supposed to decide for women in relation to land because they have no voice within the marriage.

4.2.2 Poverty

Poverty was one of the factors contributing to fragile land rights and heated tensions over land. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with the Area Land Committees (ALCs) revealed that people were desperate and looked at land as the only resource left for sale and this had brought about heated tensions and instabilities with close families and clans. They attributed poverty to one of the main reasons people kept selling away land cheaply and would end up becoming squatters on their own land in the future. Poverty in families is attributed to alcoholism among men who sell off household agricultural produce for a cheap drink and the population boom. “Many men you see here end up selling off food stuff stealth fully to aid their alcoholism. At the end families end up poor and food insecure and in the vicious cycle of poverty” (FGD, Men Guru-Guru Lamogi Sub county).

Families were having more children than they could maintain, on average in most sub counties a woman had between 6-8 children. This is above the country fertility rate that is at 5.4 and is largely attributed to the fact that women did not have a voice over their reproductive rights (UBOS: 2017).

One man said, “For me I cannot allow my wife to use family planning, other women secretly use family planning without their husband’s consent, this shows disrespect and can cause violence in the family” (FGD, Men Ober Abic Amuru Sub county). This increases on women’s care roles and burdens in the home.

Fojong et al. (2016: 584) explain that not being able to own land has a negative effect on food production. It implies that families can only cultivate certain types of crops leading to a drop in yields and revenue; therefore poverty creates more poverty.

4.2.3 Illiteracy

Illiteracy impacts on secure tenure of land as will be explained. It became apparent during the study that many people who were selling off their land could not read or write contracts pertaining to that sale. A case in point was a man who had leased off land to another more elite man to use it to cut trees for his charcoal, the elite and more powerful man used a lawyer to convert the agreement to a land sale instead of a lease. Illiteracy is worse among women than men and this is attributed to the gender stereotypes associated with education of girls. “Parents still value boy’s education more than girl’s education, when girls are in primary six they are already encouraged to get married and yet they are under age between 15-17 years” (FGD, Men Amuru Sub county). This has affected women’s leadership in most sub counties, as women who do not meet the academic threshold are not confident to stand as leaders and depend on the good will of their husbands. “Many people lack legal literacy, they do not understand their rights in relation to land are misinformed and can be easily manipulated or exploited” (FGD, Area Land Committee).

4.3 Gender specific challenges

This section provides detailed explanation on the gender and land rights questions. It examines how land rights are coined and constructed around gender. It explains the factors that give women and men weaker or stronger land claims to land and how gender is constructed in relation to land claims.

4.3.1 Culture and land

The Acholi land tenure system is based on custom; that implies that land distribution is centered

on the clan head and family head, who is the man. Culture has been used as an excuse to deny women rights to control and transfer land that is enshrined in the constitution, national gender policy and Uganda Land Policy (ULP) that provide for the clause that women and men shall enjoy equal rights to land before marriage, in marriage, after marriage and at succession without discrimination (Uganda Land Policy: 23).

Women are traditionally given an “okang” that is a garden allocated to a woman for mainly subsistence production and the right to use that land. The rest of the family land will be under the control of the family head namely the man. In almost all the meetings, both women and men agreed that the family head who was the man had the rights to distribute, transfer and sell off land, but women could also be consulted in matters concerning land sales but not make major decisions. In all my focus group discussions, it was firmly established that land was never transferred to girls, the phrase ‘anyira obedo pot obiya’ literally translated ‘girls are like flowers that will be plucked and taken’ was used rhetorically. “As fathers we cannot transfer land to our daughters because they will be married off and go to their homes, then who will take care of the land. That is why we give the land to boys because they stay with us and are more permanent” (FGD, Men Guru-Guru Lamogi Sub County). It means that girls would eventually be married off and relocate, shifting loyalties and therefore would not qualify to control family land. A girl’s share is seen as being in her husband’s home where her loyalty now lies.

This kind of thinking has created problems for women who return from failed marriages to seek refuge in their natal homes. They are considered burdens, given the fact that land is relatively scarce and should they return with male children the situation is worse as these would be ostracized in the future. These nephews by Acholi culture are expected to get land from their ‘fathers’ who may be unwilling to provide them land given the sour relationship with the wife and possible remarriage in some instances.

4.3.2 Marriage

In the study, it was clearly articulated and loudly amplified that unmarried women had no voice in land matters. Marriage, which meant bride wealth being paid to a woman’s family, was the main ingredient to any woman having a voice over land. “I had problems with my husband and came back home, my brothers gave me a small portion of land to farm but clearly told me this was temporary as they expected me to reconcile with my husband and return where my share of land was” (In-depth Interview, Pabbo). Marriage formalized a woman’s position in the family and provided her with some form of authenticity in a homestead. Since married women become full members of a clan. Logically, it takes on that unmarried women are temporary residents and invisible in decision making spheres. Even though marriage legitimized a woman’s position, marriage still relegated a woman to be under her husband’s authority when it comes to decision making over land which in my view is the essence of land rights. A married woman in Acholi is still unable to make independent decisions pertaining to land sales, transfer and use putting her in a precarious situation.

4.3.3 Number of male children

Land rights for women are secured by producing male children within a marriage. Female children are still largely considered inconsequential in relation to land as will be explained. Girls are unimportant in securing family land according to my respondents because “they will go away to another family and cannot defend the land when under threat, boys stay and keep the land. Girls are usually more uneducated than boys and may not document the land, are weak and emotional and can be swayed and cannot make firm decision about land” (FGD, Men, Teddi Amuru Sub county). Male children are more cherished, valued and expected than female ones. A woman’s

failure to bear sons can cost her severely; she can lose her marriage and be replaced quickly with a potential son bearer. One woman commented on this, “My husband brought another woman because I have 5 girls and that new woman is given better treatment by both my husband and his family because she has a son. She has more authority than me over land matters and my husband has asked me to leave if I feel uncomfortable”.

4.3.4 Polygamy

Polygamy is a socially accepted practice in the Acholi community of northern Uganda and many ethnic groups across Uganda. In the Acholi context, a man can bring in a new wife on the grounds of bearing only female children, laziness, sexual dissatisfaction, witchcraft and persistent illness. However, polygamy results into a family having too many children and it strains the land especially as women fight to keep the land for their sons. “Land conflicts are worse in polygamous families, where each woman wants more land for her children and should they mostly have boys the situation is worse because boys stay in the home unlike girls. Each woman would want to secure a lion’s share for her son” (In-depth interview, Lamogi Sub county). Polygamous families are competitive in nature; a woman with adult sons will have a lion’s share of the land while a woman with a son or only daughters may find it difficult to defend her need for more land.

5. Land and livelihoods

Cornhiel (2005) reiterates that women in post conflict situations are either at the mercy and benevolence of their fathers, brothers or other male relatives or risk eviction and homelessness. Eviction of widows, for example, is rampant in northern Uganda; on a positive note, women are demanding their land rights. Women are deprived of sustenance and means of livelihood as a result. By and large, women in Uganda are unable to transfer or own land but can use land for a limited duration. Women’s lack of access to and control over productive resources such as land is directly related to women’s poverty worldwide. This is heightened in post conflict situations where land tenure systems are fractured and where land reform processes give more power to men.

In Amuru, it was clearly argued that a lack of rights to use land could result in a woman or man’s food insecurity, given that land is the main factor of production. “If you do not have land, where do you grow your food to eat? All of us here are farmers none of us have office jobs; therefore we need to have land to eat, pay school fees and to have money to go to hospital. Without land one can go hungry and become destitute” (FGD, Men Pabbo Sub County). Women and men without land can end up with no food for their family, are unable to pay school fees, meet their health care needs and even the need for shelter.

Whitehead and Tsikata (2003: 97-98) note that land claims are socially embedded because decision-making processes cannot be unraveled from local power relations and because the latter favor men, not women. In essence, land tenure is a social system that favors men at the expense of women. This is an assertion I support given my research findings; the customary tenure system in Acholi has given more power to men at the expense of women’s land rights. In many instances, it was cited that young men could threaten and evict widows from their land, and in many cases the widow was left at the mercy of the clan. Women also complained that during times of harvesting their husbands would want to control the proceeds from their gardens and yet they would not have a say over the husband’s garden in which they also contributed labor. Men could also remove the senior wife’s garden and give it to a younger wife who produced sons if the senior wife only bore girls. All this is embedded in gender imbalances supported by culture.

Moagi (2008) argues that when access to land is denied or restricted, women may find themselves struggling alone with fewer resources and less support from their husbands; the burden on women increases without the control of resources shifting to them. In addition, many rural

women are often poor and illiterate to deal with the bureaucratic procedures that are necessary to gain access to title deeds or fight for their land rights in court.

Agarwal (1994: 1459) argues for independent land rights for women so that they can be secure in times of marital breakup, so that women can flee violent marriages and start out from somewhere; wives may have different land use priorities from husbands which they would be in a better position to act upon with independent rights and would be in a better position to control the produce.

6. Conclusion

The findings from my study support the findings of other scholars like Fonjong (2013) who argues that landlessness can result in food insecurity; Mbilinyi (2017: 4) who also found that there were gender differences in access to and control over land in Tanzania. This contradicts the findings of Hopwood (2015) who argues that customary tenure protects women's rights, however my findings suggest Acholi custom marginalize unmarried women and women returning from failed marriages.

In conclusion, political conflicts which are prolonged, like in the case of northern Uganda, alter social settings including land tenure. The peace process that ensues may not focus on gender equitable land distribution as a priority but on infrastructural development, thus losing out on the core discussion. Fragile land rights for both men especially nephews and women who return from failed marriages, unmarried women, married women with daughters only, women in polygamous households are a reality and affects gendered livelihoods.

Valayudhan (2012) remonstrates that land is a particularly critical resource for women when the household breaks down in cases of male migration, war, abandonment, violence, divorce, polygamous relationships, illness or death. Secure property rights can also help women avoid or mitigate the impacts of violence, in particular, domestic violence.

Land rights are critical for women escaping gender-based violence in all its forms and from remaining destitute when marriage breaks down. Polygamy remains a big barrier in ascertaining women's land rights as the already cramped land is continuously competed for by both wives and male children. Therefore, the Succession Amendment Bill of 2011 in Uganda needs to critically address succession of property within polygamous families, the focus is on widows and widowers sharing equally, widows within polygamous contexts seem to have been neglected.

In addition, politicization of land in Amuru is creating a lot of tensions and uncertainties in the communities. *NTV 9pm news* on 3/8/2017 showed the Minister of Lands Betty Amongi explaining how members of parliament were being hypocritical; by sending controversial messages about Madvani and Government in the recent bid to survey land in Lakang Amuru district. In defense members of parliament said they were with the people and lands would not be surveyed forcefully but in consultation with the communities. As a result, the ordinary woman or man's land rights will be affected by these political maneuvers. Ministry of Lands, members of parliament and local communities need to succinctly enter into dialogue to prevent the consequences of repeated violence and displacements that are creating fragility.

Laloyo Stella Apecu is a lecturer affiliated to the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies, Gulu University, Uganda. Apecu is interested in researching new concerns that are emerging in post-conflict societies from a feminist and human rights lens that have included economic governance, land rights for women, livelihoods, political participation, human-wildlife conflicts, and environmental concerns.

E-mail: s.a.laloyo@gu.ac.ug, slaloyo@gmail.com

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