



GENDER ANALYSIS FOR INCLUSIVE SMALL HOLDER FARMERS IN NORTHERN UGANDA (DINU PROJECT)

September 2022

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Suggested Citation: CARE (2022) Gender Analysis of the Development Initiative for Northern Uganda Project (DINU), CARE Uganda; Kampala

Acknowledgements

This Gender Analysis has benefitted from the valuable contributions from CARE International colleagues, especially, Aramanzan Madanda, Sam Okello, Leah Lemongin and Gabriel Agiro.

The views in this Gender Analysis are those of the author (s) alone and do not necessarily represent those of the CARE or its programs, or any Government or any partners.

Cover page photo: Project participant Erimina in her vegetable garden in Nadiket, Moroto District.

Image: CARE



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Abbreviations

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CRS:	Catholic Relief Services
DADO:	Dynamic Agro Pastoralist Development Organization
DINU:	Development Initiative for Northern Uganda
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organization
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
GADC:	Gulu Agricultural Development Company
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IPC:	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
MCGs:	Mother Care Groups
MEAL:	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
PMGs:	Produce Marketing Groups
SACCOs:	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRHR:	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
STIs:	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
UBOS:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
VSLAs:	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WFP:	World Food Program



Executive Summary

The Development Initiative for Northern Uganda (DINU) is a Government of Uganda program with support from the European Union. DINU was awarded to a CARE Denmark led Consortium comprising of CARE International in Uganda, Gulu Agricultural Development Company (GADC), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Dynamic Agro-pastoralist Development Organization (DADO) and SORUDA. The consortium is implementing a project for inclusive market-based development for small holder farmers in Northern Uganda covering eleven districts.

The gender analysis was conducted when the project is in its third and final year of implementation, ending in February 2023 to examine constraints, needs, opportunities and inhibiting norms for women/girls and men/boys in the project target areas to support design and implementation of strategies for enhancing gender transformation.

Guided by the *CARE Good Practices Framework for Gender Analysis* (2012), the study used quantitative and qualitative methods. Its overall theory of change was the CARE Gender Equality Framework which entails Agency, Relations, and Structure. This analysis focused on five areas of inquiry namely: sexual and gender division of labour, household decision making, access to and control over productive resources, gender-based violence and SRHR and examination of relevant gender and social norms.

The findings confirm unequal gender relations that require programming, short, medium, and long-term solutions.

Key recommendations

1. **Support and strengthen project groups and collectives** as they are important change agents in promoting gender equality, they are centres of preventing sexual abuse within the group setting and at home, they have accountability processes for gender equality in their activities and can enhance communication and collective engagements.
2. **Integrate labour-saving technologies into project plans and budgets** to address the unfair gender division of labour that discriminately burdens women and girls with unpaid care work.
3. **Educate men, women, boys, and girls on relevant laws** on marriage and payment of bride price that plays a pivotal role in defining controlling relations between women and men and define intra-household power dynamics.
4. **Development actors should infuse strong gender and social norms programming approaches** in future projects to shift norms on practices such as pride price, property control, resource ownership, nutrition, gender-based violence, financial inclusion, sexual and reproductive health, hygiene, and menstruation.
5. **Institute user friendly visual and non-visual packaging of project information** regarding gender programming to be easily accessed by various community-based facilitators, groups, and partners.

Key findings

- Gender division of labour shows that women and girls do the bulk of unpaid care work. Women do 70% of household chores, and children 15%.
- Over 80% of couples report joint household decision making on sales and purchases but control over sales income is largely under men.
- Women are a majority in savings groups though borrowing is contested. Land is accessible to the entire household, but control is largely by men. Men also control credit, savings, and access to business skills.
- Gender norms influence nutrition, income, gender-based violence and enjoyment of SRHR.

Introduction

Background information

The Development Initiative for Northern Uganda (DINU) is a Government of Uganda program with support from European Union (EU), supervised by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). DINU was awarded to a CARE Denmark led Consortium comprising of CARE International in Uganda, Gulu Agricultural Development Company (GADC), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Dynamic Agro-pastoralist Development Organization (DADO) and SORUDA. The consortium is implementing a project for inclusive market-based development for small holder farmers in Northern Uganda covering eleven (11) districts of Moroto, Amudat, Nakapiripirit, Nabilatuk, Napak, Katakwi, Abim, Kotido, Karenga, Kaabong and Kitgum stretching to Gulu which is hosting the Sesame Cleaning Facility.

Figure 1: Map of Uganda showing the Project Areas – marked in yellow.



The gender analysis was conducted when the project is in its third and final year of implementation, ending in February 2023.

'The consortium is implementing a project for inclusive market-based development for small holder farmers in Northern Uganda covering eleven (11) districts.'

DINU is expected to contribute to increased food and nutrition security and household income of 68,250 (60% women) smallholder farmers. The specific objectives include increasing production of diversified food by women and men small holder farmers; increasing access to key input and output markets for women and men small-scale farmers; improving access to credit along the value chain through community saving and credit schemes; increasing market accessibility for women and men smallholder farmers; and improving nutrition and uptake of family planning services through gender-responsive community-based approaches.

Purpose and Objectives of the Gender Analysis

The purpose of the gender analysis was to examine constraints, needs, opportunities and inhibiting norms for women/girls and men/boys in the project areas to support design and implementation of strategies for enhancing gender transformation.

Specific Objectives were to:

1. Assess women's and girls' relative ability to access and control productive resources, power, and services.
2. Explore the extent of gender transformative programming in the DINU project in view of identified gender disparities including identifying any unintended outcomes on women/girls and men/boys.

Methodology

Guided by the [CARE Good Practices Framework for Gender Analysis \(2012\)](#), the study used quantitative and qualitative methods. Its overall theory of change is the CARE Gender Equality Framework which entails Agency, Relations, and Structure.

The *CARE Good Practices Framework for Gender Analysis* identifies core areas of inquiry in understanding the social, economic, and political differences between men, women, boys and girls and their implications to their social status. Guided by the framework, this analysis focused on five areas of inquiry which were deemed relevant to the project namely (1) Sexual and gender division of labour (2) Household decision making (3) Control of productive assets (4) Gender Based Violence and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and (5) Gender and social norms.

The research was undertaken in September 2022 and used the following methods:

- Individual survey of 850 people (63% female) spread across 7 project districts selected through multi-stage simple random sampling.
- Fourteen (14) Focus Group Discussions for 14 people each (7 women and 7 men) spread evenly across 7 project districts.
- Key Informant Interviews: selected from 7 project districts, 6 key informants per district with total number of 42 people (21 women and 21) men.
- Secondary data review of project documents and similar gender analysis reports.

The research had some limitations: This was the first known gender analysis to be done in the Karamoja sub-region and therefore there was not much relevant secondary data to build on from the project area. The study was also conducted in the final year of the project and therefore its utility was be applied more to future endeavours.

Demographic profile

Sex and Age Disaggregated Data

The total population of the districts covered for the analysis is 1,703,961 as per the National Population Census Data of 2020 with more than half being female. Compared to many parts of Uganda, this is in general, a sparse population. Average household size of 4.3 is below the national average of 4.5. There are a significant number of female and child headed households implying that there is need to pay attention to programming so as not to focus on male-headed households alone and ignore the rest.

Demographic analysis

The key Demographics for the study districts of Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Amudat, Nabilatuk, Napak, Katakwi, Abim, Kotido, Karenga, Kaabong and Amudat are as presented below: A significant percentage of the population is young with almost half (47.9%) being below 18 years.

Total Population	1,703,961
% of Population <18 years	47.9%
% of Population 15-24 years	22.3%
% of Women of Childbearing Age	48.3%
#of Women Pregnant or Lactating	266,929
#of Female Headed Households	242,176
#of Child Headed Households	67,066
#of Polygamous Households	27,930
Average Size of Households	4.3
% of Population with a Disability	1.8%
Major Ethnicities: Karimojong, Dodoth, Pokot, Iteso, Jie, and Lango.	
Official and Unofficial Languages: Karimojong, Langi, Iteso, English, Swahili	

Data Computed From: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2020 Population and Housing Census.

<https://www.ubos.org/>

Findings and analysis

Gender Roles and Responsibilities

Division of (domestic) labour

Gender division of labour at household level was examined in relation to farmland preparation, crop planting, weeding, harvesting, marketing, and food preparation.

Preparation of farmland

Regarding whom in the household mostly prepares farmland for planting crops; nearly half of the respondents prepare the land 49.2%, by themselves implying subsistence farming is critical for most females and males. Of importance for married women is that 24% reported that their spouses helped with farmland preparation compared to 5.1% of the men who reported that their wives helped with this role. Though fewer, women (4%) more than men (1%) reported working with children to prepare farmland, about 14% used other forms of labour that could include extended family members particularly women.

Gender roles and responsibilities

Data on gender division of labour shows that women and girls do the bulk of preparation of farmland, planting, weeding, harvesting, and marketing. For household chores, women do 70% of the work supported by children who do about 15% of household chores. While there is variation, and shared decision-making between men and women, overall household decision-making is dominated by men.

Planting crops

Most of the household respondents (37.9%) reported that planting crops is an activity families do with extended family members. This is followed by women (31%), men 25% and then children 4.5%.

Weeding crops

Combined responses from women and men show that weeding in at least 47% of the respondent's households is done by mostly women including the extended family members.

Harvesting farm produce

Findings show that 30.2% (24.7%F/5.5M) of households harvest the crops by themselves. But half says harvesting is done by a group they termed "others" who could include relatives or buyers as it is probable that some of the crops are sold off before harvest. In 6% of the households, children participate in harvesting farm produce. Qualitative data suggests that kitchen gardens are under the control of women and entire harvesting of the vegetables was done by women and girls. Women are also in control of the food distribution points in communities that receive food aid.

Marketing of farm produce

Overall, about half of the respondents (49%) marketed their own farm produce. Further analysis shows a higher percentage of the women (56%) compared to men (35%) marketed crops in households. **This is unique as most studies in other parts of the Uganda indicate that men dominate marketing.** This finding was validated with evidence from key informants where to quote one Key Informant from Katakwi District: **"women are bread**

winners – women are doing business...male involvement in marketing is mainly at the transportation...they carry to the market...Men take advantage, negotiate and take the money” Children also do marketing as reported by 6.6% of the respondents.

Household chores

Generally, in nearly 70% of the respondents' households, the main chores are done by wives (women) and girls. Children do most of the main chores in 15% of the respondents' households. Men were reported to be involved in household chores in about 5% of the households.

Cooking for the household

On the overall, cooking is mainly done by women in nearly 70% of the households surveyed. Children play a major role in cooking in at least 17.8% of the households. About 5% of the households reported men as involved in preparing food. As noted in one of the Katakwi district Women focus group discussions: **“men just start drinking in the morning ..., they do not contribute to anything... they believe they are not supposed to do anything”**.

Household Decision Making.

The study examined decision making in relation to what to plant, selling household items, making major purchases, taking loans and spending.

Household decision making on what to plant.

While most respondents (64%) disagreed with the statement that men should decide what to plant, a sizeable percentage (29%) agreed, with women being a majority in either opinion category.

Decision Making on Selling Household Items

Of the respondents, 50.8% of the males and 44.6% of the females agreed to a statement that they have sole responsibility on selling household items. While men are a majority, there is an indication that women have a reasonable say in deciding what to sell from the household.

Despite this, 84.6% of all respondents (50.5%F/31.1%M) agreed with the statement **“I share responsibility for making decision on selling items with another member of my household”** while just about 11% disagreed with the statement. To understand the state in which the respondents participate in decision making, they were given another statement “I am confident to share my views and interests when making decisions on whether or not to sell items in my household”. It was established that 86% (53.1F/32.8M) of the respondents felt confident to share their views on selling household items and about 8.5% (5.9%F/2.6M) disagreed with the statement. The findings suggest that 79% of all the female respondents and 91.5% of all the male respondents are confident in sharing their interests and views in making decisions on either selling household items.

On the overall, 81% of all males interviewed in comparison to 75.4% of the females interviewed felt that their views and interests are important to make decisions on selling items in their households.

Decision making on major purchases.

The respondents were asked whether they had the sole responsibility for making decisions on major purchases and the findings show that 46% of all the female respondents and 56.2% of the male respondents do. On the contrary, 28.7% females and 14% of males disagreed with the statement. To explain this response further, the respondents were asked to respond to another statement – “I share responsibility for making decisions on major purchases like tools”. 81.4% of all the female and 91.2% of the male respondents agreed with the statement.

Confidence to share views and interests when making major decisions.

On the overall, both men and women feel confident to share their views and interests when making decisions on major purchases. This is based on the percentage agreement to the statement “I am confident to share my views and interests when making decisions on major purchases” (84.4% of all the female respondents and 92.7% of all the male respondents). To understand the levels of confidence in expressing views and interest when it comes to major purchases, the respondents were asked if their views and interests were important in making decisions on these. From responses, 75.7% of all the female and 86.9% of the male respondents answered in the affirmative.

Decision making on loans.

It was established that 49.3% of all the female and 54.6% of all the male respondents agreed with the statement: “I have sole responsibility for making decisions about taking a loan in my household”. However, a sizeable overall percentage (42.7%) disagreed implying that the issue of loans is contested. A majority of these were women.

When asked: “I share responsibility for making decisions on taking a loan with another member of the household”, 84.7% (51.5%F/33.2%M) agreed with the statement and this constituted 81.6% of all the female and 89.3% of all the male respondents.

Confidence in sharing views and interests on loan taking decisions.

To establish the respondents’ confidence to participate in decisions relating to loans, they had to respond to the statement: “I am confident to share my views and interests when making decisions on whether or not to take a loan in my household.” It was established that 86.4% (53.4%F/33%M) agreed while 9.2% (6.9%F/2.3%M) disagreed and 5.3% (3.4F/1.9%M) were not sure. This means that most of all the female (85%) and male (88.6%) respondents agreed with the statement. The respondents were further asked whether their views and interests are important in loan taking decisions and it was established that 79.7% (47.8%F/31.8%M) agreed with the statement while 15.1% (10.9%F/4.2%M) disagreed and 5.3% (4.1%F/1.2M) were not sure.

Decision making on household spending patterns.

In examining the decision-making patterns of the household, the respondents were asked to respond to a statement: “I have sole responsibility for making decisions on spending in my household. The findings show that 53.6% (32.8%F/20.8M) constituting 52.3% and 55.8% of all the female and male respondents respectively agreed with the statement. The respondents were further requested to respond to the statement: “I share responsibility for making decisions on spending with another member of my household” to which 87% (53.3%F/33.7%M) agreed with the statement constituting 85% and 90.2% of all the female and male respondents respectively.

Confidence on sharing views and interests on spending decisions.

To establish the level of confidence in sharing views and interests on spending decisions within the household, respondents were asked to respond to the statement: "I am confident to share my views and interests when making decisions on spending in my household". The responses revealed that the levels of confidence are high 89.9% (56.2%F/33.7%M) constituting 89.6% and 89.3% of all the female and male respondents respectively. The respondents were further asked if they felt that their interests and views are important to making decisions on spending in the household and it was established that 81.6% (50.4%F/31.2%) agreed while 14.7%(10.2%F/4,5%M) disagreed with the statement.

Access to and Control Over Resources

a) VSLA membership

Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) membership provides a form of social capital that is not only useful financially but provides a social base that can be relied upon economically and socially. The findings show that most of the respondents both male and female were members of the VSLAs or some savings group (81.6%). There is no significant difference between the number of male and female respondents that were not members of the VSLA or similar savings groups. Of the 533 women interviewed, 89 (16.7%) were non-members. Of the 317 men interviewed, 67 (21%) were non-members.

In three months prior to the interview, 69.2% (43.6%F/25.6%M) of the total respondents had saved money with a VSLA or similar group. In a follow up question for those that had saved money in the last twelve months, about one fifth (20.2%) most of them women reported saving with banks or microfinance institutions meaning that the VSLAs play a critical role in ensuring the financial life of both male and female respondents. One Key Informant in Katakwi district observed that there are challenges in accessing finances/loans from banks including the requirement for collateral security and the need for spousal consent.

b) Household farmland

Land is an important resource if effectively and efficiently used, especially when it comes to ensuring food security and the general well-being of the household. Findings indicate that most of the households for respondents' own farmland 91.5% (56.7%F/34.8M). Only 8.5% of the respondents (6%F/2.6%M) have no farmland probably because they live in urban areas or are probably because they may not afford to own land.

Findings show that 47.4% (28.6%F/18.8%M) of the respondents indicated that all household members were using farmland while 38.5% (24.5%F/14%) indicated use by husband and wife. It is important to observe that farmland that is accessed jointly by husband and wife only could be an indicator of cultural practices that prohibit men or women's utilization of that farmland like for kitchen gardens that are accessed by females only. We observe that some of this inaccessible household land may be the most valuable either economically or in terms of nutrition. Generally, most focus groups reported that men, boys, women, and girls can use the land.

c) Household Control of Land

The findings according to both male and female respondents show that land, which is a critical resource for food and nutrition security is solely controlled by husbands 55.1% (33.6% F/21.4%). Land controlled by wives is at 7.8%. Only 15% of the respondents said that the land is controlled by both husband and wife (8.7%f/6.6%M). Only 12% (7.3%F/5.1%M) stated that land was controlled by all household members. The response

communicates the key issue of limited control of land by youth that are still staying with their parents and married women. Only 9.5% (5.8F/3.8%M) indicated that household control of land is not necessarily by the members of the household. This means that nearly a tenth of the respondents' households are probably borrowing or hiring land that they are using.

d) Women and land ownership

Women's land ownership in their marital home is a contested issue as shown by the responses to the statement: **"Women do not own land because they neither belong to the natal nor marital home."** To this, 46.5% (26.5%F/20%M) of the respondents agreed and 40.8% (27.9%F/12.9%M) disagreed, while 12.9 % (8.2F/4.4%M) neither agreed nor disagreed.

The statistical findings are corroborated by views from FGDs and key informant interviews. Only 6 out of the 39 groups reported that women control the use of land. The control is lower for girls with only 4 FGDs saying girls can also control the use of land. In the case of men and boys, 38 out of the 39 FGDs agreed that men control land. Similarly, 25 out of 39 FGDs agreed that boys also control the land. Generally, land is highly in the control of men.

The situation in relation to land control is linked to cultural norms around the land tenure system. These include the communal clan ownership of land, traditional norms, and the fear of losing the land to "non-clan" members of the family. Land ownership is a sign of prestige and power for men, the need to protect and defend the land from grabbers and land control is attributed to legitimacy through family initiation during marriage and bearing of children. The fear of non-clan members taking over renders women to be users rather than owners and it is even worse for women whose bride price has not been paid as they are presumed to be illegitimate members of the family.

Selected views on Land Control

"Culturally we have land laws and systems, and we have leaders who control land like Rwot Kweri and Rwot Okoro, who are heads of farmlands and the farming community. They are supposed to organize and allocate land to women such that women in the kingdom would have access to farmland such that they can fight famine and so on. This is similar with other cultures like among the Pokot and Karamojong"
(Male KII Kotido).

"Traditionally, land is supposed to be owned by a man in Karamoja. An elder son can inherit land when he is grown up fully. A woman can only take over her husband's land after his death to take care of her children"
Male KII Kotido.

"In Pokot culture, women are not allowed to hold and own land. [Even if they buy], it's still considered the property of the man"
Female KII Amudat

Men control – even if the land belongs to the wife – hiring and selling, it is by the man. Women feel 'comfortable', even if land belongs to them, the transactions will be done by the man. In Karenga, only men can protect their land from land grabbers, National Forest Authority, and the cattle raiders
(Karenga, Male FGD).

Like land, the respondents indicated that livestock is controlled by men with a response for husbands at 49.8% (28.6%F/21.3%M) and then by both husband and wife at 26.2% (16.5%F/9.8%M), by all household members at just 9.6% (6.7% F/2.9%M). Very few women solely control livestock at a response of 6.1% (5.8%F/0.4%M). It is important to observe that very few men, less than 10% believe that other than them, wives, and other members of the household should control livestock.

f) Household access to farm inputs

Most of the respondents indicated that all household members have access to farm inputs at 35.3% (22.5%F/12.8%M) and then husband and wife at 45.5% (28%F/17.5%M). The husband only is at 10.4% while wife only is 6%. It was noted in some of the focus group discussions that men control crops from larger gardens but do not control food stored in the granary. However, a key informant from Katakwi noted that food storage granaries are of the past probably meaning that few households still have them.

g) Household Control over Finances

The respondents indicated that household finances are controlled by both the husband and wife 48% (29.6%F/18.4%M), husband only 28.7% (15.2%F/13.5%M) and wife only 10.7% (9.1%F/1.6%M). It is important to observe that very few male respondents felt that women only control financial resources (1.6%) while the response rate for wife only controlling finances is just 9.1%. Husband's participation in financial control is at 82.3% while that of a wife is at 64.5%. The qualitative findings also show that men control the financial resources including credit. Men are in more control of all the services that include credit, savings, and business skills. There are households where financial control is by others at a response rate of 6.9% (4.6%F/2.4M), meaning neither the husband nor wife controls these resources, and this could be households of the elderly or those that may have loans with credit institutions. Control of household finances is illustrated by the below views as noted in FGDs and KIIs

. Selected Views on Household Control Over Finances

"Women and girls do not have any authority to engage in any income generating activities unless allowed by the husband because it is believed that when women are financially empowered, they disrespect their men" **Male FGD, Amudat.**

"A woman is the one who is supposed to do business of brewing and selling local beer ("Nyebutia") ...Male FGD - Kotido

"Women are good financial managers because even when a man brings money at home the keeper is a woman. Men ... are poor financial managers because most of the money is finished in drinking" **Female FGD - Katakwi.**

"Women are very vulnerable, can be involved in agriculture but a man can sell the produce and take all the money. It is men dominating. Cultural beliefs have not gotten out of us. Man, in charge, woman is helper." **Female FGD, Katakwi**

"Gone are those days, for now women are more trusted than men, so they manage most finances" **Female KII - Katakwi**

"Sometimes the family suffers because a man who is said to be good at financial management spends all the money on alcohol" **Female KII- Kotido**

"A woman can't use or spend any money in the home without seeking her husband's consent". **KII Kitgum**

"There are men who trust women or their wives at financial management. These men don't adhere to the norm that says women are not good at financial management" **Male KII - Kitgum**

The findings indicate that husbands and wives are borrowing either jointly (27.9% (17.6F/10.2%M) or individually as husband only - 16.4% (6.5%F/9.9%M) and wife only 15.3% (12.9%F/2.4%M).

i) *Decision making on use of borrowed money.*

According to the respondents, the main actor in the use of borrowed money at the household level is the husband as shown by the responses of both husband and wife 52.8% (32.6%F/20.2%M) and husband only 23% (11.4%F/11.6%M). The participation of children and other household members is limited at 5% and for wife only 8.6% for responses from both men and women. This implies that children are hardly involved in the financial decisions of their father and mother.

Gender Based Violence and SRHR

a) *Experience of gender-based violence*

Respondents were asked if they have ever experienced violence in the last 12 months prior to the interview and 61% of all the female respondents and 65% of all the male respondents said they had not. However, the number of those that claim to have experienced violence is big (38% of the female respondents and 35% of the male respondents). This rate of prevalence in the sampled group is however lower than the national average where the rate is above 50% for women and men combined.

Social and gender norms are key contributors to GBV as shown by qualitative data findings. Whereas most FGD participants detested GBV, some communities justify its existence citing the need to demonstrate power and deter men, women, boys, and girls against violence acts. It was observed in one of the key informant interviews in Katakwi that some of the young girls cannot handle family affairs because they are as young as 13-14 years and being mother and in relations where drug abuse is a challenge, drinking is 'normal', condom use is unwelcome, and reporting of GBV cases is socially unacceptable. It was also noted that couples deny themselves sex in situations where a woman gives birth and leaves her home for 3-6 months and the man takes advantage of this situation to have extra-marital affairs that leads to violence within the sex network.

Selected views on GBV

"It is believed that a man should be arrogant and aggressive. That is when he will be considered a tough man who can control his family very well" (Women FGD Kitgum).

*"A woman or a man who commits violence is taken for disciplinary action by elders, caned and tasked to make *kwete* (local alcoholic drink) for the elders" (Men FGD - Karenga).*

"If a married woman commits adultery, the woman will be caned as a way of punishing her and the man will have to pay half of the dowry to the husband of the woman, and he will not be allowed to take part in cultural ceremonies and events until he kills a bull and calls the elders to cleanse him, then take cud of the bull killed to the home of the man he offended and smear the cud on the woman he committed adultery with as a sign of washing away his sins" (Male FGD - Amudat).

"Once you have misunderstandings with your husband, you should remove your belongings from the house as this is called "kii" in Acholi. This is regarded as an abomination which can cause death. Either you or your child will die" (Women FGD - Kitgum).

"Beating a woman is a sign of love. Men reporting a case is seen as a sign of weakness" (KII Katakwi).

"When they (women) receive money from VSLAs, men violate them and take it" (KII Katakwi).

"Women sometimes sell food from granaries and that can be a source of GBV in the home (FGD - Katakwi).

"If I marry you and give your family thirty cows...if you tell your family about a violent husband, they will tell you to go back ..., but if no cows have been paid, they can respect you and you have a voice" (Women FGD Amudat).

b) Child Spacing and family planning.

There are varied views on decisions regarding when to have children and how many. About half of the respondents (48.5%) stated that the final decisions about when to have a child is with the wives. However, about 40% of the with respondents disagree arguing that men still have a strong say on child spacing and family planning.

c) Sexual Reproductive Health Rights

Data from focus group discussions corroborates the view that men control women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. Most FGD participants felt that men make decisions on the number of children a woman should have. Relatedly, decisions about when to start using and stopping family planning products are made by men.

Access to family planning services and products (FPs), health facilities (HFs), safe spaces (SS) and GBV services (counselling, court, Local councils) is high among men, women, and girls. Boys were reported to have the least access to family planning and GBV services.

Men maintain control across all SRHR and GBV services as reported by 29 out of the 39 FGDs held. Women access SRHR and GBV services more than all the other categories as reported by 35 out of 39 groups. However, women were reported to have less control across all the services. For example, out of the 35 FGDs which reported that women access family planning services, only 20 agreed that women control their use. This trend is similar for health facilities, safe spaces and GBV services.

"In our communities, men always say that women should not use family planning methods as this can make them not produce as many children as they want. Any woman who insists on using family planning is taken to the clan members for punishment. You are beaten and asked to pay some money as a fine." Women FGD- Kitgum.

"Men do decide on the number of children to be produced by women" Male FGD, Katakwi

"When women give birth, they are supposed to be alone for some time, you find that men don't accept that, they still force their women to have sex with them". Female FGD - Katakwi

"Men have control in a bedroom and a woman can be beaten upon refusal [to have sex], however three out of the eight women said they can deny [men sex], and their men always understand and seek permission. FGD, Moroto.

"Currently men and women share a plan for the number of children though men make the final decision. Children are no longer considered as sources of labour and wealth. The land is no longer available, educating children is expensive, even medical care and treatment." FGD

d) Women's voice in community meetings

The study findings indicate that 'women can speak in public meetings, and they are listened to' as shown by the positive response - 79% of all female respondents and 76% of all male respondents. **This shows a high level of acceptance of the women's voice in community meetings though the remaining 22% that report otherwise still points to some concerns regarding not taking these voices seriously.**

e) Self confidence

Even though women could be listened to when they speak in the community, 70% felt confident compared to 77% of the males. Gaps in confidence to communicate must be addressed especially for women but also for a sizeable number of men.

Gender and Social Norms

Across the analysis districts, gender and social norms regarding nutrition and food security were identified by the field teams. This identification is crucial for future programming that could look at shifting these norms if inhibitive and strengthen positive ones. A detailed analysis was not possible for this study. The following sections summarize some of the norms that were picked from the field conversations.

a) Norms on food security and nutrition

“A newly married woman is not supposed to pick food from the granary. It is only picked by the mother-in-law. If the newly married woman picked, then the food would get depleted easily” – **Kitgum FGD**

“Women don’t eat chicken, eggs, and honey at their marital homes until there is some money put under the plate. This is called ‘Ayal’ in Luo. This money can give you a go-ahead to eat and the money is spent by the women. She takes it to her mother who uses it.” **Kitgum FGD**

“There is a species of mushroom called “oketkeny” in Acholi. It is not eaten by women because it’s believed that it causes divorce when eaten by women.” **Kitgum FGD**

In **Moroto** District, a **Men’s FGD** cited various norms including:

“Not eating certain types of vegetables called ‘ekilton’ because it makes people barren.”

“A woman should not eat liver and lungs - organ parts of an animal. The shepherds could curse her to death and the husband must kill a sheep to calm the situation.”

A pregnant woman should not eat after a man because she will have problems while giving birth.

A woman should not eat meat from a cows’ tongue, she will die.

In some clans, no one should eat a dove - if you do so, you urinate blood.

A woman should not eat for one week after giving birth till the baby’s umbilical cord is cured. She will only take tamarind juice and anti-hill soil is boiled in water for her to drink. Soil from ant hills helps mothers produce milk.

In a home, to cook nutritious food such as eggs, meat, chicken, a woman must ask for permission from the husband.

Women eat certain parts of the chicken but do not eat the gizzard and back parts (**Women FGD - Amudat**).

Some gender and social norms also apply to men and boys. However, it appears that the norms baring men are mild. For instance, **FGDs in Karenga district** mentioned that:

“A man shouldn’t eat millet from the mingling stick; it was one way of commanding respect.”

“A man is not supposed to eat from a saucepan, because every woman he dates will refuse to marry him.”

In Abim district: it was noted that women do not eat the gizzard of the chicken. It was observed that soda ash strengthens the woman. The first milk of a cow is supposed to be taken by men. Unmarried women do not eat some parts of beef for example the tongue to avoid bad luck.

b) Norms on Finances

Women do not know how to budget (**Katakwi FGD**).

Major financial decisions like taking a loan from a group even if the woman saves the money must be taken after seeking permission from the husband.

There is a sense of 'one directional' decision making around money. **The wife is obliged to consult her husband before deciding on money matters, but the husband is not obliged to do the same.** In other words, women account to the men.

c) Norms on GBV and SRHR

Below are some gender and social norms picked from **Women FGDs** in Amudat District.

Marriage to an immediate family member is taboo.

Men have power, head of family ... men do not accept family planning minus permission, you face it rough ... they are the head of the family...women decision making, limited power...they do not have control. You are under the man. They undermine women, who do not have a voice.

Men's fertility is guaranteed, infertility is a woman's problem.

Family and clan continuity are important that is, if a wife takes long to produce children, the husband can be encouraged by his sisters to send her away.

If women ate 'Amureen', a wild animal, they would become barren. However, these, days they eat it, and nothing happens.

No cooking during menstrual periods, no bathing, no milking, you sit on sand.

A woman is supposed to be submissive, whatever a man says, she should accept.

A Women FGD – in Katakwi district reported:

Husbands, (especially older ones) have a final say on the number of children a wife should have. This is linked to the payment of bride price, namely that the cows are producing for your parents.

In Abim district, it was noted that:

Twins do not come out of the household unless birth rites are performed.

Unmarried girls do not slaughter a goat that has produced because they will become barren.

In a Katakwi Women FGD, it was reported that:

You are smeared with cow dung if you give birth at your parents' place to prevent bad luck and that girls are seen as a source of bride price.

Implications of the Findings for the DINU Project

This section outlines the implications for the DINU project of the gender analysis findings. These are organised under different areas of inquiry pursued by the analysis.

AREA OF INQUIRY #1: DIVISION OF LABOUR:

Findings show that unpaid care work (UCW) is mainly done by women especially washing, cooking, weeding, planting, and women's participation in marketing agricultural produce alongside men. Men are mainly regarded as household heads and are also largely in charge of preparation of land to plant crops. DINU project focuses on increased production of diversified food by women and men small holder farmers. A major focus of the project is female youth. The project recognizes the role of women in weeding by promoting 500 tillage service providers to increase acreage and reduce women's labour burden on the farm. **It does not however directly address the large unpaid care work burden for women and girls relative to boys and men as DINU was not intentional on this or does it address the effect of increased production on women's workload.**

AREA OF INQUIRY #2: DECISION MAKING:

Decision making at household level is largely consultative, valued, and shared between males and females in most of the processes including borrowing, selling and purchase of household items. Quantitative data suggests that women exercise agency as much as the men. However, qualitative inquiry suggests that decision making is probably one directional. The consultation is about women accounting to their husbands and men performing their household leadership roles. A man may participate in making decisions on issues relating to property owned by the woman. A woman may not participate in property owned by the man and even if she does, the nature of participation in the decision making is complicated. The findings suggest that the man has authority, the woman does not. The findings also suggest that both males and females have high levels of self-confidence but with limitations on land matters. The findings indicate that women's voices are heard but may not necessarily be listened to in the desired form. This provides a starting point towards the recognition and respect of this voice. **DINU takes this on and conducts Intra household gender equality decision making training and dialogues with youth as well as runs radio talk shows on this subject.**

AREA OF INQUIRY #3 ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER RESOURCES:

Valuable productive resources such as land and livestock are mainly men owned and controlled. VSLAs are lifelines for communities and foster financial inclusion for both males and males. All members of the household, men and women have access to farm inputs. **The DINU project has recognized this and is promoting women's control of these productive resources.** CARE as part of the consortium for the DINU project focuses on inclusive market development for northern Uganda and promotes the VSLA Model to foster development and support of 2,700 VSLAs through capacity building including on leadership, market-oriented skills, financial literacy, business development, saving, value addition and quality control. VSLAs have guidelines that promote women's participation in leadership and in the handling of group finances including counting and keeping the keys for the money boxes. VSLAs encourage women to save. Financial inclusion has been recognized by the Government of Uganda and CARE International. There are challenges in accessing finances from the banks including collateral and spousal consent to the loan, which DINU is overcoming.

The focus on food security nutrition and promotion of agriculture recognises farmlands as major assets for households. There is provision of ruminants to 19,000 women and girls, financial literacy, and financial consumer protection information. Household dialogues for financial empowerment of women methodology are used to foster processes to address gender barriers to women's equitable access to and control over household financial resources.

There is noted improved livelihoods at family level because both females and males have utilized the VSLAs. Receipt of VSLA savings can be a source of GBV when men use it for drinking and not spending it on household needs. DINU uses the male engage model to address this.

Most of the households have farmlands but the cultural belief around land is that it is purely for men. When you are married, your parent's family feels you cannot come back home. If your husband dies, his brothers start sending you away. **Women can cultivate, access, but owning land is difficult – land ownership is almost impossible.** Dowry is a key determinant of women's land rights. Land usage and control for women is mainly woven into marital status, Land usage and control is closely linked to marriage. **Gender norms were not a central focus of the DINU project though they were indirectly addressed through the male engage approach and gender dialogues.**

AREA OF INQUIRY # 4: GBV AND SRH:

Men seem to be in control of women's bodies based on the authority vested in them by the institution of marriage as household heads with guaranteed sexual reproductive health and rights. Men by and large control women's bodies thus affecting their sexual and reproductive health. DINU has utilised community-based interventions for family planning to increase appreciation and utilisation of family planning services. Role model men mentors, links with the health facilities and training of village health teams (VHTs) on gender equality and family planning/accessible services and referrals has been key. Also, important have been the CARE life skills training, contextualisation of GBV and SRHR messages for the regions as well as tackling Intra-household gender equality and decision-making training. However youth friendly SRHR services are still limited, men still control women's bodies, family/clan continuity is important and influences the number of children born, the cultural practices like the burying of the umbilical code is slowly dying out but still present, cross generational sex that subjects girls as young as 13-15 years to traumatic sexual relations is prevalent, issues of teenage pregnancy and large family sizes, birth preparedness may be a challenge and girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school. There is still limited utilization of GBV services by men. Men's presumed authority over women's bodies which mainly manifests in older men affects the efficiency and effectiveness of GBV services but strengthens the need for role model men. Thus, spaces such as clans where women have no voice become an important target for engagement. DINU has done significant work in this area but with gaps.

AREA OF INQUIRY # 5. GENDER AND SOCIAL NORMS:

A range of gender and social norms are prevalent regarding nutrition and food security, marriage, sexual and reproductive health, family planning, participation in decision making, gender-based violence, ownership of assets such as land and access to loans. These though partially addressed are not explicit in the DINU project design. Future programming should dig deeper in these norms determining which ones are positive and need strengthening, which ones are negative, and need changing and should work on finding means and how these can be shifted, it should identify the key influencers and actors to work with and effect change.

Conclusions

Gender division of labour, decision-making power, gender norms, and access to and control over resources are critical to livelihoods, food security as well as for sexual and reproductive health rights. Disproportionate unpaid care work with respect to household chores – washing, food preparation, and tilling, overstretch women and girls relative to men and boys. This has negative outcomes. Men and boys are socialised to disregard unpaid care work as their core role - until such a time that norms will shift, and practices change. As men spend

relatively more time on leisure activities including alcohol abuse, families miss out on their needed and valuable labour that could usefully improve household food security.

Meaningful women's participation opens opportunities to exercise their agency and voice in a variety of contexts, including greater access to and control over community resources, increased household and community decision-making power, and the shifting of gender and social norms.¹ Having a voice that is effective both in the family and outside it is critical to meaningful women's participation. This still needs deepening.

Self-confidence has a big impact on one's ability to speak or have a voice. Self-esteem or confidence in oneself is a favourable predictor of women's empowerment². Participation in collectives and membership in VSLAs is critical to enhance women's self-esteem and confidence as well as collective agency. The collectives engage in educational, social, agricultural, and financial activities that not only enhance individual but also collective agency which strengthens women's action.

Whereas involvement of women in things that matter is relatively high, meaningful participation is still limited. As such valuable productive resources such as livestock and land are controlled by men including incomes from sales even if marketing is done by women. Discriminatory gender and social norms that limit women's control over crucial productive resources include one that promotes land inheritance following the male line to the exclusion of women and girls. Predominantly male inheritance of land limits women's rights. Besides the practice of paying bride price in marriage ferments a sense of "ownership" of married women by their spouses.

Financial inclusion has been strengthened through VSLAs which have provided an opportunity for women's voice to be heard and respected. Financial inclusion plays a vital role in enhancing women's productivity and consequently economic empowerment. Existing research indicates a direct beneficial association between financial inclusion and savings³. The findings suggest that social norms are changing in women's favour in which they are recognized as good financial managers which was hitherto not the case.

A married woman's control over her body is largely by her husband whose authority and sense of "ownership" is bestowed by paying bride price. As such men maintain significant control across all SRHR and GBV services.

Pervasive GBV influences women's empowerment. Intimate partner violence is linked to payment of bride price that makes men feel like they paid for the women, sometimes seeing them as part of their property. There is the inability of women to leave those relationships because their families are unable or not willing to refund the bride price – although refunding bride price has been outlawed in Uganda.

Gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health rights are critical challenges in achieving women's empowerment. Sexual reproductive health and GBV are mostly linked through personal relationships, which are influenced by socio-cultural variables such as gender power imbalances. Unable to negotiate the timing and conditions of sex due to social reasons such as their negative economic standing, individuals are unable to protect themselves against HIV infection and other sexually transmitted infections,

¹ Evans, A., & Nambiar, D. (2013). Collective action and women's agency: A background paper. Women's Voice, Agency, and Participation Research Series. No. 4. Washington, DC: World Bank.

² Al-Qahtani, A. M., Ibrahim, H. A., Elgzar, W. T., El Sayed, H. A., & Essa, R. M. (2021). The role of self-esteem and self-efficacy in women empowerment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: A cross-sectional study. *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, 25(1), 69-78.

³ ibid

as well as undesired pregnancies⁴. Gender and social norms that glorify men's sexual power over women, sometimes prevent women from believing that they can say no and thus believe in men's control over access to family planning services.

Lastly, it is important to observe that gender and social norms around reproductive health are closely woven with food and nutrition practices.

Recommendations

1. **Support and strengthen project groups and collectives** as they are important change agents in promoting gender equality, they are centres of preventing sexual abuse within the group setting and at home, they have accountability processes for gender equality in their activities and can enhance communication and collective engagements.
2. **Integrate labour-saving technologies into project plans and budgets** to address the unfair gender division of labour that discriminately burdens women and girls with unpaid care work.
3. **Educate men, women, boys, and girls on relevant laws** on marriage and payment of bride price that plays a pivotal role in defining controlling relations between women and men and define intra-household power dynamics.
4. **Development actors should infuse strong gender and social norms programming approaches** in future projects to shift norms on practices such as bride price, property control, resource ownership, nutrition, gender-based violence, financial inclusion, sexual and reproductive health, hygiene, and menstruation.
5. **Institute user friendly visual and non-visual packaging of project information** regarding gender programming to be easily accessed by various community-based facilitators, groups, and partners.

⁴ Nakalembe, J. (2020). Gender Based Violence and its Linkage to Sexual Reproductive Health of Women and Young Girls in Uganda. Accessed at <https://www.cehurd.org/gender-based-violence-and-its-linkage-to-sexual-reproductive-health-of-women-and-young-girls-in-uganda/>

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