

**EXAMINING WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH DECENTRALIZED
LAND STRUCTURES AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL: A CASE
OF MUKONO DISTRICT**

BY

KIRUNGI JACKLINE

REG NO: 2007/HD14/9811U

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
GENDER STUDIES OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

NOVEMBER, 2012

Abstract

This study set out to examine the prospects of the women's engagement with decentralized land structures on women's land rights. This was done through examining the ways through which women are making contact with land structures, taking the case of processes and procedures of operations of land structures at local government level. Targeted however were women both as clients but also as adjudicators in decentralized land structures in Mukono district. Socialist feminist theory guided this study. Women's differentiated experiences, mainly as women but also as widows, mothers and sisters, sisters in law were used to understand women's ways and reason of engagement with decentralized land structures.

The study employed a cross section largely descriptive study design. Qualitative methods such as focused group discussions were conducted to inform findings of the study. In depth interviews with women clients to the decentralized land structures, key informants with officials were carried out. Observations during land structure operation were also used for data collection.

The study reveals how the decentralized land structures provide for forums through which women begin to negotiate their substantive rights in land, though the grounds of struggle are not yet leveled a situation that make women's gains at any stage, weak and tentative. The mechanisms of ascertaining rights in land are not yet standard and it is mainly women that tend to fall through the gaps of the ill-defined land rights systems. The customary land tenure system rights in land assume collective benefits at the expense of women. Titling and registration of rights in land serve to the advantage of those already with land of which majority women do not have land. There is need to envisage a land administration and management system that promotes shared benefits in land, otherwise the current land rights transfer system, that inform engagement, in all its multi-dimensions largely dispose women off land.