The proximate causes of inequality take place within a social-political framework that governs ownership and usage of key production resources like land. This paper seeks to show the ways in which land use and tenure insecurity in Uganda contribute to growing inequality, poverty and hinder sustainable development. Inequities in land ownership and access are possibly one of the most common injustices that have persisted in Uganda since the pre-colonial times. Unfair land use policies and practices and the lack of security of tenure must be immediately addressed if Uganda is to achieve its development goals under the National Development Plan II and most of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Oxfam is working in Uganda together with partners to address the drivers of extreme inequality and injustice such as land.

The methodology involved collection of both primary and secondary data as well as use of qualitative and quantitative analysis.

The proximate causes of inequality take place within a social-political framework that governs ownership and usage of key production resources like land. This paper seeks to show the ways in which land use and tenure insecurity in Uganda contribute to growing inequality, poverty and hinder sustainable development. Inequities in land ownership and access are possibly one of the most common injustices that have persisted in Uganda since the pre-colonial times. Unfair land use policies and practices and the lack of security of tenure must be immediately addressed if Uganda is to achieve its development goals under the National Development Plan II and most of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Oxfam is working in Uganda together with partners to address the drivers of extreme inequality and injustice such as land.

1. **Gender biased land ownership:** In most Ugandan communities, land ownership is patriarchal which worsens women’s situation in case of any decisions/threats to the land. In the event of compensation both land and monetary, the beneficiaries are mainly men (‘the owners’). Often, women, in case of displacement will experience reduced agricultural productivity and income as they depend on family and kin for land access and labor.

2. **Gaps in the management of public land:** The gaps in records of government land have facilitated encroachment as well as land grabbing by investors/individuals through government agencies. The illegitimate transfer of intrinsic public wealth to individuals enables them to generate more wealth using a bigger endowment base, perpetuating inequality.

3. **Land Based Investments:** Most land in Uganda is held under the undocumented customary tenure. Uganda’s development policy approach treats land as a tradable commodity in the market to ease access for large scale land investments that are largely foreign direct investments. This is often at the expense of small-holder farmers with no registered ownership of interest over the land. Accordingly, the compensation processes and the challenges that arise have profound effects on both the wealth and income disparities.

4. **Multiple land disputes and inadequate resolution mechanisms:** Land disputes are prevalent in Uganda and constitute 25.2% (3rd highest) of the court case backlog. Lack of an effective dispute resolution mechanism that provides an equal opportunity for the poor is one of the most critical aspects that perpetrate inequality in Uganda.

5. **Environmental Effects of Large Scale Development Projects:** A common feature of most development projects is not only the displacement of people but also the negative effects on the environment and disruptions to the ecosystem including water and vegetation, which reduce the productivity of several local enterprises in the surrounding areas.

**RESULTS**

1. **Scale up the registration of customary land in a gender & culturally- sensitive way so as to protect the interests of most of the population.**

2. **Introduce a strong law which requires Parliamentary approval of any transfer of public land to the private sector, especially for cases lasting over 5 years and involving land over a certain value (US$ 100,000).**

3. **Government should strengthen the provision of legal aid service to cover land matters since most victims of land injustices are poor/vulnerable people who cannot afford to hire private lawyers to protect their land rights.**

4. **The assessment of compensation should consider World Bank recommendations on social economic support mechanisms that are surrounding the household to ensure restoration of a similar level of livelihood during compensation.**

5. **The UN through the UNFCCC, should hold Uganda government accountable to its commitment to investment in eco-systems restoration that will convert the land use change and forestry sector sustainance (2015 NDCs).**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Honor. Mukitate Birahwa, Ms Asingwire Adriene,Mugisa Dennis, Omonya Rama, Tumuhimbise Jasper, Akumu Patience, Opiyo Charles, Burgos Stephanie.

**REFERENCES**

- Birungi Patrick and Rashid Hassan (2010), Poverty, property rights and land management in Uganda ALAPE Vol 4 No 1 March
- Makerere District Land Stakeholders’ Forum: A Stakeholder Approach To Unlocking Land And Property Related Challenges Uganda.
- ONUF (2015), Gender Policy Statement.
- World Bank (2017), Uganda Economic Update, 8th Edition