

*“I own that house and I believe in myself as a woman”.*

**The contribution of the National Agricultural Advisory Services  
(NAADS) Programme to Women’s Empowerment: A case of  
Lwankoni sub-county in Uganda.**



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## COVER PHOTO:

The photo on the cover page is a piggery project of one of the female informants (a widow) of this study. She received the first 2 pigs from the NAADS programme when she joined in 2004, but now the project has expanded to 11 pigs, excluding the young piglets. She is also investing the profits from this project in her coffee enterprise. With money from these projects, she is constructing a big house made of bricks and iron-sheets.

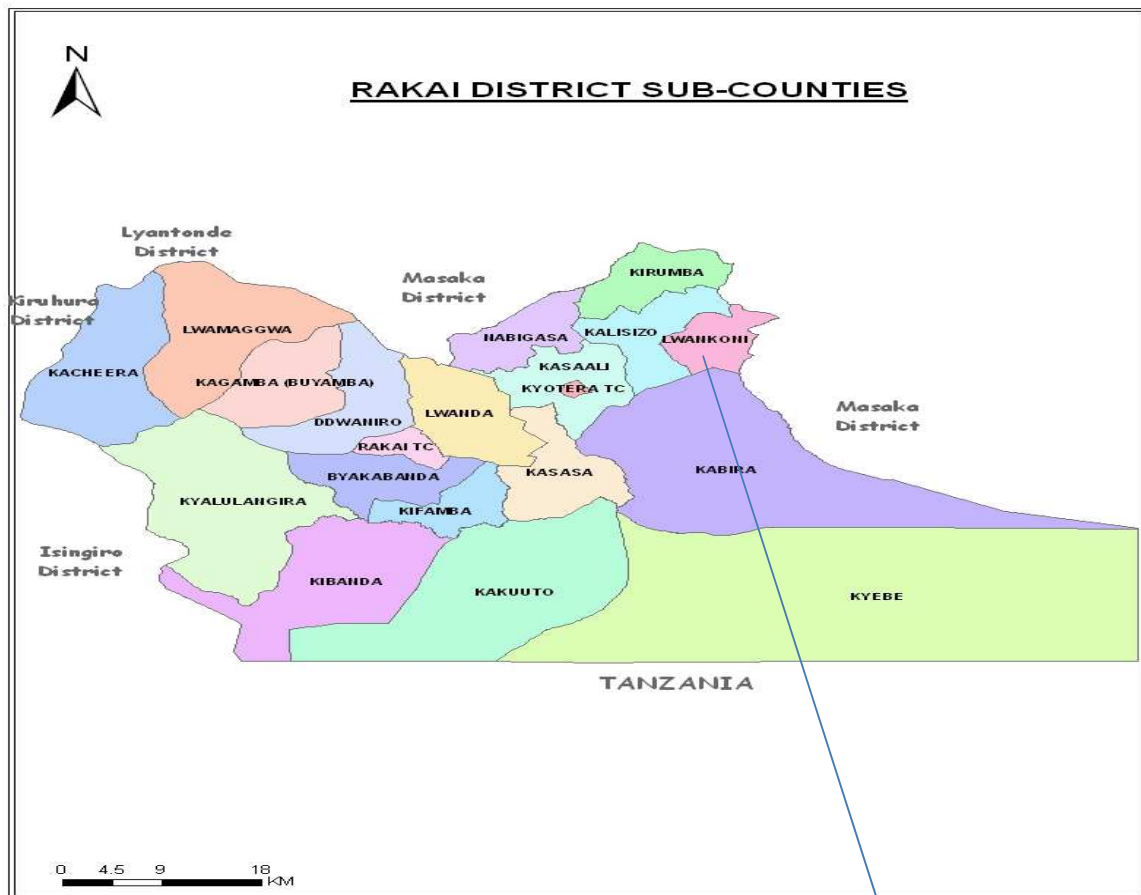
## MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING RAKAI DISTRICT:



**Study Area**

Source: [www.map.com](http://www.map.com)

# MAP OF RAKAI SHOWING LWANKONI SUB-COUNTY:



Study sub-county

Source: Rakai District Development Plan 2010/2011

## **DEDICATION:**

This thesis is dedicated to my father, Mr. Kabiswa Robert Ssendawula. I am an empowered woman because you educated me.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CBFs	Community Based Facilitators
CDD	Community-Driven Development
CDO	Community Development Officer
CEDO	Community Enterprise Development Organization
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DNC	District NAADS Coordinator
FADSI	Family Development Support Initiatives
FAWE	Forum for Africa Women Educationalists
FF	Farmer Fora
FGs	Farmer Groups
FI(s)	Farmer Institutions
FID	Farmers Institutional Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immune deficiency Syndrome
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ISFG	Integrated Support for Farmers Groups
LC	Local Council
LGs	Local Governments
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFI	Microfinance Institutions
MED	Ministry of Education
MFPE	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MGCD	Ministry of Gender and Community Development
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PFA	Prosperity for All
PMA	Plan for Modernization of Agriculture
SACCOs	Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies
S/C	Sub-county
S/CC	Sub-county Chief
SFF	Sub-county Farmers Forum
SNC	Sub-county NAADS Coordinator
UNDP	United Nations Development programme
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNST	Uganda National Council of Science and Technology
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPPAP	Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process
WB	World Bank

## **ABSTRACT:**

The government of Uganda, in its endeavours to reduce poverty by empowering women, has since 2001 been implementing the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) programme. NAADS is aimed at enhancing rural livelihoods, as well as increasing the proportion of market oriented production. This is sought achieved through empowering farmers, particularly the poor and women, to demand and shape agricultural advisory and information services. However, Uganda being a patriarchal society, women's participation in commercial agriculture is still hampered by their 'triple roles' and lack of control over production resources like land. This study explores the contribution of the NAADS programme to women's empowerment in Uganda. The study is qualitative and based on 20 key informants and 13 background interviews, in addition to participant observation. The informants are beneficiaries and implementers of the NAADS programme of Lwankoni sub-county in Rakai District, Uganda. Through the empowerment theory concepts of resources, agency, achievements, choice and power, along with Kandiyoti's concept of *bargaining with patriarchy*, the study reveals varying levels of empowerment among the female beneficiaries of the NAADS programme. The less empowered had, at the time of the fieldwork, achieved little in terms of control over material resources like land, which limited their agency. In turn, their agency - which usually tended towards the passive and minimal - was reflected in their choices, which were effective rather than transformative. The agency of some women, especially the married, was also limited by the 'patriarchal bargains' and the overarching 'power over' them by their in-laws, husbands and the community. However, the study also reveals that some female beneficiaries have attained some degree of empowerment. Although they have not been able to fully reach what Longwe (1991) refers to as the highest level of empowerment due to the existence of patriarchal bargains, the study argues that the changes that have occurred in the lives of the female beneficiaries within 4 to 7 years after joining NAADS indicate that they may be in the process of transformative empowerment. The study, therefore, concludes that the NAADS programme has contributed to women's empowerment, and some of it is transformative, despite the fact that NAADS' official definition of empowerment, as well as the majority of the implementers' and husbands' understandings and perceptions of the concept, indicate that empowerment is not really a priority of the programme. The results of this study clearly indicate a need for the government to revise the NAADS goal of women's empowerment while at the same time designing strategies that increase women's access to water and control over land.

# ***Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY:***

## ***1.1 Introduction:***

Uganda is a country whose beauty made Winston Churchill name it the “Pearl of Africa”. Uganda’s magnificent scenery includes snow-capped mountains, rolling plains, thick tropical forests, as well as semi-desert areas. It is a landlocked country in East Africa, sharing borders with Kenya, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Uganda lies astride the Equator covering an area of about 240,000 square kilometres, between the two East African Great Rift Valleys. Uganda is recognized as one of the few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa making progress towards economic development. Since the regime of the National Resistance Movement in 1986, the Government of Uganda, with support from development partners, has implemented a range of macroeconomic and development reforms. However, despite the Government’s efforts, the majority of the Ugandan population remains poor, with a gross domestic product (GDP) per person averaging only about US dollars 330 per year, and with 40% of the population living in extreme poverty (NAADS Secretariat 2001a). To reduce poverty and gender disparities in economic growth, Uganda has committed itself to implement the international programmes for empowering women. Uganda has been an active participant in the International Conferences on women. In addition to CEDAW, Uganda has committed itself to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, and she is also a signatory to the Millennium Declaration, which was launched at the UN Summit in September 2000 (UNDP Report 2007).

The Ugandan economy is largely dependent on subsistence agriculture for both food and foreign exchange earnings. Women constitute approximately 80% of Uganda’s agricultural labour force, are involved mainly in food crop production and in many places also form up to 60% of the labour force for cash crop production (UNDP Report 2008). Therefore, in order to eradicate the income poverty of poor rural women and empower them, the government of Uganda put in place the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) programme in all districts of Uganda, including Rakai District. This study aims to explore the contribution of this programme to the empowerment of female NAADS beneficiaries of Lwankoni sub-county in Rakai District. Rakai District is comprised of three counties – Kooki, Kakuuto and Kyotera; the counties are composed of 21 lower local governments, one of them being Lwankoni sub-county, which is my study area. Rakai District has a population of 471, 806

people, 239, 544 of which are females and 232,262 are males (Rakai District Local Government 2009). It borders the districts of Masaka in the North and North East, Mbarara in the West and North-West and the republic of Tanzania in the South. The distance between Kampala, the capital city of Uganda and Rakai District is 169.5 kilometres (105.3 miles). Agriculture is the major economic activity in this district and men and women have distinct roles within the farming systems. Men tend to concentrate on production of cash crops like coffee, while women concentrate on production of food crops, mainly for family consumption, due to their limited access to and control over land (Otiso 2006). A study in Rakai and Kumi districts also confirms that involvement in non-farm activities creates a “double workday” for women and often necessitates a shift of domestic responsibilities to other females (usually daughters) in the household (UPPAP 2002).

Despite the fact that women have limited access to and control over land, as well as limited time to participate in commercial farming, both national and local political leaders of Uganda are celebrating the positive impact of the NAADS programme on poverty reduction among the most vulnerable and poor people, and its contribution to the empowerment of women in Uganda. The results have been good in Lwankoni sub-county, which was one of the three first sub-counties to benefit from this programme in Rakai District in the financial year 2003/2004. This sub-county has even created a model village called Mitondo, which is pioneering a holistic approach to fight poverty and promote household hygiene and health. The model village aims at promoting health and economic empowerment, and this is also indicated on its sign post.



**Sign Post for Mitondo Model Village.**

Farmers, especially women, have established model projects for poultry, dairy, coffee, fruit and banana farming. The model village has also attracted funders like United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and tourists from other sub-counties and other districts, who come to observe and learn from the model projects.

I have been working as a Community Development Officer in-charge of gender in Rakai District from 2007 to date, and one of my responsibilities involves working on probation and gender domestic violence issues in Byakabanda sub-county. When I had just started working

in this sub-county, I received a lot of cases concerning women who had been physically violated by their husbands, widows whose property had been confiscated by the in-laws, and women who had been chased out of their marriages by their husbands, without any property, among others. However, to my surprise, these cases were never reported by the women themselves; they were reported by either the Local Council I (LCI) Vice Chairperson or a brother of the abused woman, who had also normally got the information from rumours or a third party. Intervention in such cases required both the abuser and the abused to be interviewed in order to understand the root cause of the problem. However, whenever the couple was invited to the sub-county for a talk, women never felt free to disclose. They always protected their husbands, giving excuses and statements like *madam we just disagreed on a simple family issue but it is nothing serious, you do not have to jail him; men are supposed to be like that; beating me is a sign that he loves me; you cannot help me in this since it is between me and my husband and he paid my bride price*. These women did not know their rights, and even those who knew their rights could not exercise them due to cultural attitudes and beliefs that real men have to be violent and property owners, including owning women themselves. This brought a lot of questions in my mind: did women support the men's violation of their rights because of their dependency on men and high levels of poverty? What would happen if these women had a source of income and became autonomous? Would they still protect their husbands and in-laws from jail if they became economically independent? Did all female farmers from other communities in this district face the same challenges? I thought that such a community required sensitization on change of attitudes in relation to the patriarchal beliefs that governed the local way of thinking. When NAADS programme started in July 2007 in Byakabanda sub-county, with one of its goals being the empowerment of women, I anticipated that such community attitudes would change as a result. However, no result in this regard could be detected after two years. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I found it wise to look at Lwankoni sub-county, the sub-county where NAADS has been working the longest, since the impact of the programme probably would be more visible there. This study was thus an opportunity to get back to the same district I have been working in so as to get answers to the above mentioned challenging questions I had encountered in my area of work. Hence, this study will explore the contribution of NAADS programme to women's empowerment at household level in Lwankoni sub-county. It will specifically explore the different life challenges that the female farmers in Lwankoni sub-county encounter; and whether NAADS programme has increased women's ability to make and act on their own strategic life choices and challenge existing

patriarchal power relations at household level. It will also investigate how the term women's empowerment is understood by the implementers and beneficiaries of the NAADs programme in Uganda.

## ***1.2 Ugandan Context: The Status of women***

A number of women's organizations, with technical and financial support from international agencies and donors, have done a lot of advocacy work to promote the rights of women in Uganda (Nabacwa 2002). These include organizations such as the Action for Development, Federation of Uganda Women Lawyers, and Forum for Africa Women Educationalists (FAWE), Uganda Media Women's Association, and Uganda Women's network, among others. Some of the advocacy initiatives include the campaign on land rights and the campaign on the domestic relations bill. Uganda has realized that women's low and subordinate status is part of the major causes of poverty in the country. Thus, many women organizations and programmes (supported by the government and civil society organizations) specifically committed to overcoming the subordinate status of women have been established and many have committed themselves to promoting women's empowerment and mainstreaming gender into their programmes. Many women's groups at grassroots level have been spearheaded by women themselves, engaging mainly in income generating activities with major emphasis on agricultural projects (Nabacwa 2002), trying to overcome patriarchy and make their voices heard both at community, parish, sub-county, district, county and national levels.

In 1986, the Ministry of Women in Development, which is now the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, was set up by the Government of Uganda to advance the issues of the marginalized. Though this has been one of the most underfunded ministries, it has developed the National Gender Policy of 1997, which is seen as the national machinery for the advancement of women and gender equality. The policy recognizes gender relations as a development concept in identifying and understanding the social roles and relations of women and men of all ages. It stipulates that equal participation of all social groupings in economic, political and socio-cultural aspects is a requirement for sustainable development (MOGCD 1997).

Uganda has registered considerable achievements in the area of women's participation in politics. There have been a growing number of women in politics both at local and national

levels. Uganda was the first African country to have a woman vice president – Dr. Specioza Wandera Kazibwe (Tripp and Kwesiga 2002). The Constitution of the government of Uganda (1995) provides that the parliament shall consist of one woman representative for every district and that one third of local council seats shall be reserved for women. Women also occupy 102 out of 332 seats in the national parliament (Government of Uganda 1997).<sup>1</sup> However, the active participation of women in representing their constituencies is still low due to lack of resources and skills in advocacy, and the continued power and culture structures that promote gender inequalities (Nabacwa 2002). Women are still disadvantaged, despite having a better social position than prior to the introduction of positive discrimination. Moreover, the social expectations placed on women are the same, irrespective of how their status has changed. They are still expected to attend to domestic chores for their families and relatives, which means they have less time to participate in politics. Bringing women on board by the quota scheme therefore seems to have done little if anything towards enhancing women's capacity to influence rules, norms, and practices that marginalize them.

Regarding the education sector, Uganda's average literacy rates for the population aged 10 years and above are estimated at 67% for rural areas and 87% for urban areas, but with wide regional variations. Uganda has established a programme of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and has recently extended this programme to the secondary level of education, to address the gender parity at these two levels. However, social and cultural bias still put the girl child at a disadvantage (UNDP Report 2007). The drop-out rate, especially for girls, is still high as a result of early marriages, pregnancy, triple roles, sickness and poverty (Nabacwa 2002). The quality of education in UPE schools is still low and attended by pupils from poor families that cannot afford paying for private schools. According to an IFAD study, illiteracy in Uganda is 55.1% among women, compared with 36.5% among men (IFAD 2000). To address the high illiteracy rates among adults, Uganda is undertaking the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) Programme at the lower local governments, and women have participated more than men in this programme. However, their participation is still hindered by lack of time due to women's domestic chores, and poverty.

In the 1990s, Uganda attained high economic growth rates (of about 10 percent per annum in 1994/95) with significant poverty reduction due to successful policy reforms, donor support,

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<sup>1</sup> The Local Government Act of 1997 also stipulates that women must occupy 30% of all positions of the Local Council structure while people with disabilities occupy 20% of these positions. This gives a total of 40% of women's representation in these structures.

and reversal of capital flight. However, the subsequent years have seen economic growth slowing down to about 5 percent per annum and welfare inequality significantly increasing (UNDP Report 2007). Hence, while Uganda has had an impressive economic growth in the last decades, it remains one of the world's poorest countries with an HDI rank at 146th and a GDP per capita rank at 150th out of 177 countries (UNDP Report 2007). The Ugandan economy is currently dominated by the agricultural sector. It accounts for 43 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 85 percent of the export earnings, 80 percent of employment, and it provides most of the raw materials to the mainly agro-based industries. 85 percent of Uganda's population live in rural areas and depend mainly on agriculture for their livelihood (PMA 2000). Women are the poorest of the poor in Uganda (World Bank 1995) and very few own property (Danida 2005).

From this background, it is clear that despite the decades of intense focus, by the government and Civil Society Organizations, on improving the situation of women, women still remain in a subordinate and disadvantaged position compared to their male counter-parts due to entrenched patriarchal practices and values. Whereas we would expect the laws to protect and improve the situation of women, some laws in Uganda still display elements of customary law ideology and emphasize male dominance in their provisions. I will thus discuss a few laws relevant to my study, especially the laws regarding land rights, since land is a key issue explored in this study.

### ***1.3 The Land Laws of Uganda:***

The 1998 Land Act restricts transactions of family land without the consent of spouses (Government of Uganda 1998). However, the operation of this is not easy as women have limited decision-making powers in the home, especially in communities where bride price is paid, since it is interpreted as payment for the bride and hence the right to control her (Nabacwa 2002). The clause on co-ownership of land by spouses was accepted in principle by Parliament, but in practice, women generally have user rights once they have access to land, mainly through their relationship to men. However, these relationships affect women's decision making about land utilisation and enjoyment of its products, and when the relations go sour, the women are likely to lose their user rights (Nabacwa 2002).

There are two national statutory laws that govern inheritance matters in Uganda, namely the 1995 Constitution and the Succession Act (Amendment) Decree No.22/1972. According to



the current Constitution, widows have a right to inherit their husband's property.<sup>2</sup> However, it is upon Parliament to come up with a specific law that governs inheritance matters. While the Constitution seems to guarantee a widow the right to inherit the matrimonial property, this right can only be extended to her through an Act of Parliament. As of now, Parliament has not passed the Domestic Relations Bill which specifically handles inheritance and other family laws.

The Ugandan current succession law<sup>3</sup> is divided into two parts; one part deals with properties of persons who die testate<sup>4</sup> and the second deals with properties of persons who die without leaving wills (intestate<sup>5</sup>). While one would expect the inheritance statutory law to protect the widow, it instead supports the cultural image ideology that encourages male dominance. The intestate succession law guarantees the widow only the user rights to the matrimonial home, which is inherited by the eldest son of the deceased (Wagubi 2003; Asiimwe 2007). The testate statutory law, on the other hand, makes fair provision for a widow since a husband is free to will the matrimonial home and land to his legal wife (Okumu-Wengi 2001). Whereas the Constitution is gender sensitive, the succession law provisions still display elements of customary law ideology that disregard a woman's contribution to the home (Asiimwe 2007).

Under customary law, women in Uganda do not inherit property on widowhood. When a man dies, the clan appoints an heir, usually the first son in the family. He inherits the property of the deceased and is supposed to take care of the family. A widow only holds goods in trust for her sons until they are adults (18 years). The widow's right to access to the home and property within the home depends on whether she decides to remarry or not. Customary law puts a woman in an economically insecure position. She inherits no property despite the fact that she has contributed to it through her unpaid labour in the home. The widow is left at the

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<sup>2</sup> For example Article 31(2), states that "Parliament shall make appropriate laws for the protection of the rights of widows and widowers to inherit the property of their deceased spouses". Article 26(1) protects all persons from deprivation of property, Articles 31(1) entitles women and men to equal rights during and after marriage, and Article 32(1) mandates the state to take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalized on the basis of gender or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom (Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs 1995; Nabacwa 2002)

<sup>3</sup> The Succession Act Amendment Decree No.22 of 1972

<sup>4</sup> Testate Succession or inheritance refers to a situation where a deceased person dies having written a statement that legally is called a Will, in which a person expresses his/her wishes regarding the disposal of his/her property and other rights or obligations (Okumu-Wengi 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Intestate inheritance refers to situations where a person dies without leaving behind a Will to dispose of his or her property. Although everyone above 18 years of age is allowed to make a Will, the majority of Ugandans die intestate (Okumu-Wengi 2001)

mercy of her husband's line and his heir. As a result, women continue to be marginalized as far as property ownership is concerned.

Therefore, even though inheritance laws have been reformed in favour of women, women still do not necessarily have more rights to land, as local customs and lack of information about their rights act as barriers (Ogunlela, et al. 2009). The government, through development programmes, is supporting women's involvement in income generating activities as one way of empowering women and changing the status quo. The National Agricultural Advisory services (NAADS) Programme is one of these programmes. It is seen by the government as "an effective engine of social change, empowering the poor and creating equity through creating the conditions within which the rural poor, and especially women and youth, can address their livelihood needs" (NAADS Secretariat 2003:\_1). I will therefore give a brief introduction of what the goal of NAADS programme is and its key elements.

#### ***1.4 The National Agricultural Advisory Services Programme (NAADS):***

Since 2000, the Government of Uganda, in its endeavours to reach the declared aim of poverty reduction, has been implementing the Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture (PMA). The PMA is part of the country's 1997 Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), whose objective is to reduce income poverty to 10 percent of the population by the year 2017 (Jorge 2003). PMA is "a holistic, strategic framework" (MFPED 2000) for poverty eradication through multi-sectoral approaches, thereby improving people's livelihoods. One of the seven pillars or components under the PMA focuses on improving delivery of agricultural extension through the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) programme (MFPED 2000; Stroud et al 2000). The National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) programme is a 25-year programme of the government of Uganda aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural extension services. NAADS programme started in 2001 in Uganda, but it was implemented in Rakai District in the financial year 2003/2004, and is currently implemented in all the districts of Uganda. Its development goal is to "enhance rural livelihoods and increase the proportion of market oriented production by empowering farmers, particularly the poor and women, to demand and control agricultural advisory and information services" (NAADS Secretariat 2003:\_1). The farmers are therefore empowered as key partners in determining who and how agriculture and market services are delivered (NAADS Secretariat 2003). Through its activities, therefore,

NAADS programme “increases the levels of control poor rural women have over their own lives, enables them to make their own decisions about livelihood options and translate their chosen livelihood options into improvements in their well-being” (NAADS Secretariat 2003:\_2). Focusing this study on the funds and skills received by female farmers from the NAADS programme, I will introduce the two components of NAADS programme, since they are very relevant to my study:

The Integrated Support to Farmers’ Groups (ISFG) is one of the components of the NAADS programme that is aimed at enhancing the attainment of increased enterprise productivity and profitability (MAAIF 2005). Through the ISFG, NAADS provides a revolving fund to the farmers in order to increase farmers’ access to improved seeds, better breeds and agricultural inputs. It also involves enhancing the capacity of farmer groups to organize for effective access to input and output markets, and their ability to take up and sustainably use improved technologies. ISFG objectives include; “deepening farmer institution development and organization; increasing effective farmer demand for productivity through enhancing the use of improved technologies; increasing farmers’ access to input and product markets through active linkage of farmer groups with processors or produce buyers” (MAAIF 2005:\_2). The main objective is to link farmer groups under NAADS to the government’s plan to promote savings and expansion of savings and credit cooperative organizations (SACCOs) or other rural micro finance institutions.

Farmers Institutional Development (FID) is another component of the NAADS programme. Under FID, farmer groups are seen as core grass root institutions and their effective participation and subsequent empowerment is the principle determinant of the success of NAADS (NAADS Secretariat 2001a). Therefore, the primary responsibility for formulating the demand is vested in farmer groups (FGs) and the decisions on services to be provided, arrangement of contracts and monitoring of service providers is done by the farmer fora. The process of organizing and strengthening farmers institutions involves mass mobilization and sensitization; group formation and development; farmer fora formation and development; and enterprise selection and development. Farmer institutions promoted by NAADS have been based on the assumption that farmers have a real propensity towards collective action. FID is therefore mainly about encouraging and enabling farmers to organize and create institutions through which they could play a part in the decision making processes for their own development, demand research products and advisory services that are based on informed

choices and needs, support group and individual enterprises, as well as influencing policies related to agricultural services delivery (NAADS Secretariat 2001a).

### ***1.5 Study Objectives:***

The main objective of the study is to explore the contribution of the NAADS programme to women's empowerment in Uganda.

#### **Specific objectives:**

- To understand the specific experiences and challenges characterizing female farmers in different life situations from their point of view.
- To understand the female beneficiaries' motivation for joining NAADS and the benefits obtained from the NAADS Programme.
- To explore the contribution of the NAADS programme to female beneficiaries' ability to make strategic life choices and/ or decisions in their homes and their capacity to challenge existing power relations at both household and community levels.
- To investigate how the term women's empowerment is understood and perceived by the implementers and beneficiaries of the NAADS programme and the consequences of their perceptions to the programme's attainment of its goals.
- Suggest additional ways how the NAADS programme can transformatively empower women and other marginalized groups of people in Uganda.

### ***1.6 Significance of the Study:***

- The study aims to contribute to the available literature exploring the contribution of government agricultural development programmes to women's empowerment in Uganda and Africa.
- The findings from this research will identify areas for further investigation in the area of women's empowerment and government development programmes in Uganda.
- The study findings will be useful for designing policies and strategies for empowering women through agricultural advisory services programmes by the government and civil society organizations, since it will provide new insights on how social norms and cultural features can influence the objectives of such programmes, and provide recommendations on how development programmes can transformatively empower women.

### ***1.7 Structure of the report:***

This report is divided into a preliminary part and a part of empirical findings, discussion and analysis. The preliminary part contains four chapters. Chapter one is the introduction/background to the study and it covers the general context and information about Uganda that is relevant to the study including the situation of women, the land laws in Uganda, the NAADS Programme, and the study objectives. Chapter two reviews the literature related to my study, exploring the challenges faced by female farmers in Africa and Uganda, the impact and/or prospects for women's involvement in agricultural extension services in Africa, the impact of NAADS programme on the lives of women farmers in Uganda, perceptions about women's empowerment in Africa, and the researcher's contribution. Chapter three, the theoretical framework, discusses empowerment, forms of power and bargaining with patriarchy as the relevant theories that guide my study, and chapter four describes the study methodology. The second part contains four chapters. Chapter five presents the life situations and challenges faced by female farmers, highlighting the different life situations characterizing the widowed, married and divorced female beneficiaries, as well as the gendered division of labour in their households. Chapter six covers the female beneficiaries' motivation for joining and the benefits acquired from the NAADS Programme, including a discussion about the contribution of the NAADS programme to women's empowerment. Chapter seven explores the NAADS programme implementers', the female beneficiaries', and the beneficiaries' husbands' perceptions and understanding of 'Women's Empowerment', and Chapter eight presents the final conclusions and recommendations.

The next chapter will present the reviewed literature that is relevant for the study.

## ***Chapter Two: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:***

### ***2.1. Introduction:***

This chapter will provide a review of literature relevant to my study. It will look at what other researchers have done in areas of interest to my study in Africa and Uganda in particular. Literature to be reviewed will include topics like the challenges faced by female farmers in Africa and Uganda, the impact and/or prospects for women's involvement in agricultural extension services in Africa, perceptions and/or understandings of women's empowerment in Africa, and the impact of NAADS programme on the lives of women farmers in Uganda. I will highlight the gaps in the studies that I have reviewed and discuss how my study will contribute to the depth of knowledge already available.

### ***2.2 Problems facing Women farmers in Africa:***

#### **2.2.1 Limited Access to and Control over Land:**

Studies have shown that the main challenge for female farmers in Africa is lack of access to and control over resources like land (Amu 2005; Takyiwaa 1998; FAO 1994; Duncan 2004). While both men and women farmers lack sufficient access to agricultural resources, women generally have less access to resources than men. This is mainly due to statutory legislation and customary laws and practices that limit their rights to land. For instance, Amu argues that in Ghana, although there are Constitutional provisions that protect the right of women with regards to land, land is held in trust by the leaders of the stool/family, who more often are men (2005: 39, Akua, et al. 2004). Duncan attributes this to the Ghanaian traditional culture according to which men are perceived as natural leaders (2004). In the context of South Africa, the order of power within the family is also dominated by men through the succession of patriarchal control over external family affairs, with hereditary power assigned to (elderly) male persons (Charman 2008).

In Africa, land titles are usually registered in the name of a male household head, regardless of how much a woman has contributed to the buying of that land (Takyiwaa 1998). Lack of ownership of land restricts women's choice of crops to be grown as well as their access to credit since land is used as collateral. African women are therefore disadvantaged in both statutory and customary land tenure systems (Argawal 1994; Kevane 2004). Even where existing legislation protects women's property rights, lack of legal knowledge and weak

implementation may limit women's ability to exercise these rights (Quisumbing, et al. 2009: 582). In countries where ownership and inheritance laws have been reformed in favour of women, women still do not necessarily have more rights to land, as local customs and lack of information act as barriers (Ogunlela, et al. 2009). The most important source of access to land for African women is marriage, and therefore divorce may leave a woman without access to land irrespective of the development they have made on the land (Amu 2005). Women are also discriminated against in the allocation of lineage lands for reasons that are associated with marriage, because their control over their rights to land tends to diminish upon marriage. In Zambia, just like in Tanzania and Ghana, women only have access to land through male relatives and most land belongs to the lineage (Milimo 1991; Koopman 1983). Similarly, of 176 women farmers in Kenya interviewed by Davison (1988), only one widow held land registered in her own name. Therefore, while women's decision-making power tends to increase in many African countries when the husband is not present, men always remain involved in many of the most important decisions (Ogunlela, et al. 2009).

The situation is not different in Uganda, particularly regarding women's control over land resources. While women provide from 70-80 percent of agricultural labour, they own just 7 percent of all productive land (Danida 2005). Only 30 percent have access to and control over proceeds from land. Both men and women have access to land, but ownership and control over land is ultimately with men (Nabbumba 2008; Ovonji-Odida, et al. 2000). Evidence from the 2002 Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP2) showed that men virtually own and control all household resources including land. Very few women were reported to own or control land, though they access it for use. A study undertaken in Mpigi and Lira districts by Eilor and Giovarelli (2002) revealed that most of the decisions about use of land are made by husbands. Women in general access land through marriage, but when the man dies, it is common for his family to take his land, leaving the widows and orphans destitute (Nabbumba 2008). Few daughters inherit land and those who do only retain the use of land while they are living with their family and do not have the right to sell that land (Otiso 2006). Widows generally have no right to sell land and upon divorce, women's families are often expected to return the bride price and the divorcees are sent away without marital property (Nabbumba 2008). Property grabbing by the husband's family is widespread and widows and orphans are the most vulnerable. A study by Gilborn, et al. (2001) showed that out of 204 widows, 29 percent said that the property was taken from them at the time of their husband's death. In addition, 21 percent of older orphans aged 13-18 years reported that

they had also experienced property grabbing. Therefore, although the national legislation has affirmed women's basic right to land, the customary practices and laws limit women's land rights in Uganda.

### **2.2.2: Access to Credit, agricultural inputs and technology:**

Studies have revealed that African women basically lack access to credit due to their low levels of savings as well as the lack of the necessary collateral needed for the acquisition and repayment required for a loan (World Bank 2001; Amu 2005; FAO 1994). Women's lack of access to credit is a direct consequence of women's lack of access to land (Takyiwaa 1998). Amu argues that in Ghana, land is used as collateral in banks, and husbands have to approve before a bank administers a loan to the wife but men most times do not support their wives' applications (Amu 2005). A study carried out in Kenya established that men had access to credit from banks, money lenders, and cooperatives while women's sources of credit were the kin/friends, and rotating credit and savings associations, locally referred to as '*lisanga*' (Mikalitsa 2010), termed '*njagi*'<sup>6</sup> in Cameroon (Ngangriyap 2007:\_25). Furthermore, the bureaucracy involved in acquiring a loan is too complex for most women farmers, especially those with little or no educational background. Slama (n.d) argues that in African countries, obtaining a loan usually means lengthy visits to the nearest town which may be several hours' journey away, and men do not like the idea of women travelling to town. In addition, with their heavy workloads, it is difficult for most rural women to be absent from their homes for long periods of time. A study by Mhango (2008) in Tanzania revealed that there were SACCOs<sup>7</sup> in villages but women farmers did not in practice have access due to beliefs that they would be taken to court once they failed to repay the loans. Farmers lacked enough information about procedures to access loans since social norms prohibited them from receiving information from outside lenders. The access of women farmers to agricultural inputs and technologies is also constrained by their lack of access to credit (Takyiwaa 1998) and the poor socio-economic status of women in rural Africa impinges strongly on the production tools and implements they use.

The situation in Uganda is in many ways similar to the general African situation. Lack of adequate access to credit is often seen as a major problem for poor Ugandan women,

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<sup>6</sup> *Njagi* are informal financial institutions rotating funds through informal circles of traders, to which each member of the circle contributes on a regular weekly or monthly basis.

<sup>7</sup> SACCOs are Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisations.



especially in rural areas, considering women's lack of control over productive assets. Women wanting to source individual loans are encumbered by the lack of collateral, and the requirement for a husband's signature creates a problem for some women, as husbands often want to use the money for other purposes (Stevenson, et al. 2005). While the micro-finance institutions (MFIs) and government extension programmes have increased women's access to credit, they have not followed up to find out to what extent these women have control over the resources received. There are many stories of men taking away the money these women get from the group, development programmes or the micro-finance institutions. This burdens women who in the end are responsible for loan repayment (Stevenson, et al. 2005). Studies have also indicated that most rural women farmers in Uganda do not have enough information about where, how and when to access credit facilities (Stevenson, et al. 2005). The Plan of Modernization of Agriculture summarizes the women's challenge of credit access in Uganda by highlighting four issues. First, the procedures and process to access credit and financial services are bureaucratic and intimidate and discourage the poor, illiterate women. Furthermore, women are not considered credit worthy by credit institutions; they are used to informal credit systems, and the high transaction costs in the provision of rural financial services also discourage MFIs to operate in the rural areas (PMA 2005).

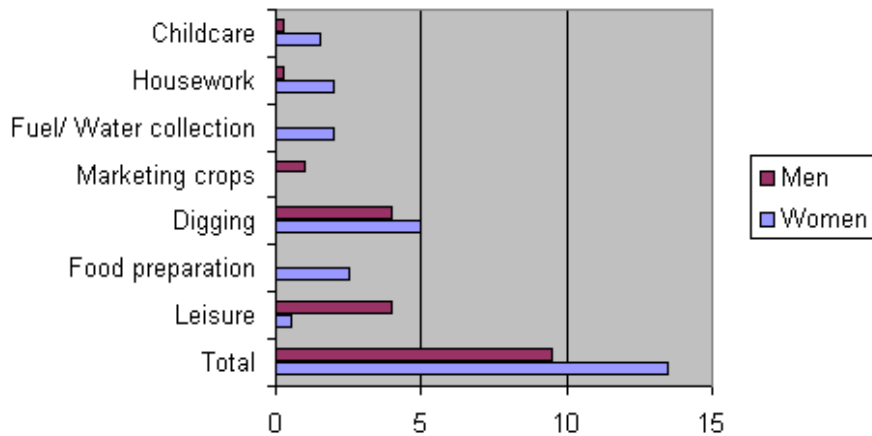
### **2.2.3: Labour Shortages and Women's Time Constraints:**

Different studies have identified and documented the invaluable role of women in agricultural production in various parts of the world (Ejembi, et al. 2006; FAO 1994; World Bank 2001). Sub-Saharan African women contribute 60–80 percent of agricultural labour in food production, both for household consumption and for sale (Takyiwaa 1998). A survey on women's contribution to food crop production carried out in 9 countries by FAO indicated that women contribute 30 percent in Sudan, 80 percent in the Congo, and 48 percent in Burkina Faso (FAO 1994). They contribute between 70 and 80 percent in Nigeria where rural women take part in the processing of agricultural produce, while Zambian women contribute up to 80 percent of their labour for household food production (Ogunlela, et al. 2009). While there are significant variations in Africa, there is the same division of roles in agriculture and women are to a large extent involved in almost all the sub-sectors of agriculture including farming, processing and distribution (Amu 2005; Duncan 2004). The immediate labour supply for an African woman farmer comes from her family. However, there have been shortfalls in family labour as a result of husbands', older sons' and daughters' migration into urban centres, leaving the women and small children whose capacity to supply labour is very

limited (Amu 2005). This problem is especially serious for African rural women farmers who have to support their husbands in the planting and harvesting of their crops besides their own individual farms. In Ghana, for instance, a wife is by tradition under obligation to help her husband on his own farm and they tend to respond to this by abandoning their own farms or by acquiring smaller portions of land (Amu 2005:\_ 40). Women in Anambra State of Nigeria contribute more than the men in terms of labour input in farming and are solely responsible for household management duties (Ejembi, et al. 2006). Amu (2005) indicates that to solve the problem of labour shortages, most rural women farmers in Ghana join mutual labour supply associations where the group work together to help clear, crop and harvest each member's farm (Nnobo system). Time budget studies have shown that women generally have longer hours of labour and therefore far less hours for leisure than do men in their households in both the Western and developing worlds (Amu 2005). Women also take time off work for reproductive purposes as well as caring for the children and the home. This hampers their participation in commercial farming as it reduces the time available to them for working on their own farms, as well as their mobility to search for information necessary to improve their productivity or to explore alternative markets for their produce (Amu 2005).

The situation is even tougher for Ugandan women. The 2002 Participatory Poverty Assessment on the gendered division of roles showed that women have the prime responsibility for domestic duties and food production while men spend time on productive activities or on leisure. Both women and men contribute to agricultural production, with the women playing a larger role and in most cases being entirely responsible for food production (MFPED 2002). The study by Eilor and Giovarelli (2002) in Lira and Mpigi districts, Uganda found out that women provide most of the labour during planting, weeding, harvesting, processing and storage of food and cash crops while men are mainly involved in initial opening of land and sell of produce (also see Nabbumba 2008). Men and women have distinct roles within farming systems, as they are engaged in the production of different crops and livestock (UPPAP 2002). Available data indicates that in Uganda women work considerably longer hours than men, between 12 and 18 hours per day, with a mean of 15 hours, compared with an average male working day of around 8-10 hours (UPPAP 2002). A study in Rakai and Kumi districts confirms that women's involvement in non-farm activities increases their workload in the household thereby creating a "double workday" for them (UPPAP 2002).

**Figure 1: Time allocation for men and women in Katebe, Rakai District (Hours/Day)**



Source: UPPAP 2002

#### 2.2.4: Poor and limited access to markets:

In addition to typical production and market risks, such as theft and inadequate information about current market prices, African female farmers face many gender-specific barriers to accessing markets (Quisumbing, et al. 2009). Modes of transportation may be culturally inappropriate for women. Market or health officials often harass women who market their agricultural produce just outside the market boundaries owing to the high cost of permits. Time burdens constrain women from seeking the best prices for their output. And marital conflict may break out if fluctuating prices incite husbands to suspect that their wives are withholding money (Quisumbing, et al. 2009). Men may also appropriate crops for which women are traditionally responsible once they enter into the market economy and become profitable. In fact, female farmers risk losing control of their products as they move along the value chain from farm to market value (World Bank 2001; FAO 1994; Clarke1994). In Tanzania, women's farmer groups are less successful than men's groups at accessing new markets for their existing products because companies, assuming that men are the primary producers in the household, tend to approach men (Mhango 2008). These findings compare well with those of the findings in the study undertaken in Western Province of Kenya (Mikalitsa 2010).

In Uganda, market-oriented interventions are influenced by gender norms that place women at a disadvantage when seeking new market opportunities (Quisumbing, et al. 2009). Like it was mentioned in the above section, Ugandan women's work burdens reduce the time available to them to search alternative markets for their produce as well as their mobility to search for information necessary to improve their productivity (Nabbumba 2008).

### **2.2.5: Limited Access to Extension Services:**

In today's global economy, access to information about new technology and existing new market opportunities is vital for commercial farming. While some women may have access to such information and extension services, a majority of African women farmers have no access because they either live in rural areas where such information and services may not be available or urban areas where such information may be limited to a few. Amu (2005) argues that in Ghana, women's low level of education to some extent hampers their access to information about existing/new technology. With this low access to information regarding available markets, appropriate technology, and better farming methods, African women's productivity continue to be low (Amu 2005). A study in Malawi found out that few women ever had contact with extension agents and their participation in agricultural training was limited (Hirschmann, et al. 1984). In Zambia, few women farmers were chosen as contact farmers, and female household heads were less likely than men to know the name of their contact farmer or extension agent (Due, et al. 1991). Studies have also indicated that some efforts to reach women through extension services have been successful in some parts of Africa like in Zimbabwe where women constitute the majority membership (Muchena 1994). However, as Muchena (1994) argues, even in cases where women's participation in extension services is average, their participation is still constrained by a variety of practices, including the expectation that a woman's husband must approve any legal transaction in which she is involved.

For socio-cultural and other reasons, women in Uganda have had little or no access to education (Otiso 2006). This lack of access to or inadequate provision of education and the resulting low literacy levels have hampered their ability to access information about support and extension services for improving their farming business. Rural women are the most disadvantaged in terms of access to agricultural extension services, education and other forms of formal and informal training programmes (Nabbumba 2008).

### ***2.3: Impact of and/or prospects for women's involvement in agricultural extension interventions in Africa:***

The above mentioned data shows the essential contribution of women to agriculture in Africa, which Boserup (1970) describes as "farmers par excellence". Unfortunately, most of the activities that women do are not considered as economic activities but are rather seen as

traditional chores that they are duty bound to perform. Research has shown that when women's incomes from agriculture are improved, when they have better access to resources like land, infrastructure, credit, and health care, they tend to invest more in the nutrition, education, and health of their family, causing a ripple effect of benefits that can extend to the entire community (Amu 2005). Apart from food security and other activities and responsibilities for women farmers, most of them are becoming increasingly responsible for the educational and other material needs of their families. Women have had to become breadwinners in many rural homes where their men have left the villages to cities in search of greener pastures (Koopman 1983). Therefore improvement of household food security, health and nutritional levels is associated with women's access to income through agricultural extension services and their role in household decisions on expenditure. This is because women are more concerned about the well-being of their families and therefore spend most of their earnings on improving their children's and husband's nutrition and health. However, becoming household breadwinners has resulted into an added burden for women farmers whose agricultural productivity and income are still too low to be in a position to provide better care and future for their children and wards (Amu 2005). Husbands tend to neglect their responsibility of being breadwinners upon women's involvement in commercial agriculture.

Women in Africa receive little from the agricultural extension services in African countries due to the traditional prejudiced attitude towards women, lack of time on their part to attend meetings, and their limited decision-making powers (Ogunlela, et al. 2009). Women are deprived of the right to make decisions about the marketing of the crops and they are denied the right to control incomes from agricultural products, especially cash crops (Rwomire 2001). Men spend a much larger share of their income on their own personal needs and in poorer households, husbands are more likely to claim part of what their wives earn for their own personal needs (Geisler 1992, cited in Rwomire 2001:\_99-100). Some studies have identified women's empowerment as one of the impacts of women's involvement in agricultural extension services (Charman 2008; Maxime 2005). It is argued that women have been empowered through the promotion of agriculture as a business, especially through women's groups that enable them to access credit and strengthen their marketing and bargaining power in comparison with that of men. Charman (2008) argues that despite the patriarchal control in South Africa, participatory agricultural extension interventions have strengthened women's entitlements and empowerment. Although women's empowerment has

often been identified as a goal for agricultural development interventions, as Mosedale argues, there are still major difficulties in achieving the goal (2005:\_223). There are still gender based barriers to accessing financial resources, in part because women lack collateral such as land required by banking institutions (Stevenson, et al. 2005). The study carried out in Lungwena, Malawi indicated that men, as household heads, control their wives' income and increase in the income earned is not a guarantee for increased decision-making power for women (Maxime 2005). According to the World Bank and IFPRI<sup>8</sup> (2010), providing better agricultural extension services to women is not only necessary for them to be able to realize their rights, it is also essential to empower them, and promote development.

#### ***2.4: Perceptions and/or understandings of women's empowerment in Africa:***

There has not been so much literature on women's and men's perceptions of women's empowerment in Africa. Two studies that have been reviewed in this respect revealed the following: A study about understanding the impact of Microfinance-Based Interventions on Women's Empowerment and the reduction of Intimate Partner Violence in South Africa revealed that there was no equivalent word for empowerment in the local language. Rather, women used phrases such as 'the power to be enlightened' or 'the ability to claim personal power and use it to change for the better' to express the concept of empowerment (Kim, et al. 2007). The study also indicates that although some women alluded to challenging gender norms and the broader social and political status of women, most of them defined women's empowerment within the more intimate spheres of the household and community life.

According to Selby (2009), despite the enthusiasm and the capabilities women in Ghana exhibit when in power, society normally does not appreciate their being in power. Men, and even some women themselves, usually detest women who assume key and influential positions, especially in politics and governance. She argues that the society sees women as very conceited and disrespectful when in power. Some men find explanations in the biblical and African traditional setting which prescribes that women, no matter their level of education, should be submissive to their husbands and other men. She argues that some men believe that some empowered women become disrespectful to their husbands, and even try to assume the position of the man, especially when they earn more than the men. The women

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<sup>8</sup> IFPRI - International Food Policy Research Institute

also believed that a woman in a powerful position tends to mistreat her fellow women (Selby 2009).

### ***2.5: Impact of NAADS Programme on the lives of rural women farmers in Uganda:***

Despite the challenges female farmers in Uganda face, as discussed in the above sections, various survey research and evaluations indicate the positive impact of the NAADS programme on the livelihoods of rural and poor women farmers. The Scanagri Mid-Term evaluation survey on the impact of NAADS found that 88 percent of NAADS farmer groups believed they had greater ownership of the extension system, compared to 30 percent of non-NAADS groups (Scanagri 2005). The PMA evaluation report illustrated a significant impact of NAADS programme in terms of increasing farmers' earnings, use of improved technologies and marketed output (PMA 2005).

An assessment of the programme's impact on the rural livelihoods of Ugandan people was done by Benin, et al. (2007) in 16 sub-counties with NAADS and 4 districts without NAADS programmes. Study findings show that roughly one fourth to one third of the households involved in NAADS noted that their farm income had increased between 2000 and 2004, a quarter of the farmers perceived that their farm incomes decreased, while the remaining felt no significant change in their income (Benin, et al. 2007). The study also indicates that the involved households increased their ownership of assets on average between 2000 and 2004, and the differences across sub groups in asset accumulation were not statistically significant. The quantitative increase in assets is also reflected in the perceptions of changes in assets. Over 42 percent of households reported that their wealth increased and only 15 percent reported no change in wealth since 2000 (Benin, et al. 2007:\_ 51). The study also indicated that about 38 percent of all households felt that their food security and nutrition in 2004 has improved from the level in 2000, but about a quarter did not perceive any change in food security (Benin, et al. 2007:\_52). The impact of NAADS on farmers' sense of empowerment was found to be weak in this study, but Benin, et al. (2007) argues that this may have resulted from problems in the way empowerment was measured, which may not have been fully comparable between NAADS and non-NAADS sub-counties. Empowerment was measured depending on the ease of group members to participate in decision making of farmer groups, their ability to express views to sub-county farmers forum, public extension agents and local

government officials, and their participation in developing bylaws and group constitutions, using quantitative data from farmer groups and a household survey (Benin, et al. 2007:\_8).

Farmers' limited access to programme information due to political factors and farmers' negative attitudes towards NAADS programme were specific limitations emphasized by the study carried out by Nalugooti, et al. (2006). The production department of Rakai assessed the contribution of NAADS in different sub-counties in the District, but specifically aimed at ascertaining whether farmers have access to information, knowledge and technology for profitable agricultural production, and data were collected from programme implementers but not from the beneficiaries (Magembe, et al. 2009).

## ***2.6: The Researcher's Contribution:***

It is clear from the above mentioned studies that women farmers face a multitude of challenges in Africa. However, many studies mentioned above look at all African women as facing the same problems. They do not focus on different challenges that characterize different categories of African women farmers. Although some studies focus on the legal and institutional framework governing inheritance (Wagubi 2003; Nabacwa 2002), these studies have not fully discussed the many challenges faced by the widows due to power exercised over them by their in-laws. Moreover, they do not discuss the specific challenges the divorced and married women face. This study will fill this gap by analysing the specific challenges characterizing the widows, divorced and married female farmers from their own point of view. The analysis is based on qualitative interviews as well as participant observation.

Even though the reviewed studies mention patriarchy as one of the factors that influence the challenges female farmers face, they do not explore the diverse ways that different categories of female farmers actively engage in and strategize within a set of different constraints to deal with patriarchy. This study will analyse women's strategies and coping mechanisms in order to capture and reveal how men and women resist, accommodate, adapt, and conflict with each other over resources, responsibilities and rights (Kandiyoti 1988). It should also be noted that none of the studies about challenges faced by female farmers have been conducted in my area of study.

In addition, as discussed above, studies have identified women's empowerment as one of the impacts of women's involvement in agricultural extension services, but it is not clear how



women's empowerment has been measured by these studies since most of them are quantitative in nature. They present figures but do not clarify how they came to get those figures and what parameters they use. A few of the studies that have assessed the impact of NAADS programme on farmers have not been specifically focusing on women as a category; they looked at all farmers, focusing mainly on farmers groups. Moreover, all of them were quantitatively based on descriptive analyses of surveys (see Benin, et al. 2007; Magembe, et al. 2009; Kavuma 2010). My study uses qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

A few Ugandan studies have focused on assessing the impact of the NAADS programme on the empowerment of women's farmer groups but have not approached individual women farmers at household level. In addition, despite the programme's goal of empowering women, these evaluations have not explored the contribution of the programme to increasing women's ability to make and act on their own strategic life choices and challenge existing power relations and gendered constraints restricting their empowerment (transformative empowerment). This is the gap that this study aims at filling. Only two studies have mentioned the perceptions of men of women's empowerment in Africa. No study of this issue has been done in Uganda and even the two studies reviewed did not explore the perceptions of women's empowerment by the women and project implementers. This study will fill this gap by exploring the perceptions and understandings of women's empowerment by the NAADS female beneficiaries, implementers and the husbands. These gaps will be filled by analysing the qualitative data material collected for the study using theories of empowerment, forms of power, and bargaining with patriarchy.

The next chapter will therefore introduce the reader to the theoretical framework for this study.

## *Chapter Three: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:*

### ***3.1 Introduction:***

The following theories of empowerment, forms of power and bargaining with patriarchy will guide the process of this research. I will focus on the concepts of agency and power because I find their interrelatedness appropriate for my study and since, as Rai, et al. (2002) argues, an understanding of women's empowerment requires a more nuanced analysis of power. I will focus mainly on Kabeer's notion of empowerment and agency (1999/2005) in order to explore the contribution of the NAADS programme to female beneficiaries' empowerment, and what in their own view is empowering or disempowering to them. I also explore the concept of power and its relationship to empowerment as put forward by Townsend, et al. (1999). The theoretical framework of 'bargaining with patriarchy' (Kandiyoti 1988) will also be used to explore the diverse ways that NAADS female beneficiaries actively engage in and strategize to deal with patriarchy as they exercise their agency or their 'power to' capacity (Kabeer 2005).

### ***3.2. Empowerment Theory: What is empowerment? :***

Empowerment is a means and an end (Sen 1999), a process and an outcome that can be measured against expected accomplishments (Rai, et al. 2002). However, as Kabeer (1999) cautions, it should not be assumed that empowerment can be measured and declared a success (or failure) by how much it does or does not achieve measurable goals. Empowerment as a concept has been discussed from different angles and perspectives by a number of scholars and practitioners, prominent among them Jo Rowlands (1997), Naila Kabeer (1994, 1999, and 2005), Srilatha Batliwala (1994), Sarah Mosedale (2005), Sarah Longwe (1991) and Amartya Sen (1999). For instance, Mosedale explains empowerment as an on-going process (rather than a product) by which people begin 'making decisions on matters which are important in their lives and being able to carry them out' (2005:\_ 244). She argues that to be empowered, one must have been disempowered and empowerment cannot be 'bestowed' by a third party although it is possible to act as 'facilitator' of this process. To her, women's empowerment is "the process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them to be and do in situations where they have been restricted, compared to men, from being or doing" (2005:\_252). I will use Mosedale's understanding of women's empowerment to explore whether or not the NAADS programme has enabled women to

make important decisions in their lives despite the restrictive patriarchal practices surrounding resource ownership and women's roles. What has the programme enabled them to do in situations where they earlier were restricted from doing? For instance, some of them bought land; does this mean they are empowered?

Sen relates empowerment to individual capacities developed through the process of gaining education, skills, and knowledge in order to improve the life-chances of individuals and empower them so they can have a better quality of life (1995). Sen (1981) argues that poverty is an indication of the inability of people to meet their basic needs, which can be both physical and intangible ('agency achievements'). Sen's conception of empowerment will also guide my analysis of some aspects of my findings. I will use it to look deeply into whether female beneficiaries' participation in NAADS trainings has developed their individual capacities to question, to reflect on, and to act on the conditions of their lives that were previously limiting their agency, for instance poverty.

### ***3. 3 Resources, Agency and Achievement:***

Kabeer defines empowerment as "the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability" (2005:\_13). She argues that this ability, in turn, rests on three distinct yet interrelated dimensions, that is, 'resources', 'agency' ('power to'), and 'achievements'(2005:\_14-15).

**3. 3.1 Resources**, according to Kabeer, are the medium through which agency is exercised. They include material, human and social resources. They are acquired and distributed through various social relationships in institutions like family, community, market and state. Such institutions, however, privilege particular people at the expense of others through rules, norms, and conventions, thereby enabling or disabling different categories of individuals to exercise their choices. Therefore, the distribution of resources depends on one's "ability to define priorities and enforce claims" (Kabeer 2005:\_15) as well as the social structures in which he or she lives.

**3. 3.2 Agency** represents the processes by which choices are made and put into effect. Agency (power to) "refers to people's ability to make and act on their own life choices, even in the face of others' opposition" (Kabeer 2005:\_14). In relation to empowerment, agency involves challenging power relations. It involves not only decision making and other forms of observable action but also the meaning, motivation, and purpose that individuals bring to

their actions (Kabeer 2005:\_14). Also appearing frequently in definitions of empowerment is an element related to the concept of self-efficacy. Drawing mainly on the human rights and feminist perspectives, many definitions contain the idea that a fundamental shift in perceptions, or “inner transformation,” is essential to the formulation of choices. That is, women should be able to define self-interest and choice, and consider themselves as not only able, but entitled to make choices (Sen 1999; Kabeer 2001/2005; Rowlands 1995; Nussbaum 2000). Kabeer (2001) goes a step further and describes this process in terms of “thinking outside the system” and challenging the status quo. Agency can be both passive and active. Kabeer distinguishes between ‘passive’ and ‘active’ forms of agency whereby *passive agency* is action taken when there is little choice and active agency relates to purposeful behaviour, actions taken with choice (2005:\_15). She distinguishes effectiveness of agency - women’s greater efficiency in carrying out their given roles and responsibilities, from transformative forms of agency - their ability to act on restrictive aspects of these roles and responsibilities in order to challenge them (2005:\_15). To Kabeer, transformative forms of agency do not simply address immediate inequalities but are used to initiate longer-term processes of change in the structures of patriarchy (2005:\_16).

**3. 3.3 Achievements** refer to the extent to which people’s potential for living the lives they want is realized or fails to be realized (Kabeer 2005:\_15). It refers to both the agency exercised and its consequences such as women’s greater self-reliance and sense of independence.

I will use Kabeer’s three interrelated dimensions of empowerment to explore the contribution of NAADS programme to women’s empowerment. I will explore the resources available to female beneficiaries and how they access and control such resources. According to Chambers, empowerment means that poor people are enabled to take more control of productive assets (2005:\_8). In my study, resources that will be considered include material resources (agricultural inputs, land, and credit), human resources (labour), intellectual resources (farming and life skills from FID trainings and study tours, education levels), and social resources (husbands, in-laws, fellow beneficiaries, politicians and friends). I will thus explore whether accessibility and/or limited access to these resources by women enables or constrains them “to make and act on their own life choices, even in the face of others’ opposition” (Kabeer 2005:\_14). I will analyse whether the female beneficiaries’ actions are taken with or without choice and the reasons behind this. I will also focus on Kabeer’s distinction of effective agency and transformative agency in my study to analyse whether the

female beneficiaries have been transformatively or effectively empowered by the NAADS programme, given their struggles to bargain with patriarchy while carrying out their income generating enterprises. Rai, et al. (2002) argues that individual empowerment takes place within the structural constraints of institutions and discursive practices. People's ability to make strategic life choices is enabled or constrained by the structures of power that they encounter and as Kabeer argues, "subordinate groups are likely to accept, and even collude with, their lot in society, if challenging this either does not appear possible or carries heavy personal and social costs" (2005:\_14). Therefore this study will explore whether or not the choices exercised by female beneficiaries suggest their greater ability to question, analyse, and act on the structures of patriarchal constraint in their lives and whether this leads to transformative or effective empowerment (are they challenging the patriarchal relations or are they bargaining with them?). Therefore, the outcomes of female beneficiaries' investment of available resources and the agency exercised will also be explored.

### ***3. 4 Empowerment and Power:***

Rai, et al. (2002) argues that understanding women's empowerment requires a more nuanced analysis of power, and Kabeer notes that one way of thinking about power is in terms of the '*ability to make choices*' (2005:\_13). Empowerment is not simply the ability to exert *power over* people and resources but a process through which women and men experience as well as challenge and subvert power relationships both in institutional, material and discursive contexts (Rai, et al. 2002). Empowerment cannot therefore transcend power relations; "it is enmeshed in relations of power at all levels of society" (Rai, et al. 2002:\_3). Batliwala defines power 'as control over material assets, intellectual resources, and ideology' (1994:\_129), and to her, empowerment then means 'the process of challenging existing power relations, and of gaining greater control over the sources of power' (1994:\_130). Rowlands (1997) argues for an understanding of power in its multiple guises, including *power over*, *power to*, *power with* and *power from within*. She argues that 'empowerment is more than participation in decision-making; it must also include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions' (1997:\_ 14). Power is personal, relational and collective.

In this study, I will employ the understanding of power of Townsend, et al. (1999). Townsend, et al. define power as 'a force exercised by individuals or groups' (1999:\_ 23). They identify four forms of power which include *power over*, *power from within*, *power to*

and *power with*. This study will make use of these four forms of power since they are helpful in understanding how female beneficiaries (and men) experience as well as challenge and subvert power relationships both in institutional, material and discursive contexts.

#### **3.4.1 Power over:**

Power over refers “to the capacity of some actors to override the agency of others through the exercise of authority or the use of violence and other forms of coercion” (Kabeer 2005:\_ 14). It is ‘the power of one person or a group to get another person or a group to do something against their will’ (Townsend, et. al. 1999:\_ 26, Rowlands 1995). Srilatha (1994, cited in Townsend, et al.1999) states that power is about control over ideology, which sets rules and ideals. When ‘power over’ is too strong, it becomes oppressive, divisive and destructive. According to Rowlands, ‘power over’ implies an ‘instrument of domination’ and implicitly suggests a finite resource in which ‘the more power one person has, the less the other has’ (1995:\_101). Therefore, empowerment through the lens of ‘power over’ is ‘a force exerted by an individual or group as a capacity to produce change (Townsend, et. al.1999:\_ 30), and gaining the ‘power over’ thus requires a revolution and fundamental social transformation (Rai, et al. 2002).

In my study, the ‘*power over*’ will be helpful in understanding how female beneficiaries’ agency is overridden by their husbands and in-laws who exercise this form of power over them due to the construction of patriarchy, which controls ideology. It will also help in understanding the ways in which this form of power is exercised and abused over them, as well as the effects of this to female beneficiaries’ ability to make strategic life choices.

#### **3.4.2 Power from within:**

Moser (1989) argues that “the empowerment approach...seeks to identify power less in terms of domination over others...and more in terms of the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength” (cited in Townsend, et al.1999:\_ 30). Indeed, Moser places self-reliance and internal strength at the centre of empowerment. To her, empowerment is the ability ‘to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over crucial material and non-material resources’ (1993:\_74-75). Townsend, et al. (1999:\_131) argue that power from within must be self-generated and a type of tyranny we exercise over ourselves. ‘Power from within’ is a product of the defeat of ‘power over’ internal to the self and involves the growth of self-esteem

(Zapata, cited in Townsend, et al. 1999). Therefore, 'power from within' manifests a form of self-awareness and confidence, internal strength and a sense of identity. It helps women to realize both what they can do and what holds them back. To Kabeer (2005:\_ 149), the process of empowerment begins from within and involves not only decision making but also the motivation, meaning and purpose that individuals bring to their actions (their sense of agency). Therefore, people's sense of self-worth (how people see themselves) and how they are seen by those surrounding them and their society is a crucial point while assessing their level of empowerment (Kabeer 2005). Kabeer argues that the multidimensional nature of power requires women 'to build on "the power within" as a necessary adjunct to improving their ability to control resources, to determine agendas and to make decisions' (1994:\_ 229). Rowlands (1997) also believes that a core to the empowerment process consists of increases in self-confidence and self-esteem, a sense of agency and of self in a wider context, and 'being worthy of having a right to respect from others' (1997:\_129-30). Without self-empowerment, collective empowerment is impossible (Townsend, et al. 1999).

In my study, '*power from within*' is helpful in explaining whether the female beneficiaries have gained the capacity to increase their own "self-reliance and internal strength" (Moser 1989, cited in Townsend, et al. 1999:\_30) to realize what they can do and what holds them back. Are there manifestations of self-esteem and confidence among these women due to their participation in NAADS? How is their participation perceived by those surrounding them like their husbands, in-laws and society as a whole? This form of power is important in order to look at how and why the female beneficiaries lead the lives they do.

### **3.4.3 Power with;**

According to Townsend, et al., 'power with' is "the capacity to achieve with others what one could not have achieved alone; a positive-sum outcome whereby everybody gains from the operation and exercise of power" (1999:\_31). 'Power with' connotes a cooperative relationship in which individuals work together to multiply individual talents and knowledge (Townsend, et al. 1999). It puts participation at the centre of empowerment, and creates awareness that the whole is greater than the sum of individuals, especially when a group tackles a problem together. Kabeer sees collective, grassroots participatory action - the *power to work with* others - as the key to women's empowerment (1994). Because farmers are supported by the NAADS programme in groups, '*power with*' will be important in exploring the female beneficiaries' capacity to achieve with others what they could not have achieved

when working separately, without groups. For instance, there are beneficiaries' testimonies of acquiring skills and advice from one another (which is a social resource). They tackle their problems together with other women within the sub-county and outside the sub-county when they go for study tours, thereby multiplying individual talents and knowledge. It is therefore important to analyse how this '*power to work with others*' (Kabeer 1994) helps these women to carry out their activities and how it contributes to their empowerment.

#### **3.4.4 Power to;**

This is another type of empowerment which involves accessing full range of human abilities and potential (Townsend, et al. 1999). It is the strength and ability to act, to build new capacities and skills in order to 'build a future different from that mapped out by custom' (Nussbaum and Sen 1993). The '*power to*' is creative and enabling as women reconstruct and reinvent themselves. This power is often used to mean political power, a power to influence others, to have a say in decisions. This power relates more with women's skills – the power to do new things and relate in new ways that implicitly challenge the status quo relations and roles (Townsend, et al. 1999) and it is a form of agency and purposive choice (Kabeer 2005). In my study, the '*power to*' will be useful in explaining how the female beneficiaries carry out their activities, the challenges they face, and how they overcome such challenges. It will help in understanding how female beneficiaries are using the skills acquired from this programme to try out new things that implicitly challenge the status quo (patriarchal) relations and roles. Some beneficiaries were buying land to carry out their farming enterprises and others were involved in intensive farming enterprises due to the challenge of limited land. This kind of power helps us to understand the choices these women make, as well as their agency - power to do things they want (Kabeer 2005). However, there is a need to recognize the challenges the female beneficiaries face as they exercise this form of power, such as the fragility of their '*power to*', '*power with*' and '*power from within*' due to the *power* exercised *over* them. It should also be noted that the four forms of power explained above are interconnected, overlapping and build on one another (Townsend, et al. 1999:\_ 26).

#### **3.5 Bargaining with patriarchy:**

While the concept of patriarchy has been used in different ways among social scientists, it often refers to social systems that facilitate the oppression and exploitation of women. However, critics have argued that the concept of patriarchy often relies on "an essentialist,



ahistorical analysis which is insensitive to the range of experiences of women of different cultures, classes, and ethnicities” (Walby 1990:\_2). In response to such criticisms, Deniz Kandiyoti (1988) developed the theoretical concept of “bargaining with patriarchy” to emphasize the culturally distinct arrangements by which gendered power relations are structured. Kandiyoti argues that women strategize within a set of concrete constraints that reveal and define what she terms the “patriarchal bargain” of a given society (Kandiyoti 1988:\_275). Patriarchal bargain is “intended to indicate the existence of set rules and scripts regulating gender relations, to which both genders accommodate and acquiesce, yet which may nonetheless be contested, redefined, and renegotiated” (Kandiyoti 1988:\_286). According to Kandiyoti (1988), the patriarchal bargains do not merely inform women’s rational choices but also shape women’s gendered subjectivity and determine the nature of gender ideology in different contexts. They also influence both the potential for and specific forms of women’s active or passive resistance in the face of their oppression (Kandiyoti 1988:\_275). Kandiyoti argues that women in a society where ‘patriarchal bargains’ take place will observe the restrictive practices and resist breaking the societal rules in favour of reproduction of family status. Their conduct will be in keeping with their respectable and protected domestic roles, even if observing them produces economic hardship and exploits them all the more (1988:\_280). Women become active participants in the reproduction of their own subordination. They will rather adopt interpersonal strategies that maximize their security with their husbands and in-laws than breaking the rules by challenging them. They become experts in maximizing their own life choices (Kandiyoti 1988).

Uganda in general (and Byakabanda sub-county in particular) has been described as “a patriarchal society”, where males have more access to the country’ socio-economic resources and privileges than do females (Otiso 2006:\_81). Uganda’s customary law puts a woman in an economically insecure position. She does not own land and she inherits no property despite the fact that she contributes to it through her unpaid labour in the home (Asiimwe 2007). As a result, women continue to be marginalized as far as property ownership is concerned. Moreover, statutory inheritance laws tend to support the socio-cultural norms that promote male supremacy. On a cultural and interpersonal level, there is a complex nature of patriarchal customary beliefs that are deep rooted. The fact that married men insist on registering the matrimonial homes and land solely in their name during marriage indicates that they do not wish their wives to inherit their property upon their death (Asiimwe 2007; Nabbumba 2008). In addition, the husbands’ relatives are generally not willing to transfer the

matrimonial home to the widow in situations where the husband died before he acquired the Title Deed. Hence, a widow is disadvantaged at every level and therefore has nowhere to run to demand her inheritance rights (Nabbumba 2008). The few husbands who make wills rarely give the matrimonial home and land to their wives as sole executors and beneficiaries. Women not only have to negotiate around patriarchal statutory law at institutional level, but also have to negotiate with customary laws at the interpersonal level (Asiimwe 2007). There is also a complex nature of patriarchal customary belief about what household activities a man can get involved in and to what extent (Otiso 2006). Therefore, whatever negotiations occur between wives and husbands, women's roles are already prescribed by the patriarchal regime. This situation explains the normalization of gender inequalities and the unfair accommodations that the women of Uganda make, irrespective of the government's efforts to mechanize agriculture, to stop these inequalities, and to empower women.

Kandiyoti (1997) illuminates Sen's (1999) statement that resource limitations, emerging conflicts and gender inequalities force negotiations within and across social groups in order to reduce conflicts and secure entitlements (also see Kevane 2004). The knowledge and understanding of one's entitlements play a significant role in determining the nature of the bargains (Sen 1999). Yet, as argued by Kandiyoti (1997), when women negotiate, already disadvantaged by cultural beliefs and resulting gendered mis/appropriations of their entitlements, bargaining becomes a way of merely reaching settlements that maintain the status quo (cited in Apusigah 2007). The power exercised over female beneficiaries by their husbands and in-laws sets rules and ideals, thereby propelling negotiations towards containment rather than resistance. In fact, as Kevane (2004) argues, these negotiations perpetuate inequalities as women often enter conjugal relationships already socialized to accept as norm, and even protect gender-based inequalities and their resulting limitations on women. This situation leaves women with hardly any gains as they negotiate and bargain within prescribed limits. Under such circumstances, women are likely to be subtle and conforming rather than resisting and contesting during negotiations. They are more likely to persuade and plead than to claim rights.

Therefore, it is important to explore the diverse ways that NAADS female beneficiaries actively engage in and strategize to deal with patriarchy. This study will find out if the NAADS female beneficiaries "bargain with patriarchy" and how they strategize within a set of different constraints that reveal the 'patriarchal bargains' of Lwankoni sub-county. This study will also explore whether NAADS female beneficiaries, through their actions to resist

passivity and total male control, become active participants ‘with vested interest in the system that oppressed them’ (Johnson 1983, cited in Kandiyoti 1988:\_280-281). It is also important to analyse beneficiaries’ strategies and coping mechanisms in order to capture and reveal how men and women resist, accommodate, adapt, and conflict with each other over resources, responsibilities and rights.

The theoretical framework of the patriarchal bargain will allow for a more nuanced understanding of patriarchy and highlight its complexity in my study area. It will help in examining the various ways in which female beneficiaries bargain, negotiate, participate in and reproduce patriarchal relations and how this enables and/or constrains their ‘power to’-ability to make strategic life choices and do what they want to do (agency). It will explain why women maximize their life chances and resist breaking the societal rules, even if observing them produces economic hardship and exploits them the more (Kandiyoti 1988:\_280). It will explain why women have or have not challenged the power exercised over them by their husbands and in-laws regarding resource ownership and household ‘women’ roles, and how this affects their ‘*power to*’ (agency), ‘*power with*’ and ‘*power from within*’.

Having discussed the theoretical framework, the next chapter will introduce the reader to the methodology employed by the study.

## ***Chapter Four: STUDY METHODOLOGY***

### ***4.1 Introduction:***

The main objective of the study is to explore the contribution of the NAADS programme to women's empowerment in Uganda. My two years previous work experience with the programme of NAADS, and particularly the programme component of Farmers Institutional Development (FID), inspired me to focus my study on this programme. To achieve my study objective, I used qualitative methods of data collection, since I was interested in the story as told by people who were part of the NAADS Programme, that is, NAADS programme implementers and beneficiaries. I wanted to understand my informants' experiences with this programme and the meaning of these experiences from their points of view and to "uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations" (Kvale 1996:\_1). While in the field, qualitative methods allowed my informants to open up and express their feelings about the NAADS programme and the issue of women's empowerment. In this chapter, I explain how I went about the field work. The chapter includes the process of getting access, an explanation of my study population and selection of informants, the study area, data collection methods and instruments used, limitations/challenges met, as well as ethical considerations and dilemmas encountered.

### ***4.2 The Process of getting Access:***

Getting access to the study area is a challenging process for most studies and mine was not exceptional. I started the process of accessing my study area and informants when I was still in Bergen through electronic mail communication with the District NAADS Coordinator (DNC). He recommended setting the study in Lwankoni sub-county, since the programme's impact was more substantial in this sub-county. On my arrival in Uganda, I needed to be cleared by the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNST), the authority which is in charge of all research clearances in the country. However, they needed an approval letter from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services, which I received after two weeks, and my research was finally approved. The Chief Administrative Officer gave me an introductory letter to take to the sub-county but the sub-county chief recommended that I should go to the sub-county on Thursday that week when the Council would be approving the 2010/2011 sub-county budget. This helped me so much since I was able to meet the full sub-county leadership including political leaders and technical staff at once. I managed to talk to

the sub-county chief, and then to the LCIII Chairperson and the sub-county NAADS coordinator about the purpose of my study before the council started. I tried my best to emphasize my identity as a student on research, since they all knew me as a Community Development Officer. After explaining my research objectives to them and seeking their acceptance (Davies 1999), I was invited to attend the sub-county council meeting and the LCIII Chairperson even invited me to say a word to the council before his closing remarks. This gave me the opportunity to explain to all leaders about the study objectives and it was amazing seeing people appreciating me for having chosen their sub-county as my study area. Since my study was to use purposive sampling, the sub-county chief, the sub-county NAADS coordinator (SNC), and the LCIII chairperson together with the chairman sub-county farmers' forum (SFF) had a separate meeting with me after the council meeting, through which they selected 8 households for my study. They even recommended a community based facilitator under NAADS who would take me around and introduce me to those households. The next day we set off to the field, ready and eager to meet my informants. However, I also needed consent to access the two Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), that is Community Enterprises Development Organization (CEDO<sup>9</sup>) and Family Development Support Initiatives (FADSI<sup>10</sup>). But with my introductory letter from the district, the administrators of both NGOs consented to my study with ease.

### ***4.3 Study population and selection of informants:***

This study focused specifically on NAADS Programme beneficiaries and implementers in Lwankoni sub-county, Rakai District, Uganda. Key interviews were conducted in households participating in the NAADS Programme (NAADS Beneficiaries). Before I left for research, I had agreed with my supervisor that selecting 7 households for my key informant interviews was enough to give me sufficient information and insights about my topic, provided that I was able to have more interactive and in-depth interviews with them. So, I expected to have

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<sup>9</sup> CEDO is a non-government organization which aims at promoting food security and incomes through commercial farming; revolving seed and livestock multiplication; promoting saving and credit scheme; promoting market linkages; advocating for improved lives of vulnerable households of Rakai District, including Lwankoni sub-county (Rakai District Local Government 2009).

<sup>10</sup>FADSI is “a non-government, non-political and none profit making organization. Its mission is to empower families and communities in four Lower Local Governments of Lwankoni, Kalisizo, Kirumba sub-counties and Kalisizo Town Council to attain and live high quality life in a sustainable manner (FADSI 2008).

14 key informant interviews, 7 for wives and 7 for their husbands. However, when 8 households were selected by implementers, reaching the field I realized that only two households had women who were married. The 4 households had women who had lost their husbands and two households had divorced women. So I requested the same implementers to identify 3 other households with women who, in their opinion, are empowered because of NAADS but are staying with their husbands. The informants were purposively selected by programme implementers because I wanted to understand what these implementers understand by women who are empowered. In addition to households that were selected by the implementers, I randomly selected and interviewed 3 households out of the list of NAADS Programme beneficiaries. I wanted to compare the women recommended by the implementers with some who were randomly selected. In all selected cases, husbands to women beneficiaries who were married were also studied and interviewed. This was to help me capture their ideas and feelings about their wives being part of development programmes like NAADS, their level of participation in household chores and the general community attitude towards women's empowerment. My study also included background informants, that is, the NAADS Programme implementers. These involved both technical staff and political leaders and were selected in order to get their idea about the meaning of empowerment and provide background and contextual information about the programme. Only those implementers directly involved in the NAADS Programme were selected. Also the administrators of FADSI and CEDO were part of the study population, to help get the NGOs' perspective on women's empowerment and contextual information about women's participation in agricultural related projects. I was surprised at how much information I obtained from my secondary informants, both government and NGO representatives.

#### ***4.4 Study area:***

My study was conducted in Lwankoni sub-county, one of the 21 lower local governments in Rakai District, Uganda. Administratively, Lwankoni sub-county consists of 5 parishes and 19 villages and it is 45km North-East of Rakai District Headquarters (Lwankoni Sub-County Council 2009:\_1). Lwankoni sub-county has a total population of 13, 988 of which 7,129 are female and 6,859 are male, and it is religiously diverse (2002 National Population Census, cited in Lwankoni Sub-County Council 2009:\_6).

As Silverman (2005:\_39) recommends, I purposively selected Rakai District due to my familiarity with the territory. I have lived and worked in Rakai for 2 years, working directly

with implementers of this programme. Lwankoni sub-county was also purposively selected mainly because it is one of the three first sub-counties to benefit from NAADS programme in Rakai District in the financial year 2003/2004. Since my study was exploring the contribution of NAADS Programme to women's empowerment, it would make more sense to look at a sub-county that has been with this programme for many years than other sub-counties in this district. Secondly, this sub-county has NGOs working specifically on agriculture related projects, like FADSI and CEDO. Therefore, I found it relevant to investigate the implementers' understanding of women's empowerment in these two NGOs. Additionally, this sub-county has created a model village called Mitondo, whose objectives are inclusive of increased income, food security, firewood, and improved health standards at household level by the end of 2009. To me, all these objectives could be contributing factors to women's empowerment, and having some NAADS beneficiaries from this model village as my informants would be interesting.

#### ***4.5 Research design:***

I basically employed qualitative research methods because I wanted to look deep into my informants' social life by integrating into their everyday life, as a participant observer, in order to understand their gender relations at household level (Holiday 2002). I used both primary and secondary data collection methods. As Duval (2005) argues, primary methods are necessary when the data needed cannot be found in secondary sources. My primary methods included semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

##### **4.5.1 Interviews**

Kvale explains a qualitative interview as being "a uniquely sensitive and powerful method for capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects' everyday world" (1996:\_70). I basically used semi-structured interviews in order to allow my informants more time, space and freedom to express themselves as they shared their practices and experiences with the NAADS programme. Although the interviews were open, I always briefed the informants on the main themes that I wanted us to discuss, and endeavoured to bring them back to the point in case they diverted. The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes, depending on the venue, informants' ability to open up, interviewing environment, and the type of informant. I conducted most of the interviews in Luganda since it was a primary language of the majority of my informants. The interviews were conducted on one-on-one

basis and at an agreed location. Most of the interviews were conducted in the informants' fields or homes. Key interviews were conducted in 14 households participating in the NAADS Programme.

**Table showing key informant interviews:**

Categories of key informants	No. of households.	Total no. of informants	Age Range	sex		Years spent in NAADS	Education level
				M	F	Female informants	Female informants
<b>Married</b>	5+1 sampled randomly	12	28 - 52	6	6	4 – 7	5 at Primary, 1 at Advanced secondary
<b>Widowed</b>	4+1 Sampled randomly	5	30 - 60	0	5	5 – 7	4 at primary, 1 at secondary
<b>Divorced</b>	2+1 Sampled randomly	3	31 - 55	0	3	5 - 7	3 at primary level
<b>Total no.</b>	14	20		6	14		

**Background interviews:** 9 NAADS Programme implementers were interviewed, that is, the district NAADS coordinator and the district agricultural officer, Rakai, the sub-county chief, the sub-county NAADS coordinator, the sub-county community development officer, the sub-county health inspector, the sub-county LCIII chairperson, the chairperson sub-county farmers forum, and the community based facilitator, Lwankoni. Background interviews were also carried out with NGO representatives of FADSI and CEDO. This was to help get the NGO perspective about women's empowerment as well as general and contextual information about women's participation in agricultural related projects. This was because these NGOs are working in this same sub-county and on agricultural related projects. Therefore 4 NGO staff were interviewed, that is, 2 FADSI staff, 1 founder and currently the Board chairperson of FADSI, and 1 administrator of CEDO. It so happened that most of my key informants were still members of FADSI and few of CEDO.

**Informal conversation:** I shared informal conversation with different members of the society, especially during the sub-county internal agricultural competition, a farmer group meeting, a burial and also while observing household members in their homes. Moreover, I had daily informal conversations with the community based facilitator (CBF) who was



introducing me to families and this provided me with an overview of what CBFs do. Through informal conversations with children, youth, political and religious leaders, men and women, married and widowed/separated, a number of gender related issues were captured that were very important for my thesis.

#### **4.5.2 Participant Observation:**

Participant observation is a method of qualitative research in which “a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture” (Kathleen, et al. 2002:\_1). Participant observation focusing on the household and community related work was carried out. I participated in the different activities of different household members in the families I observed as ‘a participating observer’ (Emerson, et al. 1995). I observed while participating in the day to day activities of women and their husbands that take place in their households. I selected 6 households out of the 13 households I interviewed to be observed and spent 2 to 3 days staying with each family and participating in most activities done by either partner at a particular time like farming, poultry feeding, and cooking, among others. This method was important in my study because it took me beyond what my informants had deliberated during the formal interviews. Through participant observation, I observed how women relate with their husbands in terms of division of labour, who buys household items and with whose money, who consults the other before buying anything in the home, who grows which crop and on whose land, who participates in which community activity and when, and other similar questions. I also participated in the Lwankoni sub-county internal agricultural competition, a farmer group meeting and in the burial of one of the community members. I observed a lot of gender relations and cultural norms and beliefs in all events I participated in.

#### **4.5.3 Secondary data:**

In order to complement the above mentioned data collection methods, a review of literature was done. I managed to get access to many documents that I think are very important to my study. The secondary data sources were mainly the Makerere University main library, FADSI office, Rakai district NAADS office, Lwankoni sub-county NAADS office, and sub-county chief’s office. I accessed mainly published and unpublished dissertations that were somehow related to my thesis in Makerere University library, NAADS physical progress reports,

annual reports, implementation guidelines, acts, sub-county development plans, technical planning committee and council minutes, NGO newsletters and document papers.

#### ***4.6 Research instruments:***

The main research instrument I used was a semi-structured interview guide which contained an outline of topics to be covered, and with suggested questions (Kvale 1996). The interview guides were used to make sure that all topics relevant to my study are touched at some point in the interview. The guides helped me to gain detailed information about my study but also to remind me on what to cover and where I needed to follow up. I designed three separate interview guides; one for female NAADS beneficiaries, the second was for their husbands and the third one for NAADS programme beneficiaries. However, in the process of my interviews, I had to change some parts of the interview guide for female beneficiaries to cover both categories of my informants, since some questions could not be applied to widows and those who had separated from their husbands. My interview guides solicited information on various themes including informants' personal data, life situations and challenges, personal experiences with NAADS, control and ownership over resources, balancing women's triple roles, community perceptions, as well as beneficiaries' and implementers' understanding of women's empowerment, among others. I always started with introducing questions, followed by follow up, probing and direct questions, depending on my informants' responses and the specific topics to be covered. The interview guides for the programme beneficiaries were translated to the local language, Luganda, since my informants were not conversant in English. I also used a tape recorder to facilitate my interviews, so that I could keep track of what was said and not to spend too much time on taking notes during the interview process. However, I had to seek permission from my informants to use the recorder. Most of them agreed, but 3 informants did not, so I had to write down their responses.

#### ***4.7 Data analysis and presentation:***

The focus of analysis is not merely on collecting or ordering "a mass of data, but on organizing many ideas which have emerged from analysis of the data" (Strauss 1987:\_23). Most interviews were recorded and transcribed from an oral to a written mode structure following a topic order. This was to help me structure the interview conversations in an agreeable and manageable form for closer analysis (Kvale 1996:\_168). Transcribing

interviews from the recorder also involved translating from Luganda to English. A few interviews were registered through note taking and these were organized and developed following the same line of topics as those interviews that were recorded.

To analyse my data material, I used Kvale's (1996) five approaches to interview analysis. In some cases of my analysis, longer statements by my informants were compressed into briefer statements in which the main sense of what was said was rephrased in a few words (meaning condensation). Interviews were coded into categories and large texts were reduced and structured into a few tables and figures. Like Strauss, et al. (1998: 113) argue, categorization was important since it enabled me to reduce the number of units with which I was working. Narrative structuring is another approach described by Kvale (1996) and since some informants were telling stories during the interview process, I focused on those stories and worked out their structures and plots. I used meaning interpretation by going beyond what was directly told to me during the interviews to work out relations of meanings not immediately apparent in the interviews. I provided deeper interpretations of the interviews from my perspective based on the study goal, the theory, literature, my experience with the study area and the broad social context. In some instances, I applied different techniques during the analysis in that meaning generation was done both in words, numbers, figures, graphs and/or in their combination (Kvale 1996).

#### ***4.8 Reflexivity and Positionality.***

Silverman (2005) indicates that it is unrealistic to suppose that any researcher enters a field without past experience or some pre-existing ideas about the topic under study. My study was no exception from this. I had some experience and knowledge about the NAADS programme. However, I was aware of how my prior knowledge about the programme may influence my research. Silverman (2005) argues that the danger of misunderstanding is great when the setting is familiar. I assume that my familiarity with the study area and the NAADS programme may have influenced the study findings. However, this experience was in no way detrimental to my role as a researcher since it became useful to me as a source of data. My position as a Community Development Officer and a student, who went abroad for further studies, helped me in terms of getting easy access to programme implementers. They were very welcoming and helpful and consented to my study right away. This also helped me to have easy access to my key informants. I also tried to introduce myself as a student who is doing academic research to avoid my informants from relating my study to my profession as

a Community Development Officer. This made them relate freely with me throughout the research process.

As a young girl, unmarried, childless, I was afraid that my informants would not disclose their marriage experiences to me. I thus conducted myself in a mature way during my stay in the study area and dressed decently in order not to appear like “an outsider” (Lal 1996). I was surprised by how much my informants opened up to me. My being a woman also helped my female informants to open up on particular sensitive issues like gender domestic violence. In most cases they felt like they were talking to their fellow woman and several times my informants reminded me of my being a woman in statements like “*have you forgotten we are women*”, “*you should know that because you are a woman*”. The places where I interviewed the informants could have had an impact on their responses. Since I found most of them in their gardens or working on their projects in their homes, some of them may have felt uncomfortable and inconvenienced. However, I always told them to remain working while we had an interview in the form of a conversation and this helped me to get all the information I needed without wasting my informants’ time. In addition, my presence as a participant observer in my informants’ homes could have exerted an influence on the data collected. It is common sense that in the presence of others, we always try to appear good. This was reflected in my informants’ homes where women kept their homes neat whenever I made an appointment with them. To avoid this influence I made frequent abrupt visits to these same homes to verify my observations.

#### ***4.9 Ethics and Ethical dilemmas:***

Researching on people’s lives involves a lot of challenges with concerns of informed consent, trust and anonymity, confidentiality, harm and other ethical values. However I endeavoured to build trust and create an environment in which my informants felt safe to open up (Davies 1999). The research was approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services and the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology. I also sought consent from the district, sub-county, and the two NGOs. I tried my best to reveal my identity as a researcher, explain the research objectives to my informants and seek their acceptance before they got involved in the research (Davies 1999:\_53). My informants were fully informed of the study aims, the possible risks and benefits from their participation in the research, and I stated clearly that they could freely withdraw from my study at any time if they felt uncomfortable (Kvale 1996:\_112). I gave assurances to all participants about treating information gained about

them in the course of my research with confidentiality (Silverman 2005). I assured them of protecting their privacy by changing their names and identifying features when reporting the interviews. But I explained to Programme implementers that my study may involve publishing information that may be recognizable to others like their titles but most of them agreed to the release of some identifiable information (Kvale 1996). To preserve anonymity and safeguard confidentiality, I used pseudonyms for the names of my informants throughout the research and their interviews have been coded. I promised my informants that I will keep all the audiotapes away from any one's reach and to destroy them at the end of the study. To further protect my informants' confidentiality, I guaranteed to do my own transcribing rather than using a secretary.

However, I experienced some ethical dilemmas in the process of my fieldwork. Legal problems concerning protection of my informants anonymity was a great dilemma (Kvale 1996). While conducting my interviews, I felt obliged to help some informants with their domestic violence issues that came up during the interviews. This was especially due to my earlier profession as a Community Development Officer working directly on domestic violence cases. However, I recommended my informants to take their cases to the office concerned since I had to protect their anonymity. Another dilemma concerned whether the gatekeepers' (implementers') consent to participate in my study could have an influence on my key informants' consent to participate (Punch 1986; Kvale 1996). This was due to the fact that the gatekeepers selected for me the informants and gave me the person to introduce me to these informants. However, I sought the key informants' consent too before they got involved in my study. Obtaining consent in group activities was a great dilemma too (Punch 1986). I could not approach everyone who attended and seek their consent. However, the leaders and some informants I had interviewed prior to the events knew that I was on research.

#### ***4.10 Challenges during the study***

I faced a number of challenges during my fieldwork. The hot weather was challenging to me since I was coming from Norway which has low temperatures. In addition to the hot weather, the roads were very poor and dusty since my study area is a rural area and the means of transport were poor. I used a small motorcycle called "bodaboda" in my country and we used to sit on it with the community based facilitator (CBF) who was introducing me to my informants and the owner. However, although this was not easy for me, it somehow helped

me look more like an “insider” (Lal 1996) to my informants than it would have appeared if I had done my research using a car.

Personal interruptions from relatives also took some of my time off the study. This is because my field work was based in my home country, and having been away from my friends and family for a full year, it was hard for me to just ignore their company. I therefore decided to have some weekends off my fieldwork, just to be with my friends and family. Timing farmers for interviews was another challenge since some of them spent whole days in their fields to catch up with the planting season. I thus decided to find them in their fields and farms but at times it was uncomfortable carrying out interviews in such an environment, and some informants felt inconvenienced by my presence. I made sure I interviewed each of them while working so as not to waste their time. In addition to the above, follow-up of some informants was not easy, given that it depended on their activities and schedules.

Although programme implementers were informed and maybe knowledgeable about the empowerment concept, many of my key informants were not, and expressing this term in a local language that is meaningful to them was really hard for me. I therefore asked a consultant who was very good at the local language to translate the words that were hard for me into Luganda.

Furthermore, despite the fact that all background informants accepted my appointments, it was hard for them to respect them. I kept frequenting their offices but most times they were in workshops, meetings, or in the field and I had to go back to some offices for more than 3 times before I could access them for interviews. Moreover, staying in informants’ households for a full day made me, and some household members, feel uncomfortable during participant observation, especially the first times. However, as the research process went on, most of them got used to me and were welcoming.

I will now turn to the empirical chapters of the study and the next chapter will discuss the life situations and challenges faced by the NAADS programme female beneficiaries.

## ***Chapter Five: LIFE SITUATIONS OF FEMALE FARMERS AND THEIR CHALLENGES:***

### ***5.1: Introduction:***

In this chapter, I give a brief overview of life in the community of Lwankoni. I discuss the experiences and life situations of female beneficiaries, emphasizing mainly their challenges. I let my informants to express themselves. My female informants have been divided into 3 categories, that is the widowed, divorced, and the married. For the married, I also involve their husbands' arguments in some cases and include some discussions for the implementers, depending on the case under discussion. In this thesis, by widowed, I mean the women who have lost their husbands due to death. By divorced, I mean those women who have separated from their husbands but which husbands may not be dead. In my study, all the women in this category were not officially divorced since none of them had divorce letters, they had just unofficially separated, but I will still term it divorced. By married, I mean those informants who are staying with their husbands and still in marriage. However, I will first discuss the general challenges faced by all categories of female informants, and then discuss how the three categories experienced life differently due to different circumstances.

Lwankoni sub-county is a patriarchal society. Farming is the main economic activity of the community and women play a pivotal role in this sector. The people of Lwankoni are predominantly crop farmers and they mainly grow food crops, but sell some of it to earn a living. However, there are a few people who practice livestock and poultry keeping, but on a small scale. Small-scale trade is common in the trading centres of Lusaka, Sunga, Mitondo, Lwankoni, Manyama, Kayanja, Nabyajjwe and Bbaale (Lwankoni Sub-County Council 2009). However, some men have jobs outside the sub-county, mainly in Kalisizo town council, working in the coffee factory, shops and markets, among other places. The economic situation of most people is poor, but the standard of their houses is average since most of them are made up of bricks and iron sheets. The sub-county has poor and scarce water. It is only 4 kilometres from Kalisizo town council which has electricity but there is only one rich family with electricity in the sub-county. The level of literacy is still very low for both men and women but some women are participating in the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) classes, mainly to learn how to read and write. The majority of women are illiterate, mainly due to poverty and early marriages. 85 percent of the population is catholic, and both

polygamy and monogamy is practiced by community members (Lwankoni Sub-County Council 2009).

### ***5.2: General Challenges for all categories of female farmers:***

Although my female informants fall in 3 categories, that is the widows, divorced and married, evidence from my fieldwork reveals that they share certain challenges and common characteristics. They are all farmers, producing for both consumption and commercial purposes; they are all low income earners and have very low levels of education. There are several early marriage and child birth cases among them. Generally, women in this area face multiple disadvantages. They tend to have limited access to income, land, water, capital, education and other social services, which can lead to illiteracy, malnutrition, disease, high infant mortality and low life expectancy (UNFPA Report 2007). They live in a region of low soil fertility that is highly dependent on rainfall and they survive on subsistence crops and livestock. Moreover, even though women work on this land, they have little control over it and therefore their household decision-making authority over farming activities taking place on this land is limited.

Despite the fact that the majority of the population depends on farming to feed and maintain their families, the Sub County has a problem of water scarcity and this presents a very big challenge to farmers who require a lot of water for animals and plants. In addition to this, farmers are challenged by the poor and unpredictable weather conditions, labour shortages, poor markets, and “human parasites” who steal their crops from gardens (Ngangriyap 2007:\_ 64). In addition to the above mentioned disadvantages, the rural women farmers shoulder heavy household related responsibilities, such as growing and processing food, collecting water and firewood, cleaning the home and looking after their children. And though they work hard, the productivity of the women is diminished by the socio-cultural constraints, the lack of credit, technology and extension services, which could ease their burdens. Women farmers are challenged by their ‘triple roles’ (Moser 1989). Most of them have many responsibilities in addition to their household chores. The sub-county chairperson explains this;” *Household work affects their development work in such a way that a woman is ‘duped’ in those responsibilities yet she has to participate in her farming activities and community work*”. Many women reported having more than one leadership position, belonging to a farmers’ group and different CSOs, participating in trainings and meetings besides doing household chores and farming.



### ***5.3: The Life situations of the different categories of female informants:***

Despite the above mentioned challenges facing almost every farmer in my study population, there were also specific life situations and experiences characterizing every category of the informants. The widows faced specific challenges related to their in-laws; divorced women's challenges were mainly related to their husbands marrying second wives, while the married had challenges related to their husbands' control over resources and community attitudes towards their participation in community activities. They all had different stories to tell. In this section, I look at the different life experiences and situations that characterize each category of my informants.

#### ***5.3.1 Widows: 'My in-laws are always on my neck'.***

While women's decision-making power tends to increase in many African countries when the husband is not present, men always remain involved in many of the most important decisions (Ogunlela, et al. 2009). Nabbumba (2008) argues that women in Uganda access land through marriage, but when the man dies, it is common for his family to take his land, leaving the widows and orphans destitute. Almost all widows reported encountering problems related to their in-laws wanting to take the property that belonged to their late husbands. Land was the main property, emphasized by almost every widow I interviewed, followed by their houses. As Faith narrates; *"I was very poor before I joined this programme. My family lived at the mercy of God. You see that house, one day it wanted to fall on us, yet my husband was still around. We used to make waragi (local alcohol) to earn some money but still things did not work out, we did not have enough capital. When my husband died, haha.....things were not easy. My in-laws thought I had killed him because he had an instant death. They wanted to burn my house and kill me with my children but God protected us. They even tried several times to sell all this land, including the house where I lived with my children, behind my back. But I think they never got a potential buyer then...that was to my advantage anyway (laughs)..."*

Grace encountered similar challenges from her in-laws after her husband's death, and being a farmer, she emphasizes the importance of land in her life and her children's lives. She states; *"I am a widow with 9 children. My husband died in 2005 when our first born had just joined university. My husband was rich and learned and our family was generally well-off since all our children were in good schools. But when my husband died, his relatives tried as much as*

*they could to take all that belonged to our family. They started with our second house and sold all the iron sheets on it. When they started requesting my husband's land, I was helpless and felt like it was the end for my children's education. Madam Prossy, we are farmers and our children have studied on the fruits of farming, so if someone wants to stop that, then take the land on which we farm to get their school fees.....I think they were doing all this because they thought their son had died from HIV/AIDS because of me. His sister even said it to my face". (Grace)*

Some widows reported being forced into having sex by their brothers-in-law and having to pay a price in case they refused them. Whenever the head of the household dies, men, especially the brothers of the deceased, try as much as they can to take over their brother's 'property', the wife (Nabbumba 2008). Some may want to marry them but most of them just want to have sex with them and always request the women to keep it a secret. When the widow does not comply with the request, she risks a lot of challenges related to losing her late husband's property, including land. Patricia emphasizes this;

*"I have been a widow for 8 years. I have 4 children and the last born was still very young by the time her father passed away. I have lived a challenging life since then mainly because of my 'mulamu' (brother-in-law) Kalule...He has tried his best to make us suffer, thinking that I will give in after failing with life....thank God I am not failing yet. That man wanted to take me over after his brother had died but when I refused; he started advising his parents to reclaim their land that they had given their son, my late husband. I had no written agreements, so I could not claim it. I left them to take it and stayed in the small plot which my husband had bought with his money but still that fool wants it, too. But he cannot take it because I have kept the agreements in a bank; I know that land is safe". (Patricia)*

Cate also faces the same challenge:

*"[...] When my husband had just died, my brother in-law started disturbing me, requesting me to have sex with him. I decided to report him to his parents and some elders who talked to him. He now fears requesting sex but because he knew all my husband's secrets, he decided to hide some land agreements. We are still looking for them but I am very sure it is him who has them, he wants to make me and my children suffer and maybe he is planning to sell the land after some time, yet as you can see, it is the only thing I can play with to have money for my children's education and their food".*

Education was emphasized by some widows as a weapon to fight against disturbing in-laws. Some of my informants reported knowing their rights because of being educated, and therefore, they managed to defend their property after their husband's death. *"My in-laws have tried as much as they can to take away all that I have worked for claiming that everything belonged to their son, my late husband, but because I was learned, I knew exactly what to do. I got letters of administration from the court and they did not succeed but I know they don't like me"*. (Immy)

Besides their property being confiscated by the in-laws, widows are challenged by limited land, which affects their agricultural activities to a great extent. Thus, some resort to planting more than one type of crop in the same piece of land, compromising the output. Grace explains this when she states;

*"I have land but it is not enough. That is why I am joining coffee with beans and maize in the same plantation. But the land is so old and poor; I cannot manage to fertilize it because it is very expensive for me. My activities are really affected because of land shortage. I used to harvest 12 sacks of ground nuts and 7 sacks of beans when this land was still new but this season I harvested 1 sack of beans yet using the same amount of land.....and for ground nuts, I no longer plant them because I have no land"*.

Most widows also mentioned not having enough money to buy land because all the money they get from sell of agricultural produce is spent on paying fees for their children. Every widow mentioned giving first priority to her children's education. Grace states; *"I have not got enough money to buy enough land because most of the money goes to my children's education, I can't buy land when my children have not got money to go back to school"*. Patricia also said the same thing; *"I would love to buy some land myself but all the money I earn is spent on my children's school fees. The money I save after paying for their fees can't buy land"*.

The widowed, just like the divorced women, looked at the absence of a husband in their homes as a remedy to busy schedules. They felt relieved of some household responsibilities. As Faith asserts; *"I spend the whole day farming if I do not have any meeting or training with the Sub County. ... I rarely take lunch and since I am a widow, there is no one to ask for food when my children are at school, so I can take something simple and maybe cook at night"*.

Therefore, to many widows and the divorced, the lack of husband in the home is a relief of extra work rather than loss of a co-worker. They believed that if their husbands were still around, they would have to spend more time on cooking and looking after them, getting less done in their farms.

### **5.3.2: Divorced: ‘*didn’t his second wife produce?*’**

All my informants who had divorced or separated from their husbands reported their husbands’ new marriages as the main cause of their separation. Jane explains this clearly when she narrates her sad story;

*“I had a happy family and my children were in good schools. I had 6 children and my husband used to love us all....although he used to quarrel and complain almost on everything like all men do, he was not that bad and I was used to his behaviour. In 1999, when he married a second wife, everything changed. He started neglecting his responsibilities in this home, he stopped buying us meat and fish like he used to and spent most of his time at his new wife’s place. He could buy everything good to his new wife. When the wife became pregnant, then my children were no longer noticed as his children. He even became lazy to pay their school fees in time....I remember Joan, our first born, was by then a candidate in secondary four but she spent almost 3 weeks at home before he paid for her fees. And by then I was so poor myself, otherwise I would have taken her back to school....myself if I have money, I give my children’s education the first priority. Things became worse and worse and when the ‘loved’ wife produced, it was like she had produced the king of Buganda...my husband became so violent to me and my children. I remember one time; he wanted to kill me in the bedroom because I questioned his behaviour towards us .... When I talked to his parents about it, they called a meeting to discuss this with him but he never listened. At that point, he had stopped to pay for my children’s fees claiming that he was so poor and education was not so important since he was also not educated but was surviving. I ignored him and started farming to get food for my children...that year, they never went to school but I struggled and sold my beans to the school where my first born was studying to enable her to finish her secondary four. Madam Prossy, men have no shame, this man even tried to separate the small land between me and his new wife, the only land I was left with to look after my children. I could not believe this, so I went to the LCI secretary for children and reported the case. And since I had many children and his beloved wife had only one child, the council resolved that our husband should buy another plot for his new wife since the land he*

wanted to separate was not enough for my children. After that, he became too mad at me for having reported him and that is when we separated...was it in 2000? I think it was July 2000, since then he has never set his foot here and he is never concerned about his children....really sometimes men are stupid! How do you forget your own blood?" (Jane)

Jackie also gives her story;

*"I got married at 16 years. I was married traditionally for 4 years with my husband. Our first year of marriage was paradise. I remember calling ourselves mum and dad and everyone admired the couple we were. Besides, my mother in law was my friend and she loved me so much then and our house was just besides theirs. After one year, my husband became so violent. By then we had one child. He started drinking and coming back home late. He could come back past mid-night and start beating me for nothing. When we produced the second and third child, the responsibilities became many but my husband became more irresponsible. He could spend all the money from coffee on alcohol, leaving no single coin for his children. I stood all that and worked hard for my children. But when he produced in another woman, he wanted to bring her to our house. The house was too small and I could not stand a violent man and a co-wife under the same roof. That is how I left my marriage, but I left only with my second and last child because they were still very young. I left my first born there, against my will, because my parents could not handle looking after me and all my children. When I came back to my parents' house, life became so hard. My parents are not doing so well, so I had to work hard for my children's food and to sustain a lot of insults from my family and society. To my parents, it was shameful and a disgrace that I had left my marriage. It was to me too, but I couldn't stand such suffering. I decided to work hard one season, spent all days in the field and harvested 4 sacks of beans on my father's land. I used that money to construct a small hut because I badly needed to leave my parents' house. Although I built it on their land, I felt more independent and free. I am now planning to buy my own land and build slowly a bigger house, and then I will bring my child I left with my co-wife because I know she is mistreating her. I believe God will do that for me and that my children will study".* When I asked her if the husband gives his children any assistance, she replied; *"Haha, assistance? Not at any moment, these are no longer his children since his new wife produced"*.

The stories of the divorced women suggest that husbands tend to forget their fatherhood responsibilities after marrying second wives, leaving the burden of looking after children to

their former wives, without any assistance. The children of the second wife get the love, care and presence of the father while the children of the former wife seem to be treated as though they never existed. Although it is against societal sanctions for a woman to divorce, and it brings shame to the divorced woman and her family, the women exercised their agency by leaving their abusive marriages.

### **5.3.3: Married women: “... then you remember you have a husband to look after...”**

The married women emphasized the fact that their husbands did not have problems with their being part of NAADS programme and other development programmes. They always stated that their husbands had motivated them to join and they were willing to join too but could not because they were busy or had long distance jobs. Eva explains this when she says;

*“My husband did not have problems with me joining the programme. In fact he would also have joined but he is a busy man and he is never at home. Today you are so lucky to find him here (pause),...he works in a coffee factory in Kalisizo town council, but today he is feeling weak, so he decided to stay home and just harvest his coffee”.* (Eva)

This was the same reason given by most women whenever asked why their husbands could not provide labour in their gardens or help on other household activities. Rita says; *“I do help him in his gardens in most cases but he does not do the same in mine because he is always busy and has few days at home”*. When I asked her husband about the same issue, the husband confirmed Rita’s statement when he said; *“[...] the problem is I am never home but if I am home, why not help her? I have no problem with doing some household activities”*. (James)

Most married women complained about having been labelled prostitutes by either their in-laws or community members whenever they went for evening group meetings. But people slowly changed their attitude towards these women after seeing the impact of their participation in these groups. Eva narrates how her in-laws complained to her husband when she constantly went for meetings. She says; *“[...] in the past, men did not allow their wives to be part of groups. I remember when we had just made our farmers’ group; we used to have weekly meetings at the members’ houses. You know it is very bad to live near your in-laws...that house next to us is for the parents of my husband, and they talked a lot whenever I would go to attend meetings! They told my husband one time that I am seeing another man since they see me coming home late and he is never home”*.

When I asked her about her husband's reaction towards her in-laws complaints, she said that; *"[...] He was kind of annoyed but he never said it to me. You know some men just keep quiet but they are studying the situation- that is my husband. But to avoid problems, I begged my group members to come to my place for almost a month so that my in-laws could see what we do when we come together for meetings and luckily, our group has only female members. But because there was no impact in our lives then, my in-laws, and my husband too, did not see the benefit of our group. But now, even if I come back at night and find my husband home, he never complains because he knows the kind of work I am doing and what it means to be part of these groups and programmes. He even allowed me to go for a 3 days study tour in Mityana and sometimes if I have a meeting and he is home, he will keep reminding me that I have a meeting and should not go late"*. (Eva)

Land is a major resource in women's livelihood strategies, especially in areas where the main economic activity for women is farming, like in the case of my study area. Therefore, having limited access and control over land creates severe hardships for them and for those who depend on them (Walker 2002; Nabacwa 2002). Like the widows and the divorced, the married women always mentioned the challenge of limited land for their activities. This limited their choice of enterprises to get involved in; some could not participate in cash crop production like coffee since the land either belonged to the husband or was borrowed from a friend or in-laws. Most of them were left with no choice but to participate in poultry, livestock keeping and small-scale food crop growing, since such enterprises require limited land. The sub-county NAADS coordinator (SNC) argued that resource ownership is lacking on the side of women. He states; *"Most women do not own land and some husbands refuse them to use their land. In fact we wanted to put a coffee demonstration site at a woman beneficiary's home but her husband refused us to put it on his land, and the woman did not have her own land...she had to miss that chance. I think this is why most women are involved in poultry and livestock rearing, since these require limited land. You find a woman who wants to grow coffee but can't because she has no land for it. At times it is not a woman's choice to participate in subsistence farming or food crop growing"*.

Eva confirms this when she says; *"The land I have is not enough because I just borrowed this land we are on now. All this land you see belongs to the Vice Chairperson LCV. I borrowed only 5 acres, but already I have used all the acres and need some other land. I have no space to grow crops like coffee since the land is not mine, yet I would love to grow such crops"*.

Angel, who was using her in-laws' coffee plantation to grow pineapples, comments that; *"[...] I would come very far if I had enough land. According to the trainings we get, you find that you have a lot to do but on a limited land. Because like ... I will take you around my gardens and you will see that I have planted pineapples in my in-laws' coffee plantation, yet the pineapples would be doing better if I had planted them in a separate open space. And there are times when you need to expand some enterprises but you have no land"*.

When I asked husbands about their views on property ownership for their wives, they always claimed that all the property they had belonged to the whole family, so there was no point in women having ownership over some of the property. John states that; *"Here in my family, everything we buy belongs to all of us. My wife has no specific land that is hers; in fact there is no need for that"*. James also explains that; *"we own the land together as a family, there is no reason for my wife to have her separate piece of land. And although she inherited some land from her mother, that land still belongs to us two and our children"*.

Others even mentioned that their wives may become uncontrollable if they got ownership over assets like land. For instance Jimmy noted that; *"I have seen so many women disrespecting their husbands just because they have some money in their bras, in fact there are many divorces caused by that. Imagine what can happen if she owned a piece of land! Wouldn't she become uncontrollable? Women are weak naturally, just owning a simple thing makes them think they own the world. I think it is right if everything is in my name since I am the husband"*.

In addition, married women whose husbands were full time farmers reported having an added responsibility of looking after their husbands. Ruth says; *"[...] if I did not have a husband to look after, then I would not be preparing lunch. In most cases you have a lot to do on your schedule and staying without food would be the solution, but then you remember you have a husband to look after, you just have to go home and prepare something for him"*. Whereas Rita, whose husband and children are available only during weekends, feels relieved of some responsibilities during week days. This allows her more time to participate in farming activities. She argues that; *'I always forget to have lunch during weekdays, after all my husband is at work and my children are at school. I spend the whole day in my garden but come back at 1.00 pm to feed my animals. Myself I take leftovers for lunch but prepare a heavy dinner at night. But on weekends, I have to prepare a good meal since my husband is around"*.



Should we assume that women are better off without husbands since husbands are seen as an added burden to their triple roles? It all comes to what the society takes to be the accepted norm of behaviour. Will these women be respected without husbands? We have seen that Jackie received a lot of insults from her parents and community due to her decision to divorce her husband. Her action, although it reflected her ability to exercise agency, brought shame to herself and family. Divorce was never a desirable action for all informants, but they did it because while in marriage, their choices were limited. They ran out of their marriages because they were too dangerous to their lives and the future of their children. Other than this, they all valued marriage, and believed that a married woman is respected by society.

#### **5.4 Gendered Division of labour in Households: “A good wife will not allow her husband to enter the kitchen, it is her office”.**

According to Berger and Luckmann (1979), men and women externalize themselves into the social reality in which they live and internalize the social world as their perceived reality. Despite the fact that both categories of women mentioned household responsibilities as a hindrance to their full participation in developmental activities, all of them pointed out that they were not okay with men helping them with certain household chores like cooking, fetching water and washing utensils. They looked at the execution of such chores as a sign of degradation and disrespect of their husbands and referred to those women who accepted their husbands to do such chores as ‘bad wives’. Moreover, they believed that women are respected for those special roles that men cannot do, like cooking. If these ‘women roles’ are done by men, they also lose their respect as men. However, certain household activities were believed by some women to be okay for men to do like feeding animals. Grace explains this when she says; “[...] *But myself I cannot allow a man to cook for me or fetch for me water....no, I do not want that. Even when my husband was still around, I never allowed him to enter my kitchen; he had to wait for everything from the dining room. A good wife will not allow her husband to enter the kitchen, it is her office. If I see any woman making her husband cook, it looks so funny and disgusting to me. Even if my girl got married tomorrow, I would not allow her do such things to her husband. We are respected for those special responsibilities we have as women but if you accept your husband to do the same, then where is your respect? No one can respect you and your husband will not be respected by his fellow men. Prossy if you get married do not ever allow your husband to enter your kitchen. There are activities men can do to help their wives like feeding animals, harvesting coffee, but not cooking, washing utensils! There are jobs for women and those for men”.*

The labelling of men as bewitched because they help their wives with household chores, as Joyce points out below, illustrates how culture shapes gender relations and roles. It attributes certain roles to women and others to men, and thus even women themselves will not feel comfortable if their husbands perform 'their roles'. "*They will always label men who help their wives as being bewitched. They say "yamuteka mu cupa" (meaning that the wife put him in the bottle)... Most of us fear our men to be labelled so; it is not good for them because they feel out of place and discriminated by their friends*". (Joyce)

"*You also know some things are natural...there are activities which should be done by women, and they themselves would feel uncomfortable seeing us men do such roles. Take the example of cooking: enter the kitchen and see what a woman will say to you!*" (James). This illustrates how men and women internalize the expectations of their significant others and learn to define the social reality that they are part of (Berger and Luckmann 1979). Women bargain with patriarchy by following the specific behaviour ascribed to them through the socially defined role standards, in order to avoid undesirable results like husbands being labelled "*yamuteka mu cupa*". As a result, such practices and considerations are likely to hinder their empowerment since they are left with little time to carry out their income generating projects.

Some husbands claimed to be helping their wives with production and household activities through hiring labour for them, as John stated; "*As long as I touch in my pocket and pay for labour, then it means I am helping my wife with household chores*". However, during my participant observation, when I asked the wives about the labour they use, I found out that even those who use hired labour in their fields, they pay for it by themselves, and many female informants denied the fact that their husbands have ever hired labour for their gardens. I also observed women doing their household chores themselves; in fact there was only one informant using a maid and she was paying her herself. Masculinity's dominance over femininity is evidenced here, as a fundamental part of how the reality of this community is socially constructed (Berger and Luckmann 1979). During my study, men claimed to own everything in the family including the woman's pocket money. In such a situation, if the woman pays for labour, it automatically means the man has hired labour for her. The husbands exercised their *power over* their wives' agency, thereby limiting their decision making abilities on household resources, including those resources owned by the women.

### ***5.5: Concluding Discussion:***

Before joining NAADS programme, both the widowed, divorced and married informants had a low level of empowerment due to their lack of access to and control over resources, specifically land and credit, which are very crucial in their farming activities. In addition, the in-laws, parents and husbands exercised *power over* these women, limiting their ability to make strategic life choices, and thus hampering their empowerment.

The female informants pointed out household responsibilities as a challenge to their participation in income generating activities, and to the married women, the presence of their husbands means an added burden since they have to look after them. Nevertheless, they still supported the view that men should not help their wives with household activities like cooking, since this would jeopardise men's status and respect in society. As Kandiyoti argues, these women, in a society characterised by 'patriarchal bargain' like Lwankoni sub-county, observe the restrictive practices and resist breaking the societal rules about gender roles in favour of reproduction of family status (1988:\_280). They prefer respecting their respectable and protected domestic chores rather than challenging and resisting them, even if observing these rules overburdens them, and limits their time to participate in income generating enterprises (Kandiyoti 1988). Women become active participants in the reproduction of their own subordination. They would rather spend the whole day and night working in order to maximize the security they obtain from their husbands and in-laws, than breaking the rules by requesting their husbands to do the cooking.

Uganda has put in place the 1998 Uganda Land Act, but like Nabacwa (2002) argues, the law has failed to offer real benefits to poor women. Several cultural beliefs have been used to deny women ownership over land. For instance, like Jimmy commented, there are beliefs that when women get rights of ownership to land they will not have stable marriages and they become too powerful to be controlled by their husbands. But is this really the case on the ground? All the divorce cases I encountered during my study were caused by either the violent behaviours of men or their tendency to marry second wives and mistreat or neglect the first wife and her children. None of the divorced women informants reported having any piece of land by the time of separation. We cannot state that these attitudes are either true or false, but there seems to be a clear possibility that they are used by men to prove the legitimacy of their patriarchal power as men. When Jimmy says that women are naturally weak and that therefore, owning land can make them become uncontrollable, he is trying to

legitimate the power of his position as a husband. He believes he should control his wife, and having the land in his name is a sign of his masculinity. A further argument against these attitudes is the fact that the divorced women risk losing access to household resources like land after leaving their husbands. Like Amu (2005) argues, the most important source of access to land for African women is marriage, which means that a woman puts her livelihood at risk if initiating divorce.

Walker (2002) argues that women's vulnerability becomes most exposed during times of crisis – when the household breaks up either because of marital conflict leading to divorce or separation, or upon the death of the husband. Land is a key factor of production, and an asset central to increasing widows' household income and their children's wellbeing (Walker 2002; Nabacwa 2002; Amu 2005). However, the stories told by widows during my interviews reveal that the in-laws try as much as they can to take the land and house that belonged to their son or brother after his death. By grabbing the only resource for women's and their children's survival, the in-laws become a hindrance to women's ability to exercise their *power to*. In the case of Cate and Patricia, the wife herself becomes a property to be taken over by the brother-in-law. The in-laws limit the women's choices of whether or not to remain single. In addition, the women are not given the chance to exercise their *power to* choose the new partner after their husbands' death. The narratives of Cate and Patricia also indicate that the property of widows is confiscated by brothers-in-law as a pay back to their being rejected by these widows, and they end up hurting both the wife and their brother's children. However, women exercise their life choices and reject the proposals of the brothers-in-law in the cases of Cate and Patricia, even if it means losing their source of livelihood and that of their children. In the cases of Faith and Grace, widows become circumstances of their husband's death. Faith's husband was found in bed dead after two days of fever, and Grace's husband died of HIV/AIDS, which could have been brought about by either partner but still was blamed on her. The stories also reveal the great importance and value attached to land, since to many it was the only source of money for their children's education and wellbeing. Education was seen by the women as a key resource to success. They all attached much value to education, and to some widows like Immy, it was the only weapon that saved her land from being confiscated by her in-laws. She believes that because of her education, she knew her rights as a widow and knew where to run to for assistance. Although all women mentioned the challenge of limited land for their agricultural activities, the need to invest in their children's education limited them from buying land to expand their activities.

The divorced women exercise their agency when they make decisions to leave their abusive marriages despite the fact that their choices involved paying heavy social costs. They lost their respect and stood a lot of insults from parents and the whole society. Whereas divorced and widowed women may be said to be more independent than the married women, as they are now household heads and breadwinners, society looks at single and divorced women as prostitutes because of the value attached to marriage in Uganda. Marriage earns women a high status and respect in society, and it is the only known and accepted way for the raising of balanced and socially functional children. Women who make choices to leave abusive marriages or not to marry are seen as social deviants, and therefore not respected by their parents and society. This may explain why the married women avoided anything that would jeopardise their relationships with the husbands at the cost of their independence, and why the in-laws wanted to remarry widowed women.

An assessment of the divorced women's narratives suggest that marriage breakages in many cases are caused by men's acts of marrying second wives, in addition to their violent behaviour. Jane's case reveals how women may treat violent male behaviours as normal and common to all male species. When she says that her husband's behaviour to quarrel and complain is common to all men, and that she was used to it, it illustrates conventional Ugandan perceptions of masculinity, where all men are believed to be violent at some point in life (Tumwesigye 2009). Mosedale (2005) argues that women's own perceptions of their situation are shaped by the hegemonic ideology, which supports the oppression they face. Therefore, various aspects of women's situation may be considered by women themselves as unchangeable and fair, even when it oppresses them. It is also documented that many women do persevere violence from their intimate partners due to the cultural norms and myths about marriage and violence (Gelles 1997, cited in Tumwesigye 2009). Gelles (1997) argues that women stay in violent relationships because of society's perception of male use of violence as legitimate disciplining (cited in Tumwesigye 2009). In my study, female informants bargain with patriarchy by believing that "when a husband does not beat you, it means that he doesn't love you" (Kandiyoti 1988). To them, physical violence by men is a sign of love and therefore "ill treatment, such as being beaten by one's husband, was considered reasonable" (Mosedale 2005:\_253). Although they are aware of negative effects of being beaten, and the majority have experienced it, the women still support it. They are active participants "with vested interest in the system that oppresses them" (Johnson 1983, cited in Kandiyoti 1988:\_280). The husbands of the divorced women neglect their family responsibilities, like paying

school fees for their children, after marrying the second wives, leaving the entire burden to their previous wives. Women, on the other hand, are more concerned about their children's wellbeing and struggle as much as they can to give them a better life. Jane narrates how she took beans to Joan's school to enable her sit for her final examinations. Jackie, on her side, works very hard to build a home for her children. Faced with limited alternatives, the women exercise their *power to capacity* to give a better life to their children.

Although there were common challenges faced by the 3 categories of my informants, ranging from lack of land, credit, market, labour, poor water, and triple role among others, each category has specific life situations and experiences due to certain circumstances, as discussed in this chapter. This will take us to the next chapter which looks at what motivated the female beneficiaries to join the NAADS program and benefits accrued from this programme.

## **Chapter 6: MOTIVATION TO JOIN AND BENEFITS FROM NAADS PROGRAMME: DOES IT EMPOWER WOMEN?**

### ***6.1 Introduction: Motivation to join NAADS programme;***

Most informants gave responses like this whenever I asked them why they were motivated to join NAADS: *“I joined NAADS because it focused so much on farming ....and you know my main job is farming so I expected to benefit from it and expand on my farming activities”* (Eva). The informants who gave this answer were always unspecific on how they wanted to benefit from the programme and however much I probed and requested them to be specific; they still mentioned the programme’s focus on farming as the main motivation for their joining. However, other informants were specific on what they wanted from the programme besides it being about farming; they were specifically motivated by its emphasis on training farmers in better farming methods. Some informants mentioned having expectations of receiving some hand outs from the programme, as it has been the policy of other organizations. They compared the programme to Caritas MADDO, Concern World-Wide and World Vision, which give hand outs to poor and vulnerable people. At first they did not expect to pay for anything and wanted to enjoy the free inputs given out by the programme. It was not clear to many of them at the start that they had to pay for the inputs received from the programme. Faith acclaims that; *“When I heard that in the future, the programme would give us some inputs, I had to make use of the opportunity. But it was not clear to me that NAADS would give us loans instead, I expected free inputs. People were saying that Museveni is giving back to his people for voting for him. I thought the programme would give us cows like MADDO does, but not credits. By the time it became clear to me that we have to pay back, I was already a member”*.

NAADS has a big role to play in the implementation of the government Prosperity for All (PFA) programme. NAADS is mainly regarded as the heart of the PFA initiative, considering that it carries the biggest budget and targets the communities through the different structures at sub-county, parish and community levels. In line with increasing income for the subsistence farmers, NAADS ensures that farmers engage in more than one enterprise to enable them earn more money. Hence many farmers gradually shift from subsistence farming to market-oriented production in the medium term and ultimately to commercial production in the long term. Through the Integrated Support to Farmer Groups (ISFG), NAADS is also

providing a revolving fund to the farmers to increase their access to improved seeds, better breeds and inputs (MAAIF 2005). My informants mentioned the fact that NAADS Programme was aimed at operationalizing President Y.K. Museveni's Presidential Manifesto of 2006 that had as its slogan "Bonnabagaggawale" ('Prosperity for All'<sup>11</sup>). They were thus motivated to join in order to reduce poverty in their households, since everyone including the poor and rich were to prosper through this programme as manifested by the president. Jackie says; *"When I first heard about NAADS Programme, I confused it with Bonnabagaggawale. I thought Museveni is implementing his manifesto through this programme. I wanted to see how everyone would prosper. I had to join, who doesn't want to prosper?"*

Some informants said that they were approached by the Sub County leadership requesting them to join the programme. Grace says; *"The Sub County NAADS Coordinator came and requested me to join NAADS. He said that my banana plantation was doing well, so the programme will give me inputs and fertilizers to add in it and maybe it will be used as a demonstration site for this parish"*. The informants who gave this as a reason for their being motivated to join had something already on ground, and therefore NAADS membership would just improve their enterprises.

This brings us to the question of whether the female beneficiaries have benefited from the NAADS programme. Was their choice to join NAADS wise? Have their expectations been fulfilled? These questions will be answered in the next sections of this chapter. As discussed in the fifth chapter, different categories of female farmers experienced different life situations and challenges before they joined the NAADS Programme. In this chapter, I explore the different life changes experienced by the female beneficiaries after joining the programme. The chapter will, therefore, discuss the contribution of the NAADS programme to female beneficiaries' empowerment. The question of whether female beneficiaries have been able to challenge existing patriarchal power relations due to their participation in NAADS programme will also be discussed here; has NAADS led to transformative or effective changes of women's agency?

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<sup>11</sup>Prosperity for All Programme commonly known as *Bonnabaggagawale* is a government programme which has been developed to transform the rural economy through boosting productivity, processing and marketing of the small holder farmers using the notion of trickle down approach targeting the active poor people with in society.



## ***6.2: The contribution of NAADS Programme to the female beneficiaries' empowerment:***

### **6.2.1: Acquiring skills for development: Skills and knowledge acquisition as a route to women's empowerment:**

As mentioned in chapter one, Farmers Institutional Development (FID) is a major pillar of the NAADS programme (Stroud et al. 2000). It is mainly about encouraging and enabling farmers to organize and create institutions through which they can play a part in the decision making processes for their own development, and demand research products and advisory services that are based on informed choices and needs (Stroud et al. 2000). It involves organizing and strengthening farmer institutions (FI) through mass mobilization and sensitization, group formation and development, farmer fora formation and development and enterprise selection and development (Stroud et al. 2000). Some widows participating in the programme reported that through FID trainings, they have acquired skills on how to defend their children's property from being confiscated by relatives of their husbands after their husbands are dead. As Grace highlights, gender is one of the cross-cutting issues emphasized under Farmers Institutional Development (FID) and topics like making wills and widows' rights are tackled. She says; *"Under FID, we learn more about our rights as widows, hence helping us to fight for our rights and defend what belongs to us by law"*. Grace explains this more clearly when she notes that;

*"[...] But this [in-laws taking iron sheets from her late husband's house] was when I had just started attending the NAADS trainings, I did not know much about where to go and report such cases. I just left my in-laws and prayed to God for his protection. But when our CDO trained us on widows' rights and how to make a will, I approached him and told him about my problems. He advised me to take the issue further to the Administrator General. Right now I have letters of administration and my children's land is very safe! Thanks to NAADS for organizing such important trainings. Who can now step on that land... unless I am dead?"*

Grace's statement shows that she was both determined and able to defend her children's land, which is a clear indication of her *power from within* (Townsend et al.1999:\_30).

Jane also emphasizes the importance of trainings given to farmers under NAADS and how they helped her stop her husband from giving away some of her land to his new wife. She noted; *"No way could he take my land. With all the trainings I have had, I knew exactly what*

*to do to stop him. I reported him to the Local council chairperson who gave me a letter to take to the CDO and he was stopped from taking the land. They told him to buy another plot of land for his so called wife”.*

Female beneficiaries’ testimonies about the knowledge acquired from FID trainings about women’s rights reveal an aspect of their empowerment. Like Sen argues, empowerment entails developing individual capacities through gaining education, skills and knowledge in order to improve the life-chances of individuals and empower them so they can have a better quality of life (1999; 2000). Women like Grace and Jane acquired the knowledge and understanding of their entitlements (rights) and this played a significant role in determining the nature of the bargains these women were able to make with patriarchy. They reported the cases to responsible authorities and they were able to protect their children’s property. The women’s act of reporting property grabbing cases to the local council and the Administrator General shows an ability to exercise their ‘power to’. These women’s ability to make and act on their own life choices, even in the face of their in-laws’ and husbands’ opposition is a clear indication of their agency (Kabeer 2005:\_14). They actively exercise the choice to report their in-laws and husbands who had exercised ‘power over’ them due to the construction of patriarchy, which controls ideology (Townsend et al. 1999). In these instances, the women challenged power relations, which again may lead to transformative empowerment.

The women have not only acquired different development skills from trainings, but also farming skills from their fellow beneficiaries within and outside the sub-county. The sub-county has put in place demonstration sites for each enterprise at parish and village levels.



**Sign post for the Banana Demonstration Site**

Through these sites, women learn better farming methods and advise each other on how to improve their enterprises. “*Discussing our women’s business*” was also frequently mentioned by female informants as a benefit acquired from NAADS trainings and group meetings. They explained how they got time to discuss with their fellow women about their issues as women during meetings. When I asked Faith how she benefits from group meetings, she answered;

*“[...] but also sometimes it is important to meet and discuss with your fellow women, through that we give advice to each other and since most of my group members are widows like me, we have a lot in common to share”*. The sub-county health inspector also commented that the formulation of groups helps women share their problems with other group members and get advice from each other, like on how they should respond to domestic violence from their husbands. Therefore, this programme not only allows women to interact with one another; it also creates an avenue for exchange of ideas and information, thereby allowing for a more flexible work environment where they can rely on other women for support on matters such as child care and domestic violence (UNFPA Report 2007).

The sub-county has also organized NAADS study tours whereby farmers are taken to other districts where NAADS Programme has been successful, thereby learning more skills from ‘outside’ farmers. The Sub-County NAADS Coordinator (SNC) highlighted the importance of study tours; *“Women in this sub-county have become knowledgeable and acquired skills in better farming techniques. They have also got exposure. They are no longer left behind like it was before. We take them to other districts that are doing well in NAADS to copy the good things others are doing, recently we were in Mityana district and women learnt a lot from this field visit I believe. Last year we took them to Rukungiri, they learnt a lot and some have applied those same techniques...I believe you will hear about it from them too”*. Linda believes that the study tours have increased her knowledge not only on farming but in many aspects. She notes; *“I have acquired so many skills from the two study tours I attended...not only about farming but also how to make wine...In fact I just made some wine after our tour to Mityana, you will also taste it...”*. Her husband John confirmed this when he said *“I was impressed when my wife made some wine for me after her study tour to Mityana. The wine was fantastic; I have even taken some wine to the sub-county leadership since it is them who gave her that chance”*.

The female beneficiaries’ testimonies of acquiring skills (in farming and other aspects) and advice from fellow farmers through group meetings, study tours and demonstration sites is a clear indication of their “capacity to achieve with others what they could not have achieved alone”, or the ‘power with’ (Townsend et al 1999:\_ 33). They tackle their problems together with other women within the sub-county, and outside the sub-county when they go for study tours, thereby multiplying individual talents and knowledge. Kabeer sees collective, grassroots participatory action - the *power* to work *with* others - as the key to women's empowerment (1994).

Besides acquiring farming skills from fellow beneficiaries, women also acquire skills in different other fields that are very important in their lives and which are helping them do their agricultural work better. The District NAADS Coordinator (DNC) explains that NAADS programme involves training of farmers in group dynamics, project planning and management, participatory monitoring and evaluation, leadership, financial management and cross-cutting issues including gender, among others. This equips women with skills for development which improves their farming businesses. During the interviews, my female informants always referred to those trainings and demonstrated some of the skills they have acquired. *"Whenever I am doing something, I always have a vision, objectives and specific activities to achieve my objectives; this was taught to us at the sub-county..."* (Joyce). Most of them brought out their records and visitors books during the interviewing process and explained why they were keeping those records. Faith had three separate books, one for each enterprise, indicating when the project started, all the income earned and spent per week, and dates for treatment of her pigs, and she explains everything to me very clearly. She says; *"You see these three books; I keep all my records for my pigs, coffee, and waragi<sup>12</sup> in here. All the money I get from my pigs each time I sell is here. The money I spend on their feeding, medication is all here. I stopped in primary seven but I was taught how to keep records by the Sub County under this programme....when I get problems, I get assistance from my boyfriend, you know he is a professional teacher"*.

When I asked Ruth why she was keeping records she replied; *"The visitors book helps me to get advice from my visitors like you, that is why I left a big space for comments....I myself, I hate visitors who just praise me, I like comments indicating my weaknesses and how to improve.....This other book is for keeping records of my project and it helps me to keep track of how much profit I am making...It indicates my income and expenditure, I cost everything I spend on this project including my own labour...yes, that time would have been spent on other developmental things that is why I have to cost it"*.

In addition, some women noted that they had accessed new ideas on how to use their limited land by involving themselves in enterprises requiring limited land. Women's innovativeness is witnessed when they try out what they learnt from the two trips to Mityana and Rukungiri in order to overcome the challenges they face. I was impressed by Jane's innovativeness

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<sup>12</sup> Waragi is locally made alcohol, usually used by the rural people of Uganda.

when she put up a hall in her compound to enable her harvest some rain water.



**Water harvesting technique in Jane's compound.**

Because of the limited access to land, many women were engaging in projects that were realizable on limited land like poultry and livestock keeping, and many confessed having copied that from the study tours given to them as farmers. To me, these women seemed so innovative and ready to try out anything new to challenge the existing life conditions. They had developed the *power to* (agency) due to their *power to work with others*, which facilitated their *power from within*, thus challenging the patriarchal *power exercised over* them.



**The cow and poultry projects owned by a female beneficiary.**

As the female beneficiaries demonstrate the skills acquired in relation to record keeping and their home-based projects, they reveal their 'power from within'. As illustrated by the pictures, female beneficiaries have realized what they can do and what holds them back (Townsend et. al.1999), thus trying out alternative possibilities, learnt from other farmers, to tackle their challenges. However, they do not only negotiate their culturally-specific spaces but also negotiate their options within the limited physical space they are able to occupy. For these resource-poor women, one option they have is to put the land under cultivation of crops and poultry keeping, which require limited land.



**Picture showing the piggery project of a female beneficiary**



**The Coffee and sweet potatoes enterprises owned by the husband and his wife.**



**The banana and goats enterprises owned by a female beneficiary.**

### **6.2.2: Women owning property: From being property to becoming property owners:**

Although most women still mentioned the challenge of limited land, some stated that they had bought pieces of land with the money they got from NAADS. Nevertheless, they always emphasized the fact that the land they had was still not enough for them to expand their projects. Faith, a widow who had started dating a professional teacher, was even constructing a very beautiful house, which I observed during my stay in her home. She attributes all her success to NAADS Programme when she acknowledges that;

*“After my first NAADS pig produced, I sold the piglets and I got some money to buy my own land. I could buy anywhere, but I really wanted this place [the land which she was using to farm on and that belonged to her late husband] because it was good for coffee and bananas... So I decided to pass through somebody else and buy my land back. He bought the land in his name but we have now transferred the title to my name. When my in-laws came to chase me, they were surprised to see the title in my names. I now own this land (laughs). The house you passed by before you reached here, is my own house, I am building it myself. My new boyfriend is helping me with handling builders but it is my own money, he has never put a*

*coin into it and I do not want him to because he might claim ownership over my house...I have always wanted to have my own house”.*

**Pictures showing Faith’s houses before and after joining NAADS:**

***Before Joining NAADS.***



***After Joining NAADS-house under construction***



Joyce tells a similar story, but emphasizes the fact that the land she bought is still not enough; *“I have almost 6 acres of land. I have bought all this land after my husband’s death..... I realized that I had to settle down and start farming. I did not have any piece of land for farming apart from this place where our house is. In my period as a widow, I have bought 4 different pieces of land, one is 2.7 acres, another is 2.5 and the remaining two pieces are ½ each. I bought all this land after joining NAADS but still it is not enough’.* She adds; *‘The last plot I have just bought cost me 1.1 Million shillings and I am using it to expand my banana enterprise”.*



***Land bought by Joyce.***

Several other widows who mentioned being treated as property by their brothers- in-law after their husbands’ death now owned some property like land. Their testimonies reflect their rationality, which in turn shows their agency. They make strategic choices to buy land, which is culturally known as men’s property, and Faith goes beyond that and constructs a big house. The women’s ‘power to’ buy land and own it reveals an aspect of transformative empowerment as described by Kabeer due to their ability to act on restrictive aspects of their roles and responsibilities in order to challenge them (2005:\_ 15). However, one wonders if the land they own is really enough of a resource to facilitate their farming activities for a real

transformative empowerment, since they always mentioned that the land they had was not enough for their enterprises. Nevertheless, empowerment is a process (Mosedale 2005; Kabeer 2005) and these women are in this process.



*House owned by a divorced female beneficiary.*

However, there was a group of women who never bought or owned any piece of land. They attributed this to the fact that they had not acquired enough money to buy land and therefore they had to use their in-laws' or husbands' land to carry out their NAADS agricultural enterprises. The fact that NAADS is an agricultural programme means that access to its benefits is influenced by the extent to which one has access to and control over farming resources like land and inputs. Therefore the women's lack of control over land significantly disables them to exercise their choices and benefit from the programme. Since these projects are not put on women's land, men still retain significant control over NAADS processes and actual decision making, even in supposedly 'women's projects'. Longwe (1991) argues that control over resources is the ultimate proof of women's economic, social and political empowerment. Therefore the beneficiaries' lack of control over land, a very crucial resource, constrains their capacity to make strategic choices on the type of crops to grow; how to spend their money from agricultural produce and other important aspects of their lives, hence hampering their empowerment.

Most of the married couples claimed that the land they had belonged to both the husband and the wife, and the few married women who admitted having bought their own land always put their husbands at the forefront. John, Linda's husband, attributed this to women's nature. He says; "[...] *women are weak in that even if she buys or inherits land, she will request the man to put the land in his name or in their children's names*". Eva supported his claim when she confessed that; "[...] *the seller approached my husband first but he did not have money then. My husband told me about it because he knew I had some money from the bananas I had just sold. We went and saw the land and it was good and fertile. My husband bargained with the seller because he is more knowledgeable in land issues. They reached a compromise and I*



*paid for the land but the agreement is in my husbands' name. We have grown some coffee in it but the part is still small".*

The narratives of the married women show that they have internalized the culturally defined lesser claim for ownership over the household resource of land, because to behave otherwise is considered outside the realm of possibility. Although their actions could be said to reflect choice, they are based on the denial of choice – ‘passive agency’ (Kabeer 2005:\_ 15). Therefore, instead of challenging the patriarchal beliefs that men should always own land, they bargain with patriarchy and put the land in their husbands’ name because challenging this belief would imply heavy personal and social costs. Therefore, they are left with no alternatives to choose between (Kabeer 2005). As Kandiyoti (1997) argues, because these women are already disadvantaged by cultural beliefs and the resulting gendered mis/appropriations of their entitlements, bargaining becomes a way of merely reaching settlements that maintain the status quo, thereby propelling negotiations towards the result that their husbands own the land bought by them. The married women’s ‘power to’ buy land therefore does not challenge the power exercised over them by their husbands, since in the end the land bought is put in their husbands’ name. In the long-run, the agency exercised by these women may increase their greater efficiency in carrying out their given roles and responsibilities, since they can access the land for their agricultural activities. Nevertheless, it does not reflect elements of transformative empowerment.

### **6.2.3: Investing in children’s education: The uneducated recognizes the importance of education**

*“The earnings are mainly used to pay school fees for our children, buy home requirements, and the rest is used to expand our enterprises”. (Eva)*

*“My first born is at University and I am paying for her”. (Faith)*

Bessis (2001:\_15) argues that women’s increased earnings impact directly on the community since they invest in things that contribute to the family’s improved quality of life, or in an upgrading of their income-generating activities. Studies have also confirmed that in households where women have personal incomes, children are better off than in households where women do not (Whitehead and Kabeer 2001, cited in Ngangriyap 2007:\_38). This was exactly the same response I got from all categories of women I interviewed when asked how they used the money from sell of produce in NAADS. They all mentioned using the money

for their children's school fees as their first priority and then investing back in the projects followed. They all emphasized the importance of education and although most of them were not learned, they felt obliged to educate their children. Many women could speak proudly about their children's levels of education and how relaxed they felt after paying for their children in good schools. Grace, a widow, calls this an exemplary act of hers in relation to other widows.

Also Jane emphasizes the levels of education her children have attained after she separated with her husband. She states; *"All my children go to school because of NAADS. Now my first born, a girl, has completed her course in accounts and is working with an NGO in Kampala, my second born is taking a teacher's training course, my third born is studying mechanics and my last born is in his second year at Mbuye Farm school.... why shouldn't I pay my children's fees from the money I get from my chicks, I now have almost 1000 breeding stock"*. (Jane)

Although Faith was not educated, she was very determined to educate and look after her children so that they do not become like her. She notes; *"I am not going to be selfish like my father, who never took us to school yet he had enough money...my children must study and reach university, that is when I can rest but until that, I will go naked to be able to pay for their education...I do not like my daughter to be a farmer like me, I want her to work in an office and even go to study abroad like you, madam Prossy"*. Even those who had not managed taking their children to good private schools indicated it as one of their goals in the future.

Studies have shown that an increase in a woman's income has a positive impact on the educational status of her children, among other things (UNFPA Report 2007; Amu 2005). Although most of the female beneficiaries were uneducated, they attached great importance to their children's education. In particular, they knew the importance of education, as a resource, to their daughters' lives, and they considered this resource to be the only key to success for them. In chapter five, we see cases of women who struggle as much as they can to take their children to school (see Jane's case). Women exercise their agency by making the life choices of taking their daughters to school, thereby giving them a resource that they themselves never had. Although they missed out the opportunity of acquiring education, they see it as a form of empowerment and a path to a secure future for their children. Kabeer argues that transformative forms of agency do not simply address immediate inequalities but

are used to initiate longer-term processes of change in the structure of patriarchy (2005:\_16). The female beneficiaries challenge the discriminatory structures that denied them a chance to get education and this, in the long run, may have a potential for change and is likely to contribute to transformative empowerment. The education given to girls may increase their capacity to question, reflect and act on the challenging conditions of their life, and provide them with “analytical capacity to question unjust practices” (Kabeer 2005:\_23).

The purpose and motivation the women attach to their choices to invest in their daughters’ education reflect a change in attitudes and illustrates the fact that empowerment often begins from within (Kabeer 2005:\_ 14). They all wanted their daughters to acquire the highest levels of education so as to have a bright future and not end up like them. They had a lot of aspirations and future plans for their daughters. They wanted them to marry educated men, gain respect from their husbands, work in big offices, study abroad, and pay fees for the children they will produce, be independent in marriage. The meaning, motivation and purpose these women bring to their actions of paying for their daughters’ education reflects their sense of agency and the ‘power within’ them, a clear indication of their empowerment.

In addition, many female informants who missed the chance of going to school at an early age challenged the patriarchal beliefs that women are not supposed to get education by joining the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) classes. They felt obliged to at least get some knowledge on how to write their names, keep records and balance money. They desperately wanted to learn and to me, most of these women who were part of the FAL classes sounded confident while talking, and had leadership positions as will be mentioned in the next section. Women’s ‘power to’ (Nussbaum and Sen 1993) is exercised, thereby increasing their ‘power from within’ and challenging the power previously exercised over them by their parents.

#### **6.2.4: Women acquiring leadership positions: *“In this sub-county, women are better leaders than men”.***

Women have taken on leadership roles in NAADS leadership committees and according to the Chairperson LCIII, most of them are performing better than men on these committees. There is a provision for female representation in most NAADS leadership structures. In the interviews with women, there are manifestations of their leadership positions in all committees of NAADS and other sub-county committees. They always talked proudly about the leadership positions they hold, even before I asked about it. Joyce had so many leadership positions and when I asked about her experience with NAADS, she chose to tell me about her

leadership first. She replied; *'I will first of all tell you about my leadership positions in this sub-county. I am a secretary for women in this village, I am a Councillor for NRM<sup>13</sup> in this sub-county, and I am a chairperson for Mitondo Model Village. I am also a model farmer in NAADS, a member on the sub-county NAADS farmers' forum, and a chairperson for the NAADS parish procurement committee'*. Faith also explains how difficult it was in the past to have women chairpersons. According to her and other informants, women were always given positions of secretary or vice chairpersons; it was rare for women to be chairpersons. The District Agriculture Officer mentioned women's ability to acquire leadership positions as one contribution of NAADS and attributed this to FID.

Through these leadership positions, women have been given chance to speak in public gatherings. Many women are used as mobilizing and sensitizing agents of the NAADS programme, especially the community based facilitators who champion the FID trainings at village and parish levels, according to the sub-county chief. Jane is a community based facilitator who took me around to the households, and I really admired her confidence while addressing fellow beneficiaries. Besides being a community based facilitator, she was also a secretary for "Tuvemubwavu" (literally meaning, let us get out of poverty) farmers group and a FAL (Functional Adult Literacy) instructor. These stories are manifestations of the beneficiaries' 'power from within' in the form of self-esteem and confidence. By exercising their leadership responsibilities, they have realized both what they can do and what holds them back. According to Zapata et al (1997), 'Power from within' is a product of the defeat of 'power over' internal to the self and involves the growth of self-esteem (cited in Townsend et. al.1999). I observed some female informants talk confidently in public trainings, and many attributed these skills to FID trainings. In this case, the women are given a resource (leadership skills) which they choose to exercise, thereby improving their *power from within*.

From the narratives of Joyce, Jane and several other female informants, it seems like NAADS has given women chance to exercise their 'power to' rule. By making choices to become leaders, female beneficiaries exercise active agency (Kabeer 2005:\_15). Faith's comment on the marginal leadership positions women held in the past, and the LC11 chairperson's acknowledgement of women being better leaders than men at NAADS committees, indicate that the women's choices to hold high leadership positions after joining NAADS have challenged the patriarchal societal beliefs that *women cannot be good leaders*, thereby

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<sup>13</sup> NRM is the National Resistance Movement.

defeating the patriarchal power exercised over them. This in turn leads to transformative political empowerment.

However, their agency is constrained or disabled by the lack of other resources, for instance the training materials, time, transport and facilitation money. Although some of them demonstrated that they have the skills and knowledge of their leadership positions, they lacked tools and resources to effectively function and perform the roles assigned to them in the NAADS implementation manual, as Annet, a community based facilitator confirms: “[...] *I could be doing my roles better because I know them but the support is not there. Yes at first when the programme had just started, they gave us a bicycle but since then, I have never received any maintenance, as if their bicycles do not need to be repaired. It is even getting old. Yet we have to move in the whole parish, village to village, mobilizing and sensitizing farmers about this programme, and teaching them the skills we learn at the sub-county... We also don't have books, pens, chalk, boards to write on, yet it would be better to give notice...if they were giving us some allowance then we could leave our activities and teach other people*”. This shows that there are limitations to female beneficiaries' exercise of agency and choices due to lack of other resources necessary for effective leadership. Therefore, even in presence of certain resources like skills, women's ability to exercise their power may still be constrained by absence of other crucial resources.

#### **6.2.5: Increased earnings for women beneficiaries: From dependent family members to decision makers:**

Women have increased their incomes due to inputs and farming skills gained from NAADS. All categories of female informants were involved in income generating farming projects, from food crops, cash crops, and livestock to poultry keeping. Although most of them were involved in intensive production due to limited access to land, they reported earning money from the projects they were involved in, and the sub-county chief confirmed that. Linda explains how the programme increased her earnings; “*I used to harvest like 20 bunches of bananas each season before I started putting fertilizers and applying the skills I got from the NAADS trainings. But now, I can fill a full dayana car. The yields in my plantation have increased as well as my earnings*”.

Jane explains how much loan she received from NAADS and how much she is supposed to pay back including the interest rate; “*NAADS does not give direct cash to us, we receive inputs instead. The first time I received 1 million shillings in terms of chicks, poultry feeds*

*and medicine and I had to pay back 1.1 million after one year. Little interest, isn't it? If I had gone to a bank, they would ask me to pay back more than 20% interest and within a short time". She adds; NAADS gave me the fertilizers and pesticides for this banana plantation. You see that infrastructure over there? It is for pigs and was constructed with NAADS funds that also paid for the first 2 pigs, feeds and drugs". Joyce also notes; "As a model farmer, I was given inputs of 2.3 million shillings in terms of fertilizers and labour for my banana plantation. This season, I have harvested and sold over 40 bunches of banana and yet others are still there".*

Many married female informants reported having acquired the power to make decisions in their homes even when their husbands are around. Linda acknowledges that she decides on what they eat, how much to sell the harvests for, which schools to take their children to, and her husband is not worried because he knows she can do that perfectly. Most of the married women claimed that decisions in their homes were done by both the husband and the wife and whenever their husbands made decisions, they were first consulted. Many attributed this to the fact that they had something to bring to the table. They had started earning some money from their projects and because of that men had to consult them on how to spend it. Angel summarizes this when she states; *"Here in my family we make decisions together as husband and wife. We sit and decide on how much to borrow from NAADS, what to invest in, how much to invest on our children and household requirements. But I think we do this because my husband now respects me and knows that I can bring something out of my projects. He never used to consult me before I started earning some money since he knew I would not help him with anything. But now he consults me and I feel respected by him more than his second wife since she is just a housewife".*

When we look at Angel's statement, she emphasizes the issue of being respected and consulted on all household issues by the husband because she has resources (money) which she can use to exercise her agency. I observed this during my stay in her home on one weekend. Although her husband was around, she got out her own money and sent her children to the trading centre to buy household requirements like sugar, salt and sauce. I also noticed her husband asking her if they should sell their coffee to some local trader who came around and Angel refused because the price was poor. Many scholars have argued that economic empowerment can provide incentives to change the patterns of traditional behaviour to which a woman is bound as a dependent member of the household (Longwe 1991; Kabeer 2005; UNFPA Report 2007). The female informants frequently talked proudly

about their being independent from their husbands and relatives on issues that required money. Their lives had changed since they could buy household requirements without necessarily having to wait for their husbands' money, and many believed that men want women who are hardworking and do not ask for money from them every minute.

*"I do not have to take food without salt just because my husband forgot to leave money for buying salt, besides I can pay my medical bills, eat well, pay for my children's school fees without asking for my husband's money...men get tired of you when you ask for everything..."*(Eva).

These narratives exemplify the many informants who perceived a woman's dependency on a husband's money as a bad idea. For instance, Angel believes that her co-wife's ability to make strategic life choices is limited by her lack of resources. According to Angel, because her co-wife is poor and not involved in NAADS, their husband has to decide for her in every aspect of her life since she depends on him. Some beneficiaries like Linda testified to be already economically independent and others had long-term goals of becoming independent from their husbands and men in economic terms. This is an indication of empowerment since it challenges the patriarchal dependency of women on men and gives them 'power to' renegotiate their relations within marriage (Kabeer 2005).

It should however be noted that although most informants proudly mention the fact that they are now bread winners of their own families due to income obtained from NAADS enterprises, these women do support the general view that women should not oppose their husbands in any way as a result of their empowerment. According to Kandiyoti, the patriarchal bargains not only inform women's rational choices but also 'shape the more unconscious aspects of their gendered subjectivity, since they permeate the context of their early socialization, as well as their adult cultural milieu' (1988: 285). The female informants support this view since they have been socialized to comply with men in securing patriarchal social relations, largely because male authority has a material base, and male responsibility is normatively controlled. Therefore, women's acquired responsibility of being bread winners due to their involvement in NAADS income generating enterprises does not bring their freedom from traditional beliefs that women should not oppose men; it instead forces them to enter into these traditional beliefs more stringently.

In addition, many widows and divorced women mentioned that they decided on what enterprises to engage in, how much to spend on their children and other requirements, and

where to grow what type of crop, among others. We may assume that these women make these decisions because their husbands are not around, but I encountered a case of a widow who was controlled by her in-laws in all aspects of her life. According to Townsend et al, 'power over' is "the power of one person or a group to get another person or a group to do something against their will" (1999:\_ 26: Rowlands 1995). The widow's 'power to' choose what to eat, how to dress, the schools for her children and what crops to grow in which land, was limited by her in-laws who exercised 'power over' her life choices. When I asked her why they were doing that, she mentioned that since her late husband had inherited the land from his parents, they believed that the projects belonged to the whole family. Therefore, in the absence of the household head, the father-in-law still headed the family and controlled everything. In this case, the widow's lack of control over land as a resource limits her decision making capacity and the agency she exercises seems to be passive (Kabeer 2005:\_15).

However, I found some widows who acknowledged exercising their life choices and rejected the proposals of the brothers-in law like in the cases of Cate and Patricia, even if it meant losing their source of livelihood and that of their children. Obviously, if they had accepted these proposals, the men would have claimed control over the women's assets and become decision makers. These acts of resistance indicate an element of women's ability to make strategic life choices. The divorced women also exercised their agency and made their own decisions despite the fact that some of them were staying in their parents' homes. Jackie decided to use her parents' land to grow crops in order to get a home for her children even if it meant building it on her father's land. This was a better option for her children and herself than staying in her parents' house.

Offering women a source of credit through provision of resources in terms of agricultural inputs and skills by the NAADS programme has increased their ability to make strategic life choices. This has in turn resulted into a considerable increase in their self-confidence and status within their families as they do not have to depend on men for the required basic needs. Many believed that they gained much respect from their husbands, in-laws and the society as a whole because they were economically independent.

Income generating activities empowers impoverished women in various spheres of their lives, influencing sexual and reproductive health choices, education and healthy behaviour. Buvinic (1996) states that "the most straightforward vehicle to 'empower' poor women is to increase



their productivity in home and market production and the income they obtain from work” (Cited in UNFPA Report 2007). Many researchers have recognized that women’s needs can be met and improvements in health care, nutrition and education can be sustained with an increase in household income and greater control by women over financial resources (Hashemi, 2004, cited in UNFPA Report 2007: Amu 2005). This is because when women have direct control over income, they tend to spend it on the well-being of the family, particularly on improving the nutritional security of their children and husbands (Amu 2005). It should be noted that female informants made strategic choices to spend part of the money earned from NAADS on improving their families’ well-being through improved health and nutrition. Female informants acknowledged enjoying improved health services and eating good diets due to their capability to pay for those services and buy nutritious food. Every woman in Mitondo model village had vegetables and fruits in her compound, and this was one of the requirements for qualifying to be a model farmer.

### ***6.3: Concluding Discussion:***

Female beneficiaries’ testimonies indicate both agency and lack of it. Their agency and choices are enabled or disabled by the availability or lack of resources. While the husbands and in-laws are seen as a resource, as they provide women with land for farming, on the other hand, the family is a challenge to women’s active agency due to existence of power exercised over them by their husbands and in-laws. This in turn influences the extent to which the women’s potential for living the lives they want is realized or fails to be realized. However, lack of resources might limit the exercise of choice, but sometimes might not limit agency. For instance, while beneficiaries’ choices are limited by the lack of land, their actions to use their parents’, husbands’ and in-laws’ land to achieve their future goals reflects some aspects of agency - which is passive agency. The level or quantity as well the quality of resources is a very important factor and accessibility to some resources may not be enough to facilitate women’s exercise of agency in absence of other equally necessary resources. Even in presence of leadership skills, Annet’s ability to exercise her leadership roles was constrained by the absence of other crucial resources like facilitation and training materials. Agency and resources themselves do not guarantee ‘transformative forms of agency’ (Kabeer 2005) but may lead to women’s greater efficiency in carrying out their given roles and responsibilities. Although some female beneficiaries owned land, it did not lead to their transformative empowerment simply because the owned resource itself was not enough for them to utilize

their full potentials. However, whereas some of the beneficiaries' actions were purposeful behaviour, others were taken with little choice. Equally important to note is the fact that the difference in life situations, marital statuses and maybe educational levels of female beneficiaries reflects a difference in their levels of empowerment. The choices of the uneducated, poor and married women seem to be more limited than those of the educated, richer and divorced or widowed women.

The widowed and divorced women's rationality or agency is reflected when they buy land, which is culturally known as men's property (Otiso 2006), and put it in their own names (for instance Faith), when they reject the marriage proposals of the brothers-in law, and when they report property grabbing cases to responsible authorities. Their ability to act on and challenge the restrictive aspects of their roles and responsibilities is clear evidence of their active agency, which may be transformative (Kabeer 2005:\_15). The married women on the other hand bargain with patriarchy by buying land and putting it in their husbands' name because challenging the patriarchal belief of land being a male property would imply heavy personal and social costs (Kandiyoti 1988). They are left with no alternatives to choose from (Kabeer 2005:\_ 14). They observe the restrictive practices, in their patriarchal society, of not owning land by putting the land agreements in their husbands' name, even if this means losing ownership and access to it in cases of marriage breakages and death of their husbands. What these women are most concerned with is to have space for their farming activities, not to own the land, because they know it is not culturally right for them to own land. Therefore, if given a chance to expand their activities by buying more land, why not maximize their life chances by becoming active participants with vested interest in the system that oppresses them? Through no choice of their own, they must use every means at their disposal to signify that they continue to be worthy of their husbands' protection (Kandiyoti 1988). However, while these women do adhere to patriarchal relations deliberately in an effort to secure their economic and social well-being, they are conscious and critical of the costs attached to their decisions. My informants were not passive victims of unawareness, they were aware of the repercussions of putting land in their husbands' name, as most of them said it to me. Although their actions could be said to reflect choice, they are based on the denial of or little choice – 'passive agency' (Kabeer 2005:\_15). Their agency may therefore increase their greater efficiency in carrying out their given roles and responsibilities but may not lead to transformative empowerment since such agency does not challenge the patriarchal beliefs of land ownership.

By deciding to invest in their daughter's education and join FAL classes, women exercise their 'power to'- their strength and ability to act, build new capacities and skills in order to 'build a future different from that mapped out by custom' (Nussbaum and Sen 1993). They challenge the patriarchal power exercised over them by their parents who denied them chance to have education, thereby initiating longer-term processes of change in the structure of patriarchy (2005:\_16). The meaning, motivation and purpose these women bring to their actions of paying for their daughters' education reflects their sense of agency and their *power from within*, which to Kabeer (2005) is the beginning step to empowerment.

Women also exercise their agency by making choices to become leaders, which agency is active since their actions are taken with choice (Kabeer 2005:\_15). Their ability to put the leadership skills acquired into effect manifests another form of 'power from within' in form of self-esteem and confidence. According to Zapata et al (1997), 'Power from within' is a product of the defeat of 'power over' internal to the self and involves the growth of self-esteem (cited in Townsend et al. 1999). The female beneficiaries have realized what they can do and confidently try it out. However, even in presence of some resources (leadership skills), the absence of other valuable resources like the training materials, time, transport and facilitation money constrains the beneficiaries' agency, hence hampering their empowerment. Kabeer argues that the "resources are the medium through which agency is exercised" (2005:\_ 15). However, she did not focus so much on the level of resources. In this case, the level or quantity of resources will probably determine the level of empowerment for these women. Some resources, like the few acres of land some women bought, are too minimal, and may not help so much in absence of other resources to guarantee any transformation, but may be valuable for effectiveness of women's lives.

An important change that featured in many of the women's testimonies related to their sense of self-worth, as well as their worth in the eyes of other family members, of bringing something of value to their households. They no longer depended on their husbands for economic provision and gained respect from husbands and in-laws because they had resources (money). To Kabeer (2005), people's sense of self-worth (how people see themselves) and how they are seen by those surrounding them is a key element of their empowerment. However, there were cases of women, whose 'power to' choose what to eat, how to dress, the schools for their children and what crops to grow in which land, was limited by their in-laws who exercised 'power over' their life choices. Kabeer argues that a woman's capacity to make strategic choices is likely to be limited if her primary form of access to

resources is as a dependent member of the family (2005:\_15). Thus, the women's lack of control over land as a resource limited their decision making capacity and agency (Kabeer 2005) and forced them to accept their in-laws' interference in their lives with little or no freedom (choice).

In addition, the beneficiaries' ability to earn an income helped to reduce the burden for men since women were now able to share the responsibility of providing for the family. In so doing, they not only actively exercise their choice, but also challenge the patriarchal power relations of men being bread winners. However, despite their newly acquired role of bread winner, the female beneficiaries continue to support the general view that women should perform their ascribed household roles and not oppose their husbands in any way as a result of their empowerment. They have been socialized to comply with men in securing patriarchal social relations, and therefore their new bread winner role does not bring their freedom from traditional roles and beliefs that women should not oppose men.

Chapter seven looks at the different perceptions and understandings of 'women's empowerment' by the female beneficiaries, their husbands and the implementers of the NAADS programme.

## **Chapter 7: PERCEPTIONS AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF “WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT”:**

### ***7.1 Introduction:***

Mosedale argues that empowerment is used by different people to mean different things, and while women’s empowerment has become a frequently cited goal of most development interventions, such interventions show little if any evidence of attempts to define what women’s empowerment means in their own context (2005:\_243-244). Hence lack of specificity is a common problem in empowerment projects. I therefore found it important to examine how the different involved parties in NAADS understood the concept of empowerment, given that it is one of the main goal of NAADS; *“NAADS will enable those previously denied the ability to make strategic life choices, acquire such ability. This means that the rural poor, and especially poor rural women and youth will: increase the levels of control they have over their own lives, make their own decisions about livelihood options, and translate their chosen livelihood options into improvements in their wellbeing* (NAADS Secretariat 2003:\_5). The implementers’ and female beneficiaries’ understanding of women’s empowerment will be discussed and compared to what the theories of empowerment say and in relation to the NAADS programme meaning of empowerment. This will help to explore how people involved understand and value empowerment. The views of Family Development Support Initiatives (FADSI) and Community Enterprises Development Organization (CEDO) implementers, as well as those of the husbands that were interviewed, will also be incorporated.

### ***7.2: NAADS programme implementers’ perceptions and understandings of Women’s Empowerment:***

Most implementers of NAADS Programme mentioned poverty reduction as the main goal of the programme. Women’s empowerment was mentioned by very few implementers, and those who mentioned it did not attach great importance to it. When asked to define women’s empowerment, one group of implementers seemed to understand what it means, while another group, who were the majority, did not seem to understand what women’s empowerment means. Below are the different perceptions implementers had of women’s empowerment.

The group of implementers who had inadequate understanding of the concept emphasized that women's empowerment enables and facilitates women to do their household responsibilities more efficiently. For instance, the Sub-County NAADS Coordinator says; *"Women's empowerment refers to the ability of women to do work and activities that can fetch for them money so as to effectively run their household roles and families since development starts from the household"*. The Health Inspector also related it to women's ability to understand their roles as women, and put much emphasis on their obligation to respect their husbands; *"Women's empowerment means understanding the responsibility of a woman and a man at home, more so to encourage a woman to respect a husband. Formerly, a woman was not supposed to eat chicken but women's empowerment helps a woman to realize that she can eat chicken – Eat a little and leave something for your husband and your children"*. The District NAADS Coordinator also emphasized that NAADS ensures food security and once a woman has food, it is a sign of empowerment since provision of food is one of a woman's responsibilities in the home.

Whereas most implementers mentioned that women's empowerment enables women to do household work more effectively, many noted that if misused, it can make women forget or neglect their household responsibilities, hence going against the societal norms. The sub-county chief says; *"I could admire empowered women but most of them have misused it by going against the accepted norms of society. There are certain things we know in our society which have been there for long, for instance it has always been known in this society that women should cook, so not even empowerment should change that"*. Therefore, to these implementers empowerment is good if it enables women to effectively perform the roles ascribed to them, but if they do not perform their roles because of being empowered, then empowerment is bad and it is being misused by the women.

The above implementers' definitions, perceptions and understandings of women's empowerment reflect Kaber's concept of 'effective agency', which she defines as women's greater efficiency in carrying out their given roles and responsibilities (2005:\_15). To the implementers, so long as women are able to do their ascribed roles in their households well, then they are empowered. Their definitions support and defend the local cultural beliefs of women being responsible for household chores, and according to this definition, empowerment facilitates the execution of such roles.

The few implementers who had an adequate understanding of the concept defined women's empowerment as a woman's ability to make decisions in her home. *"Women's empowerment refers to the ability of a woman to make decisions even in her husband's absence"*. (District Agricultural Officer). He goes on to say that *"It also refers to women's ability to plan, organize, implement and monitor development projects"*. The founder of FADSI emphasized the fact that women should not only be allowed to make decisions in their homes but also be involved in key decision making at community level as active participants. He notes; *"It means allowing women to get involved in key decision making at community and household level [not passive participants] to get involved in income generating activities and making decisions on how to use the proceeds"*. He goes on to emphasize the need for active political participation when he asserts that *"It means allowing women to get involved in leadership at all levels, not just filling positions provided by affirmative actions, but being active participants and making decisions that are community responsive"*. The Chairperson LCIII and several others also mention this as an achievement when he states; *"NAADS, through ISFG (Integrated Support to Farmers Groups) has enabled women to open up accounts with SACCOs, thereby improving their saving and revolving schemes. With their savings, women can decide on how to spend and what to invest in, depending on their choices"*.

The implementers' understandings of women's empowerment were not in accordance with Kabeer's definition of transformative empowerment, but nevertheless in accordance with the NAADS definition. Their definitions may address immediate gender inequalities but may not be used to initiate longer-term processes of change in the structures of patriarchy.

The few implementers whose definitions did not deviate from Kabeer's definition of empowerment emphasized the transformative aspects of the concept. When these implementers define women's empowerment in terms of women's decision making power, they refer to Kabeer's description of 'agency' as the ability to make and act on people's own life choices (Kabeer 2005:\_14). For instance, the chairperson LCIII mentions women's choices on how to spend the money they get from proceeds and what to invest in, which clearly indicates the women's *agency* or *power* to make choices, according to Kabeer (2005). However, the founder of FADSI mentions a very important aspect of the need for women to make key decisions both at household and community levels: He also emphasizes an element of political empowerment; it is not just their presence or about filling positions accorded to them by affirmative action, but also what they do with their positions. To Kabeer, women's political representation could "potentially address many of the constraints that limit the life

chances of poor women” and could have the greatest potential for transformation (2005:\_21). The definition given by the District Agriculture Officer contains transformative elements of agency. If the NAADS programme allows women *to plan, organize, implement and monitor development projects*, it means that women’s needs will be incorporated in the programme’s plans and activities and women may be able to hold programme implementers and other relevant actors accountable for their actions. Their definitions, however, seem to deviate from the definition given by the NAADS programme.

Although the definition of empowerment given by the NAADS programme mentions the aspect of women’s ability to make strategic life choices, it is not a strong promoter of transformative empowerment itself. It emphasizes the issue of improving the wellbeing of the poor women but does not mention anything about challenging existing patriarchal power relations. Many implementers seem to follow this line. This implies that the implementers work towards ensuring women’s effectiveness of agency through poverty reduction so as to improve their wellbeing, just as the programme emphasizes. This may explain why the implementers did not attach much value to the goal of women’s empowerment; they were more concerned about reducing poverty within the households by enabling women to participate in income generating enterprises, so as to improve their economic wellbeing. Therefore, although empowerment is among the main aims of NAADS, the official definition, as well as the majority of the implementers’ understanding, of the concept strongly indicates that it is not really a priority of the programme.

### ***7.3 NAADS Programme Beneficiaries’ perceptions and understanding of Women’s Empowerment:***

As mentioned in the method chapter, it was a challenge to come up with one word in the informants’ local language that could translate the concept of empowerment. However, I used two local words to refer to women’s empowerment while I was interviewing the beneficiaries, that is, *abakyala okwetengerera* - literally meaning women challenging patriarchal power relations. The Programme beneficiaries did not seem to understand that women’s empowerment was the goal of the programme although they related the programme to Museveni, the president; many believed that it was one way through which the president wanted to thank women for giving him many votes. Although they did not know that women’s empowerment was the goal of NAADS, a few female informants reported knowing what it meant, but the majority did not know the definition. Whereas the female beneficiaries



do not relate or associate themselves with the concept of ‘women’s empowerment’ and some say they do not know what it means, they still talk about the most important changes in their lives whenever asked if they were empowered. They linked it to several ideas such as gaining respect from their husbands, making decisions in their homes, and others defined it when outlining the achievements they had obtained with help from NAADS, which indirectly confirmed their understanding of the term. They used different words to explain what it meant. I will use the same words they used as my sub-headings in the following section. Below are the different perceptions and understandings of women’s empowerment presented by the beneficiaries:

### **7.2.1 Omwenkanonkano: Gender Equality:**

Most beneficiaries responded right away to my question about the meaning of women’s empowerment with this word *omwenkanonkano*, local word literary meaning ‘gender equality’. To them, for a woman to be empowered, she must be equal to a man in all aspects of life including but not limited to doing the same jobs, competing for the same political positions, receiving the same education, following the same dress code, and eating the same food. Some aspects of equality, like boys and girls receiving the same education, doing the same jobs and competing for the same positions, were supported by most beneficiaries. However, there were some aspects of equality between men and women that all beneficiaries did not support; *“Empowerment is good if it allows women and men to run the same jobs, receive the same level of education and become chairpersons. But if empowerment calls upon women to dress like men, as girls of these days do, then it becomes bad and I don’t support that. It has made girls become so shameless that they are now moving naked but they do not even mind”*. (Joyce)

Many beneficiaries mentioned poor dressing code of educated girls and women as resulting from empowerment. In addition, some beneficiaries related women’s empowerment to women’s ability to know their rights. Jane, a divorced woman, defines women’s empowerment as; *“It is when a woman knows her rights and can enjoy them just like the men”*. When asked if she was empowered herself, she answered; *“I should say I am empowered. I know all my rights and can defend them*. Therefore, to her, knowing one’s rights is not enough to empower a woman if she is not able to defend them. Several other female informants, as well as some husbands, say the same.

Definitions of empowerment like the one Joyce presented contain aspects of women's empowerment, since gender equality is a human right and the realization of human rights by women is a vital element of their empowerment (UNFPA report 2007). Therefore, promoting gender equality, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives, is a critical aspect of promoting women's empowerment. The beneficiaries believed that for a woman to be empowered, she should know and enjoy equal rights with men in some aspects like education, leadership, and employment, but not in dress code, since equality in this sense is associated with prostitution and promiscuity within their society. The other aspects of equality were supported, since they are attained out of women's hard work.

***7.2.2: I think I am empowered since I can buy Salt and do not have to wait for my husband...:***

Many beneficiaries mentioned women's ability to buy household items and meet household expenses as a sign of empowerment. Many responded to the question of 'do you think you are empowered?' by saying things like; "*yes, I think I am empowered since I can buy salt and do not have to wait for my husband to come back*". *I can take myself and my children to the hospital even when my husband is not around, we do not need to die in the house just because the husband is away*". (Eva)

Annet also noted; "*With my earnings now, I can fulfil my household responsibilities at home without begging for my husband's money. I think he likes it, too, since I do not disturb him as I used to... I can buy sauce when it is market day, I can buy salt and all the necessary things I need to do my cooking. Isn't that being empowered?*" Many other informants related it to the same issue.

Linda, a married woman and a teacher by profession, defines it as; "*It is when women have power in their homes and can decide on certain issues*. She later gives herself as an example of an empowered woman when she says; "*[...] Like myself, even if my husband is away for a month, I can run this family and even when he is around, I decide on what we eat, how much to sell our harvests for, which schools to take our children to and my husband is not worried because he knows I can do that perfectly*".

Buying household items, feeding and educating children and meeting their health needs in presence or absence of their husbands was seen by women as being empowered. However,

despite their perceptions of women's empowerment as the ability of a woman to make decisions in the household and become a breadwinner in the absence or presence of a husband, the female beneficiaries still maintained the view that women should not disrespect their husbands by making them do women's household chores just because they are empowered. As Kandiyoti argues, the female beneficiaries in a society with 'patriarchal bargain' observe the restrictive practices and resist breaking the societal rules in favour of reproduction of family status and keeping with their respectable and protected domestic roles, even if observing them produces economic hardship and exploits them the more (1988:\_280).

### **7.2.3 Okwekiririzaamu- *"I think I am empowered since I believe in myself"*:**

Some female beneficiaries defined women's empowerment as believing in oneself. They believed that if someone believed in herself, she could accomplish everything in life like compete for higher leadership positions, apply for bigger loans, join development programmes and participate in bigger enterprises among others, and all this contributes to their empowerment. Patricia's response says it all; *"I think I am empowered since I believe in myself. If I didn't, maybe I would fear to ask for bigger loans from NAADS, maybe I would be afraid of joining NAADS itself in the first place. We have women in this sub-county who fear to even get a loan of 100,000shs and prefer farming on a small scale rather than getting credits. These women do not believe they can do better than that and are always left out"*.

Eva says; *"Haaha, there are some things I can do as myself without any assistance from my husband, like those projects I run...I think that is being empowered. When I started getting trainings, I got the strength to participate in anything, however hard it can appear. And now I can do anything with my hands. Last week a friend of mine found me watering our coffee with a big spray machine at my back and she made a silly comment. She said 'have you become Mr. Mugumya'; she was referring to my husband. But I told her anyone can do this, it is about believing in yourself, that you can do it"*.

Such testimonies and definitions of being empowered reflect an aspect of *power from within* (Townsend et. al.1999). Patricia and Eva explain that believing in themselves has enabled them to realize what they can do, thereby joining development programmes, applying for bigger loans, and doing activities previously done by men. Eva's sense of self-worth (how she sees herself) and how she is seen by those surrounding her and the society is a clear indication of her *power from within*, which for instance has enabled her to defeat the

patriarchal beliefs that some agricultural tools are male tools. To her, any woman can do what men can do if they believe in themselves.

***7.4: Husbands' Perceptions about Women's Empowerment: Some women do not respect their husbands because they are empowered... Women should learn to use their empowerment reasonably.***

The majority of the husbands I interviewed said that women's empowerment is good but only if it is not misused. They believed that some women take advantage of their husbands because they are empowered and thus start disrespecting them, especially where a woman earns more than a husband. They placed most emphasis on women's economic empowerment. Mathias' statement exemplifies what most informants said; *"If you are empowered reasonably, I respect you, but out of order, I don't. As long as you respect your husband and know where to stop, then I respect you. Some women do not respect their husbands because they are empowered. There is a nurse I know who recently barked at her husband in public when we were all around. The husband used her car and when the woman wanted to use it, she found it was not in the garage. So this woman came to the trading centre and barked at her husband for taking her car without her permission. The man felt ashamed and disappeared secretly. If that is what empowerment makes our women do, then I can't like it. Women should learn to use their empowerment reasonably"*.

John cautioned me to use my empowerment reasonably; *"Prossy, you will complete your Masters but when you are entering your husband's bed, do not enter the bed with your Masters. You can use it elsewhere like at your work place, but forget about it immediately when you enter your home. I have seen learned women who deny doing any household work and leave everything to be done by a maid including laying their husbands' beds. They fail to understand their responsibility, which to me is the mission of women's empowerment. In the end their marriages break"*. James also said that a woman who is well educated does not make up a good wife. He says; *"If you want to marry a good wife and save your marriage for years, do not even try to marry a woman who has exceeded senior four"*. This implies that many of my male informants understood education as a vehicle of women's empowerment and many believed that if women studied to higher levels, there were higher chances that they would misuse their empowerment while in their homes.

They mentioned many negative impacts of women's empowerment, including divorce, disrespecting their husbands, neglecting their household responsibilities, poor dressing habits, and adultery. John sums it up when he says; *“some women can run away from their marriage with children after getting empowered. They do not respect the social hierarchy within the family like asking for permission from the husband before going for a workshop. Imagine your wife going for a two weeks workshop in Kampala with so many other men out there. A lot can happen. She may sleep with other men, just like the husband at home can sleep with other women. Even the way they dress in those workshops says a lot. Why should my wife put on a mini dress in my absence as if she wants to attract other men? All those two weeks I am left alone at home, maybe with a house girl to look after me, lay my bed... (laughs). That is how men end up having affairs with maids and you cannot blame them, it is their wives who expose them to such a temptation.”*

Therefore, to all husbands, women's empowerment is good only when it is used reasonably by the women. Like most implementers, the husbands looked at women's empowerment as positively impacting on the family's wellbeing only if women used it to fulfil their obligations as wives and continued to respect their husbands. Hence, the husbands' perceptions of women's empowerment correspond with Kabeer's definition of effective agency (2005:\_15). Although husbands like James believe that educated women do not make up good wives, they are aware of the fact that education is a contributing factor to women's empowerment. Most of the husbands referred to me as an 'empowered woman' because of my education level. Kabeer argues that access to education can bring about changes in cognitive ability, which is essential to women's capacity to question, to reflect on, and act on the conditions of their lives (2005:\_16). Sen also relates empowerment to individual capacities developed through gaining education, skills, and knowledge in order to improve the life-chances of individuals and empower them so they can have a better quality of life (1999). The husbands were aware of this, but still maintained the fact that education sometimes makes women forget their conjugal responsibilities and household chores. Just like most implementers, the husbands' understanding of women's empowerment deviates from Kabeer's definition while it corresponds with and facilitates the patriarchal cultural beliefs of their society. This implies that the husbands will not support their wives' transformative forms of agency due to the social construction of patriarchy, which controls their minds. The husbands, in this connection, are a resource constraining women's ability to make and act on their own life choices.

### ***7.5 Concluding discussion:***

It should be noted that while a few implementers identify women's empowerment as a goal for the NAADS programme; most of them emphasize poverty reduction as the only goal of the programme. Even those who mention it do not attach great importance to it. While defining women's empowerment, a few implementers understood what it means, while the majority did not understand what women's empowerment means. The implementers who had inadequate understanding of the concept said that women's empowerment enables and facilitates women to do their household responsibilities more efficiently and effectively. Their definitions are not different from those of the husbands; they both relate empowerment to the local societal beliefs of women fulfilling their ascribed household chores while respecting their husbands. Both the implementers and the husbands believe that some women misuse their empowerment by disrespecting their husbands and forgetting their household roles. However, the definition of empowerment given by the NAADS programme is not a strong promoter of transformative empowerment itself, although it contains some aspects of women's agency. It emphasizes the issue of improving the wellbeing of the poor women, but does not mention anything about challenging existing patriarchal power relations. Therefore, we cannot blame the implementers for their inadequate understanding of the concept since they still had an adequate understanding of the NAADS definition of women's empowerment. The husbands and majority of the implementers seem to relate to and think in accordance with the NAADS aim.

On the other hand, a few implementers who had adequate understanding of the concept define it in terms of women's decision making power both at home and on community levels, active political participation and their ability to plan, organize, implement and monitor development projects, which explains the women's transformative forms of agency and their ability to challenge existing patriarchal power relations in homes and the society as a whole. They go beyond the NAADS aim of improving the wellbeing of women through increasing their agency, and mention some aspects of transformative empowerment. However, the goal of women's empowerment, in relation to other NAADS programme goals, did not seem to be important both to the implementers and husbands. They both emphasized the poverty reduction goal and were more concerned with the issue of increasing women's access to credits so as to reduce poverty levels in households. They were more concerned with improvements in household life conditions than challenging existing power relations. In fact,

to most implementers and husbands, if women challenge the power relations, then they are misusing their empowerment.

Whereas the female beneficiaries are not aware that women's empowerment is also part of the goals of the NAADS programme, and the majority claim not to know what it means, they still define it when outlining the achievements they have made with help from NAADS that indirectly confirm their understanding of the term. They define women's empowerment in terms of gender equality, knowing and defending women's rights, women's decision making powers in the home, and their *power from within*. Therefore, despite the NAADS programme's, implementers' and husbands' inadequate understanding of and selective emphasis on empowerment, the beneficiaries know what it means, not from a training, but because they have experienced it. They defined women's empowerment from their experiences, and although it is not the focus for the NAADS programme and implementers, some transformative empowerment, or agency of the female beneficiaries, is still taking place. Empowerment is a process, and the women seem to be in this process. They are empowered, and some of it is transformative. Therefore, if the programme continues to cause such great changes in women's lives at that pace, in the long run the patriarchal power relations will be challenged.

The last chapter gives the final conclusions from the study findings and suggests additional ways through which the NAADS programme can transformatively empower women.

## ***Chapter Eight: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:***

### ***8.1 Conclusion***

The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), supposed to be reached by 2015. The Millennium Development Goals highlight the need to address gender inequality and empower women as a foundation for human development. There are a variety of understandings of the term empowerment, due to its widespread usage. Common to most understandings is that empowerment is looked upon in terms of ability to make choices: to be disempowered therefore, implies to be denied choice. The notion of empowerment is inescapably bound up with the condition of disempowerment, and refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability (Kabeer 2005). Understanding empowerment in this way means that development agencies, both Government and Civil Society Organizations, cannot claim to empower women. Rather, they can provide appropriate external support and interventions, which can foster and support the process of empowerment (Mosedale 2005). The NAADS poverty and gender strategy for the delivery of improved agricultural advisory services clearly indicates women's empowerment as one of the goals for the Ugandan government's NAADS programme intervention (NAADS Secretariat 2003:\_5). However, despite this intervention, women are still disadvantaged in terms of control over resources like land due to existing local patriarchal beliefs and discriminatory customary laws.

Therefore, right from the on-set of this study, I was set to explore the contribution of the NAADS programme to women's empowerment in Uganda through qualitative analysis of interviews and participant observation. The study aimed at answering questions concerned with the specific experiences, challenges and life situations characterizing different categories of the NAADS programme female beneficiaries, as seen from their point of view. Moreover, central research questions were: what motivated the female beneficiaries to join NAADS, and what are the benefits they have obtained from the NAADS Programme; what is the contribution of the NAADS programme to female beneficiaries' ability to make strategic life choices and/ or decisions in their homes and their capacity to challenge existing power relations at both household and community levels; how is the term "women's empowerment" understood and perceived by the implementers and beneficiaries of the NAADS programme. Through the answers to these questions, I hope to be able to suggest additional ways through



which the NAADS programme can transformatively empower women and other marginalized groups of people in Uganda. To achieve this, the study employed the empowerment theory concepts of resources, agency, achievements, choice, and power to analyse the findings. It also employed Kandiyoti's *bargaining with patriarchy* framework to examine the various ways in which female beneficiaries bargain, negotiate, participate in and reproduce patriarchal relations and how this enables and/or constrains their 'power to'- ability to make strategic life choices and do what they want to do (agency).

The female beneficiaries of Lwankoni sub-county that are the informants of this study cut across the different demographic characteristics in terms of age, marital status, education level, life situations and duration of the NAADS programme membership. Considering education as a resource, most of the female beneficiaries had stopped at primary level of education, only a few at secondary level. They all attributed their low levels of education to poverty and their parents' preference to take sons to higher levels of education. This lack of education indeed left most of them ill-equipped to fight for their rights and to defend their children's or late husbands' property. The majority of the informants were widowed or married, and a few were divorced. The female beneficiaries were between the ages 28 to 60 years, and most of them had been in the NAADS programme between 4 to 7 years. Equally important to note is the fact that the difference in life situations, duration of NAADS membership, marital statuses and maybe educational levels of female beneficiaries reflects a difference in their levels of empowerment. The choices of the uneducated, poor and married women seem to be more limited than those of the more educated, well-off, divorced and widowed women.

The study reveals that the female farmers faced several challenges that hampered their empowerment before they joined and at the beginning of the NAADS programme. The widows' property was grabbed by the in-laws, who also wanted to remarry them after their husbands' death. The divorced women were challenged by their new acquired role as household breadwinners, with the responsibility of looking after their children and their families without the help of their partners, in addition to facing community pressure and embarrassments regarding their divorce statuses. The married women, on their side, were faced with challenges related to being labelled prostitutes by either their in-laws or other community members whenever they went for evening group meetings, having an added responsibility of looking after their husbands, especially for the women whose husbands were full time agricultural workers, and therefore always at home. All the three categories of the

female informants had faced the challenge of poverty and limited access to and control over land to facilitate their agricultural enterprises. These women's low level of empowerment limited their agency and choices. They were thus motivated to join the NAADS programme in order to improve their life situations, and the fact that the majority were household heads after their husbands' death or divorce worked as an extra incentive.

This study concludes that the female beneficiaries have attained some degree of empowerment as a result of their participation in the NAADS programme. They are now involved in decision making processes both at community and household levels; they have become confident, household breadwinners, economically independent and autonomous, and some women are now owning land and houses. However, they have not been able to fully reach what Longwe (1991) refers to as the highest level of empowerment due to their failure to break through and challenge the patriarchal power that creates structural barriers for their empowerment. They instead bargain with this patriarchal power. The female beneficiaries' acceptance of their secondary claims on household resources like land, including the resources bought by themselves, their acquiescence to violence at the hands of their husbands, their preference for their husbands to be respected, not to be opposed, and not to be involved in household chores as a result of women's empowerment, exemplifies the practices through which female beneficiaries 'bargain with patriarchy' by undermining their own well-being and internalizing their own lesser status in society (Kandiyoti 1988). While these forms of practices could be said to reflect 'choice', they are choices which stem from, and serve to reinforce, women's subordinate status (Kabeer 1999:\_441). They illustrate the view that power relations are expressed not only through the ability to exercise agency and choice, but also through the kinds of choices people make. This supports Kabeer's argument that power operates not only through constraints on people's ability to make choices, but also through their preferences and values and hence the choices that they make (Kabeer 1999:\_ 442). Nevertheless, empowerment entails a process of change (Kabeer 1999/2005; Mosedale 2005; Rai, et al. 2002), and some transformative changes in the patriarchal structures of this community may not be attainable over a short period of 4 to 7 years. Like Mosedale (2005) argues, empowerment is an on-going process rather than a product. There is no final goal, and one does not arrive at a stage of being empowered in some absolute sense. People are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time (Rai, et al. 2002). Considering the changes that have occurred in the lives of the female beneficiaries within 4 to 7 years, we can think of how far they can come, and how

much they can achieve in the next 10 years. I find a reason to conclude that these women are in the process of transformative empowerment, and in the long term they will challenge the patriarchal practices of this society that are hampering their empowerment. Future research should study this same community, targeting the same informants, to explore the long term contribution of the NAADS programme to women's empowerment after maybe 6 to 10 years from now.

Considering the perceptions and understandings of the concept of 'women's empowerment', the study indicates that the majority of NAADS programme implementers interviewed do not understand as well as support the transformative aspects of empowerment. The majority of the implementers had inadequate understanding of the concept, and their definitions deviated from Kabeer's description of transformative empowerment. They believed that women's empowerment enables and facilitates women to do their household responsibilities more efficiently and effectively. Their definitions were not different from those of the husbands interviewed; they both relate empowerment to the local societal beliefs of women fulfilling their ascribed household roles and respecting their husbands' dominance and authority. Nevertheless, they still had adequate understanding of the NAADS definition of women's empowerment, since NAADS does not promote transformative empowerment. However, there were a few implementers who defined women's empowerment in terms of women's decision making power, active participation in leadership and development projects, which confirmed their understanding of transformative agency. During my study, I also realized that the female beneficiaries who were purposively selected by the NAADS programme implementers were more economically well-off and had gained more from the programme in terms of increased earnings than those I randomly selected from the list of beneficiaries. This could be mainly because they had spent more years in the programme. However, there is reason to conclude from this observation that the implementers perceived an empowered woman as one with an increased access to income.

Although the female beneficiaries are not aware that women's empowerment is also part of the goals of the NAADS programme, and the majority claim not to know what it means, they link it to several ideas. Others define empowerment by outlining the achievements they have got from NAADS, which indirectly confirm their understanding of the term. They understand the concept mainly because they are experiencing it. From this observation, therefore, I can conclude that the NAADS programme has contributed to women's empowerment, and that

some of it is transformative, despite the fact that NAADS' official definition of empowerment, as well as the majority of the implementers' and husbands' understandings of the concept, indicate that empowerment is not really a priority of the programme. It should however be noted that empowerment arises out of women's interests and in their own understanding of what needs to be improved to enhance the quality of their lives (Kabeer 1994). The women's testimonies about the changes in their life situations, while defining the concept of empowerment, indicate that they treasure and appreciate such changes, and thus support transformative empowerment.

Generally, the study reveals varying levels of empowerment among the female beneficiaries. The less empowered had, at the time of the fieldwork, achieved little in terms of material resources, and they still lacked control over required resources like land. This lack of resources further limited their agency. In turn, their agency - which usually tended towards the passive and minimal - was reflected in their choices, which were effective rather than transformative. Their agency or 'power to' and 'power from within' was also limited by the overarching 'power over' them by family, community and the state.

The empirical findings of the study also suggest limitations to Kabeer's empowerment concept. Kabeer looks at resources as the medium through which agency is exercised (1999/2005). However, she does not focus on the level and quantity of such resources in her conceptualisation. This study reveals that the level or quantity as well the quality of resources is a very important factor that may determine the level of empowerment. Although a few female beneficiaries had bought pieces of land, these pieces of land were too small to facilitate their farming activities for them to attain the highest level of empowerment. The study also found out that accessibility to some resources may not be enough to facilitate women's exercise of agency in the absence of other equally necessary resources. Even in the presence of leadership skills, community-based facilitators' ability to exercise their leadership roles was constrained by the absence of other crucial resources like facilitation and training manuals. The study also indicates that women's access to credit alone, as a resource, may not be sufficient to empower them. Additional services like trainings in improved farming skills, awareness raising workshops about women's rights, demonstrations and study tours are also an important determinant of the degree of NAADS impact on the empowerment process of the female beneficiaries.

The study confirms that women's triple roles hinder their economic empowerment. The female beneficiaries of Lwankoni sub-county are involved not only in the NAADS programme income generating projects but also in community and household activities. As observed in chapter five, all beneficiaries mentioned heavy household work load as a challenge to their effective participation in the NAADS income generating projects, and the married women looked at the presence of a husband, especially full time farmers in the home, as an added burden. This is also in correspondence with other studies done in different parts of the country that indicate that in Uganda women work considerably longer hours than men (UPPAP 2002: MFPED 2000: Eilor et al 2002: Nabbumba 2008). NAADS-related work is added on top of other obligations, and while husbands and in-laws are interested in the economic output of the women's NAADS activities, the wives are expected to do all household chores by themselves, while they in turn support this view in order to become adequate members of society. The female beneficiaries keep with their respectable and protected domestic roles even if these roles limit their time to participate in income generating enterprises and exploit them the more (Kandiyoti 1988), thereby hindering their empowerment.

## ***8.2 Recommendations:***

### **8.2.1 Revision of NAADS goal:**

From the findings of my study, it is clear that access to credit provides female beneficiaries the opportunity to engage themselves in economically gainful projects, gives them more power, prestige, and decision-making ability in their life and in family matters, which are very important aspects for women's empowerment. However, it may not be enough to break traditional patriarchal social norms. The NAADS programme needs to design and focus on other approaches that can change the patriarchal social norms of Uganda. Efforts to empower women through this programme need to consider changing female beneficiaries', husbands' as well the implementers' perceptions and attitudes towards gender roles and responsibilities, women's empowerment as a bad idea, the value of women, issues of power and control over resources, and customary inheritance beliefs. Efforts to change these ideas would bring about long-term positive social change that may facilitate women's empowerment. Therefore, the programme's goal of women's empowerment should be revised to focus on changing these patriarchal practices and beliefs. The programme's goal and definition of empowerment also needs to be analysed at length; it does not promote transformative aspects of empowerment.

Therefore, the need for challenging existing patriarchal power relations by the women themselves should be incorporated within the definition. Creation of awareness about the NAADS goal of women's empowerment among the beneficiaries and implementers at all levels of implementation is also required since most of them are not aware that it is part of the NAADS goals. Such a component can be integrated in the FID trainings.

### **8.2.2 Sensitization about the concept of 'women's empowerment' and human rights:**

I also recommend that the NAADS programme integrate trainings on the concept of 'women's empowerment' in its FID programme since the majority of the informants did not know what women's empowerment means. A women's empowerment specialist at both national, district and sub-county levels should be employed for these trainings. For instance, the gender focal persons at district level can sensitize the implementers at both district and sub-county levels about the concept, and the district gender focal persons should also be mentored by the gender specialists at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. In addition, according to the study, most beneficiaries seemed to have limited knowledge about their rights, though they agreed that they were taught about their rights under FID. Therefore, more time should be invested in sensitization workshops for women beneficiaries concerning their rights, especially the land rights and laws. This should be done by specialists in human rights matters or human rights advocates. There is also a need to link NAADS processes at all levels of implementation with other national women's rights initiatives so as to increase awareness and promote more assertive tendencies among women on these issues.

**8.2.3 Design strategies to increase women's control over land:** The implementers of this programme, both at national and local levels, working within an empowerment framework must develop strategies that enable women themselves to critically review their own situation and participate in the creation and shaping of the society. Strategies specifically aimed at increasing women's control over resources like land need to be designed. For instance, women may be given loans for buying land, which must be registered in the women's name. The implementers should put this condition on these loans so that women do not lose ownership over land in cases of marriage breakages, and can maintain control over the means of production.

**8.2.4 Training women in water harvesting techniques:** Women's practical gender needs should be focused on and provided by the government of Uganda in order to facilitate them in

their triple roles. For instance, the absence of water in Lwankoni sub-county presented a great challenge to women's projects, especially those that required much water. As a result, women have to struggle and look for water for both their household activities and income generating projects, hence over-burdening themselves and reducing their valuable time for participating in development projects. The majority have to spend part of their profits in buying water. Therefore, extending water provision to the women's neighbourhoods could reduce their work burden and increase their profits from NAADS enterprises. I thus recommend that the government, and CSOs working towards empowering women, should introduce safe water harvesting programmes at both district and lower local government levels, and women should be trained in how to harvest water so as to increase the water availability to women in both dry and rainy seasons.

#### **8.2.5 Strengthening partnerships between Government and Civil Society Organization:**

NAADS programme beneficiaries also reported belonging to other Community Based Organizations (CBOs) like FADSI, CEDO, and many of them mentioned using inputs from other CBOs in order to expand their NAADS projects. These have achieved more and are more successful farmers than farmers who rely only on NAADS. The question to ask here is how these organizations work together. Are they competing or complimenting each other? Almost all these organizations were providing similar services. For instance, both FADSI and NAADS have SACCOs (Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies) and the FID element. In fact, some informants said that they had accounts in both SACCOs and the trainings were almost on the same topics. I would recommend the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to support and work hand in hand with the Government development projects, especially in cases where they are both targeting the same group of people with the same development enterprises. Partnership, rather than competition, between the government and CSOs development projects should be emphasized if the women are to benefit from these projects. For instance, FADSI and CEDO can partner with the sub-county by funding trainings in human rights in order to create more awareness about women's rights.

**8.2.6 Government investing more in Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme:** The Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme seems to be helpful to these illiterate women, and can contribute to the success of their income generating projects. The Government of Uganda, with support from CSOs, needs to invest more resources in these programmes so as to target more women for FAL classes. There is also need to facilitate the groups already

benefiting from this programme through training more FAL instructors and providing more facilitation instruments like boards, and chalk. In addition, in order to increase community ownership of these programmes, the government should ensure that they get and train FAL instructors who are insiders and part of the targeted community, rather than getting instructors from outside the community. These instructors will have the heart for their own people and this, in the long-run, will ensure sustainability of the programme.



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## **Appendix I: Interview Guide:**

*Research Topic:*

***“I own that house and I believe in myself as a woman”.***

### **The contribution of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) Programme to Women’s empowerment: A case of Lwankoni sub-county in Uganda.**

A qualitative interview, according to Kvale, is a powerful method for “capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects’ everyday world” (1996: 70). This study will involve asking informants about their lived experiences with the programme of NAADS and their perceptions of women’s empowerment. I will use semi-structured interviews in order to get deeper understanding of the informants’ life challenges and experiences with the NAADS programme and thus a better insight into the study topic and objectives. It will also allow my informants more time, space and freedom to express themselves as they share their practices and experiences with the NAADS programme. I will have three separate interview guides; one for the NAADS Programme female beneficiaries, one for their husbands, and one for the NAADS programme implementers. My interview guides will solicit information on various themes including informants’ personal data, personal experiences in NAADS, control and ownership over resources, women’s triple roles, community perceptions, beneficiaries’ and implementers’ ideas about women’s empowerment, among others.

**Interview guide for NAADS Programme Female Beneficiaries and their Husbands** involves the following sections:

**1. Personal data.** This section will seek general information about the informant. General information like the age, marital status, education, duration in NAADS and occupation are important in understanding the ways in which informants’ experiences with and achievements from NAADS may differ.

**2. Experiences with the NAADS Programme:** Questions under this section will particularly seek information concerning the challenges faced by the female beneficiaries before they joined the NAADS programme, the motivation for their joining, number of years spent in NAADS, the informants’ and community members’ general attitudes and perceptions about women’s involvement in NAADS programme.

**3. Control over household resources:** This section will look for information on women farmers’ access to and control over resources like land, the influence or impact of NAADS programme on ownership of household resources, especially land, community reaction towards women owning land, women’s ability to challenge power relations and make decisions on matters of resources, enterprise selection and labour.

**4. Benefits from NAADS Programme:** This will seek for information regarding the benefits obtained from the women’s participation in NAADS programme, life changes in their relationships with husbands and in-laws, as well as the programme’s impact on women’s empowerment.

**5. Balancing women's household roles and NAADS activities:** This section will solicit information on how women balance household activities with NAADS enterprises, the extent of and societal perceptions about men’s involvement in household chores.

**6. Perceptions and understandings about “women's empowerment”:** This will seek information on the understandings and perceptions of women’s empowerment by the beneficiaries, husbands and



the society as a whole. It will also seek to understand whether the beneficiaries and implementers are knowledgeable about the NAADS goal of women's empowerment.

**7. Concluding Questions:** This will involve information concerning the general challenges faced by the NAADS female beneficiaries while participating in the programme, as well as the suggestions for making the NAADS programme more effective.

### **Interview guide for NAADS Programme Implementers will consist of three sections:**

**1. Personal Data:** This will basically solicit information on the age, marital status, education, and occupation of the implementers so as to understand their relationship with the NAADS programme.

**2. Implementers' ideas about "women's empowerment":** This will seek for information regarding the implementers' and community's understandings and perceptions of women's empowerment, their understanding of the NAADS goals, the strategies put in place to empower women, the challenges hindering women's empowerment, and the implementers' suggestions on how the programme can be improved to transformatively empower women.

**3. NAADS FID Trainings and Meetings:** This section will solicit general information regarding women's participation in NAADS trainings, the community reactions and attitudes towards women who hold leadership roles, participate in NAADS trainings, and speak confidently in public during trainings and meetings.

### **Actual Questions:**

#### ***Interview guide for NAADS Programme Female Beneficiaries:***

**Face Sheet:** Date, time and place of interview: Informant Code no:

**1. Personal Data:** Name, Age, Education level, Occupation, Marital status, Religion, No. of children - boys and girls, Relationship to the household head

#### **2. Experiences with the NAADS Programme:**

- Tell me about your life situation before you joined the NAADS programme. *Probe for challenges and situations related to household incomes, marital statuses, access and control over household resources, among others.*
- How did you come to know about the NAADS programme?
- When and why did you join the Programme?
- Did your partner motivate or support you in any way to join the programme? How?
- How do you feel about being part of this programme?
- How does your husband or in-laws feel about you being part of NAADS?

#### **3. Control over household resources:**

- Do you have access to land? Whose land do you use for your NAADS activities?
- Have you ever bought any piece of land?
- Do you have control or ownership over any piece of land? How did you obtain that land?
- What is the total number of acres that you use for carrying out NAADS agricultural activities?
- Are your NAADS activities hindered in any way because of lack of control over land?
- Have you ever tried to demand for more land from your partner to support your NAADS activities? What was his reaction?
- Has this programme affected or influenced your control over household resources? How?

- How do you feel about this? How does your partner feel about this?
- Have you bought any piece of land from the money acquired from NAADS programme?
- Are there some women in this community having ownership and control over land?
- Are they involved in NAADS?
- What is the community's reaction towards women owning land?
- Are there any societal sanctions challenging women's ownership of land?
- What agricultural enterprises were you engaging in before joining the NAADS programme? Why?
- Did you change the enterprise after joining the NAADS programme? Why?
- Who selected the enterprise? Who sells the agricultural produce?
- What type of labour do you use? *Probe for husband's provision of labour on the wife's fields.*

#### **4. Benefits from NAADS Programme:**

- Tell me about the benefits you have got from NAADS ever since you joined.
- How do you use the money obtained from NAADS enterprises?
- How does your partner, parents or in-laws benefit from the money obtained from NAADS?
- How have your children benefited from the money obtained from NAADS agricultural projects? Who decides on how much to spend on your children's welfare?
- Has your participation in NAADS programme increased your ability to make decisions on how to spend money obtained from sell of NAADS agricultural outputs the way you want, without first consulting your partner? Which decisions?
- Has your participation in the programme given you the opportunity to make other important decisions in your home? Which type of decisions? Are you happy that you can make such decisions?
- Are there women in this community who make decisions on how to use the money obtained from sell of NAADS agricultural output without first consulting their husbands?
- How do you think about women who make such decisions?
- How does the society think about women who make such decisions?
- Do you think anything has changed in your relationship with your husband or in-laws since you joined the NAADS programme? What has changed?

#### **5. Balancing women's household roles and NAADS activities;**

- Tell me about your schedule for a day. How does a typical day of other women in this community look like?
- Are you involved in any community activities? Which ones?
- Do you have regular NAADS group meetings and trainings? How many times a week?
- How do you balance household and NAADS activities? Do you get some assistance from any of the household members? Who and on which activities?
- Does your husband help you with some of the household chores on days when you are busy with NAADS farm activities and meetings? Which household activities?
- Have you ever demanded him to do so? What was his reaction?
- How do you feel when your husband helps you with household activities while you are attending to your NAADS activities?
- What was the situation before you joined NAADS?
- Is your ability to benefit from NAADS activities affected by your having many responsibilities to fulfill? How?
- Are there some households in this community where men help their wives with household chores? How does society look at such men?
- Are there any community sanctions against men's involvement in household activities?

## **6. Beneficiaries' Perceptions and understandings about “women's empowerment”;**

- What is the goal of NAADS Programme?
- Have you ever heard about `women's empowerment'?
- What do you think `women's empowerment' means?
- Do you admire women who are empowered? Why?
- Do you think other people in the community admire women who are empowered? Why?
- Are you empowered? Why?
- Do you think you are empowered because of your participation in NAADS programme? Why?
- What are the community perceptions about empowered women?

## **7. Concluding Discussion:**

- Would you recommend others to join the NAADS programme? Why?
- What challenges do you face while participating in NAADS programme?
- Based on your experience with the NAADS programme, what suggestion would you give to make it more effective in future?

Thank you very much for your time!

### ***Interview Guide for Husbands:***

#### **1. Personal Data:**

Name, Age, Education level, Occupation, Marital status, Religion, No. of children - boys and girls, No. of wives, Relationship to the household head.

#### **2. General ideas about women's involvement in NAADS:**

- How did you come to know about the NAADS programme?
- Are you a member of NAADS Programme yourself?
- How do you feel about your wife being part of this programme?
- How do you think other relatives and the community feel about women's involvement in such development programmes?

#### **3. Women's control over resources:**

- Has NAADS programme influenced your wife's control over household resources in any way? Tell me how you feel about this?
- Has your wife bought any piece of land using the money from NAADS?
- Are there women in this community having ownership and control over land?
- How does the community react towards women owning land?

#### **4. Decision making in the household:**

- Who selects the enterprises your household is involved in?
- How do you utilize the agricultural output after harvesting?
- Who sells the produce? Tell me about how you use the money obtained from NAADS enterprises?
- Who decides on how much to spend on your children's welfare and education?
- Are there women in this community who make decisions on how to use the money obtained from NAADS enterprises?
- How do you think about such women who make decisions in the household?

#### **5. Husband's involvement in Household and NAADS activities:**

- Do you think your wife's ability to effectively participate and benefit from NAADS is affected by her household responsibilities?

- Have you ever provided labour on your wife's NAADS enterprises?
- Do you ever help your wife with household chores? Which activities?
- Has your wife ever demanded your help on household and NAADS activities? Tell me how felt about that?
- Are there some households you know where men help their wives with household chores in this community? How does the society look at such men?

**6. Husband's perceptions about women's empowerment:**

- What is the goal of NAADS Programme?
- Have you ever heard about 'women's empowerment'? What do you think 'women's empowerment' means?
- Do you admire women who are empowered? Do you think other people in this community admire women who are empowered? Why?
- Do you think your wife is empowered? Why?

**7. Concluding Questions:**

- What challenges do you think your wife encounters while participating in NAADS programme?
- What suggestions would you give to make NAADS programme more effective in future?

Thank you very much for your time!

***Interview guide for NAADS Programme Implementers:***

**1. Personal Data:** Age, Marital status, Education, Title (Occupation)

**2. Implementers' ideas about "women's empowerment";**

- Have you ever heard about 'women's empowerment'?
- What do you think 'women's empowerment' means?
- Do you admire women who are empowered? Why?
- What is the goal of NAADS Programme? Is women's empowerment part of its goals?
- Do you think women are empowered because of their participation in NAADS programme? Why?
- How do other people in this community think about women being empowered? Why do you think so?
- What strategies have you put in place to make sure that the NAADS goal of empowering women is fulfilled? Are there other strategies you think if tried could empower women?
- What challenges do you think these women face at both household and community levels while participating in NAADS programme that affect their getting empowered?
- Are there any community sanctions and norms affecting women's participation in NAADS and their empowerment? Tell me about those sanctions?
- Has women's participation in NAADS programme helped them to challenge such challenges and societal sanctions? How?
- Based on your experience with the NAADS programme, what suggestion would you give to make sure the programme can transformatively empower women and other marginalized groups in future?

**3. NAADS FID Trainings and Meetings;**

- How many NAADS trainings or meetings do you organize in a week? What is the sex of the facilitators? Do women participate in these trainings or meetings?

- Where do you carry out these meetings from? Do you think women have difficulties reaching those places? Why?
- What is the education level of most of the women who participate? Which language do you use when communicating to these women during trainings?
- Do women communicate freely with men during NAADS trainings and meetings? Do they ask questions or give suggestions? What are men's reactions towards these women?
- How do you think the community reacts towards women who speak confidently in public during trainings and meetings?
- How do these trainings help women overcome and challenge societal sanctions and household factors affecting their participation and progress in NAADS activities?
- Do you have any women leaders in NAADS leadership committees? How is their leadership perceived by their husbands and community members?

Thank you very much for your time!