

## **Gender Mainstreaming and Socio-Economic Development of Women in Kathile Sub-County, Kaabong District, Uganda**

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**Abstract.** The study sought to examine gender mainstreaming and socio-economic development of women in Kathile Sub-County, Kaabong District, Uganda. The study objectives were; to determine the level of income generation on socio-economic development of women in Kathile sub-county, Kaabong district, Descriptive design was used. The study population involved 133 participants where 15 Community Development officers (Kathile Sub-County), Community leaders (Kathile Sub-County), 35 Kathile Sub-county top authorities and 65 Selected women. A sample size of 100 respondents was determined through purposive and proportionate sampling techniques. Data was collected from primary and secondary sources using questionnaires and interviews. The data was presented using frequencies and percentages. The study findings revealed that income generation has significant influence on the socioeconomic development of women in the area of study. In addition, micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor, particularly women in predominantly developing countries has become one of the most popular development strategies of the last few years. The study recommends that civil society, NGOs and CBOs should advocate for the need to create income generating activities for women in the sub-county. This is because the involvement of civil society, public consultation, and polling can have different

outcomes on income generating activities which can help to promote socio-economic status of the women.

### **1. Introduction**

United Nations Charter of 1945 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 established the first official worldwide recognition of women's equality and non-discrimination on the basis on sex. However up until the late 1960's the focus was on women's reproductive roles, as women were seen as wives and mothers and their main issues were supposed to be obtaining access to food, contraceptives, nutrition and health care. The 70's and 80's marked a new phase in which the debate moved beyond women's equality and the domestic sphere of women's role as wives and mothers onto the global stage where the role of women was promoted as an aid for economic development. The important events such as the First World Conference for Women held in Mexico 1974, the UN decade for women "76-85" and the promotion of the Women In Development (WID) approach emphasised women's right to development, recognition of women's economic role in national economies and, most significantly, gave a voice to women in developing countries.

In Africa, the mainstreaming of gender was identified as a key process for instituting change

to the new South African democracy in 1995. South Africa ratified the Beijing Platform for Action, an agenda towards female empowerment, and made a firm commitment to the mainstreaming of gender within the Public Service by creating the National Gender Machinery. However, appreciation for the diversity between men and women still remains limited in most government departments, and the processes currently in place are not making much of a difference. The process of gender mainstreaming is especially important in a participatory democracy, as it enables international agreements in the area of gender to have clout. Gender is widely recognised as a marginalised issue, and the UN defines gender mainstreaming

Over the past decade, Uganda has made significant progress in the advancement of gender equality and empowerment of women in political, economic and social spheres. National Development Plan (NDP) which describes the country's macroeconomic and social policies in support of growth and poverty reduction during the period 2010/11 to 2014/15- emphasizes that discrimination against women in the country is embodied in traditional rules and practices that explicitly exclude them or give preference to men, resulting in a lasting constraint on women's empowerment and economic progress. At the governance level, these rules and practices limit political and economic participation of women. This in turn, leads to formulation and passing of policies and laws which do not protect women's rights. At the community and household level, women are restricted from participating in important decisions such as resource use, family planning, and access to services such as health and education.

The development of a National Gender Policy (NGP) in 1997, and its revision in 2007, confirms the Government of the Republic of Uganda's unequivocal commitment to take actions that will bring about more equal gender relations. The policy will ensure that all Government policies and programs, in all areas and at all levels, are consistent with the long-term goal of eliminating gender inequalities. The policy gives a clear mandate to the Ministry of

Gender, Labour and Social Development and other Line Ministries to mainstream gender in all sectors. It sets priority areas of action at the National, Sectoral, District and Community levels with all levels of planning, resource allocation and implementation of development programs redressing gender imbalances and acting with a gender perspective. The ultimate objective of this policy is to lead to a society that is both informed and conscious of gender and development issues and concerns.

## 2. Statement of Problem

In Uganda, many of the women have been have been victim of gender discrimination across country depending on the social cultural facts most of their participation have not been released in policy making and planning in most offices much as they are being involve in the offices their pay is low in country and most poor. Uganda has a strong legislative and policy framework that supports gender equality and women's empowerment, based on commitments under the Constitution well as other international obligations on gender equality. However, Ugandan society is characterized by strong patriarchal beliefs that value male supremacy and women's subordination. Gender inequalities stand in the way of Uganda's achievement of economic growth and transformation as highlighted in the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Millennium Development Goals.

In Karamoja region, decades-long efforts of the government intervention towards SDGs have remarkably reduced gender disparities in health, education, employment and political participation. However, substantial gender inequality persists and women in Kathile Sub-County, Kaabong District remain disadvantaged and vulnerable in many ways around the world. These include gender disparities in girls' secondary education enrolment and completion; high maternal mortality rates; women's unequal access to economic resources; disproportionate burdens of unpaid work; legal and social discrimination against women and girls; and widespread gender-based violence. In settings affected by tribal conflicts in Karamoja, and other crises, gender inequalities are often

magnified and their negative impacts on development are exacerbated.

Women still suffer and in a family setting they suffer more because they cannot give up their children. Moreover, the ultimate wellbeing of women is influenced by culture to a large extent.

Most women in Uganda have been marginalized in access to ownership and control over land, education, business ownership, skills. Whereas women comprise an estimated 70 per cent of the work force in agriculture, they experience unequal access to and control over important productive resources like land. This limits their ability to move beyond subsistence agriculture. In wage employment, women are concentrated in the lowest paying sectors, which is linked to their lower education levels; 50 per cent of employed women work in the three lowest paying sectors, compared to 33 per cent of men in Uganda.

The society decides which cultural beliefs and practices govern women and take control of their roles and responsibilities. Men on the contrary are left with the role of defining these societal norms with full control being left to them. Their interaction on different levels is fully determined by societal norms. Economically the means of production and access are also controlled by the society. The society on a bigger scale controls the process of development through resources (Hooks, 2000). It seems that, lack of awareness on gender issues is an influencing factor as well as the limited nature of resources and dysfunctional policies. That necessitates an investigation of this kind that enlightens the socioeconomic state of Women in Kathile area of Uganda.

In Kathile Sub-County, Kaabong, allocating enough resources towards gender mainstreaming is partially demonstrated by bringing on board the under-represented groups which in most cases is women. This enables them to take part in decision-making and ensure that they are truly part of the change process.

With the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, people may demand to be consulted, heard and be involved in development projects

and programmes. It is through consultation that people's views and perceptions can contribute to development that affects them

### 3. Statement of Problem

Gender mainstreaming is integral to a country's sustainable development. Socio-economic development in any country is also pegged on access to optimal use of resources for both men and women. Gender mainstreaming of policies and programs in both the public and private sector is important if gender equality and equity for all citizens is to be achieved. Gender mainstreaming also results in more effective service on the part of operation, power and resources. Uganda as a country has made great efforts to mainstream gender in its activities but there have been challenges that have derailed the process.

According to Boughelaf (2012), the government policy in post-colonial times has not seriously challenged the basic structure of gender relations through creating awareness. This implies that gender inequality still persists. Awareness has not been created in terms of observing the rights of women, their participation and due place in socioeconomic and political arena as well as their safety and protection. This situation can be blamed on both individuals and institutions and this is very common in remote areas such as Kathile Sub-County, Kaabong District.

In Kathile Sub-County, gross inequality in terms of access to resources by both men and women is another challenge. This imbalance has resulted to higher incidences of poverty in women than in men. Most women depend on brewing local brew such as Kwete, Malwa etc which yields very little compared to men who do cattle rearing. In addition to that, women are often given heavy work load such as building houses, gardening, taking care of children yet their male counterparts are always idle taking alcohol.

Despite the fact that the government has done much to promote respectful relations, expressions of stereotypes are still rampant. The government has not keen on the progress of women who are the core of gender

mainstreaming given the inequalities they have faced over the years. This is because despite the fact that the government is sensitive to their needs, the voice of women has not considered important in decision making processes. In addition, awareness is not created among male staff on the objectives of gender equality. It seems that the government did not see the need. If the government was committed to the process of gender mainstreaming, supervisors would have been encouraged to play a strong role in gender mainstreaming to a large extent. Despite the existence of gender policies developed and implemented by the government, their functionality and implementation in gender mainstreaming is still very poor. In support of this statement is the fact that the government considers gender mainstreaming to be an important aspect in its policies and programmes and specific projects are designed and funded to address women's problems.

Despite the government's efforts in implementing gender mainstreaming to overcome such gender disparities, little success has been realized in Kathile Sub-County. It was this regards that researcher intended to examine the gender mainstreaming and socio-economic development of women in Kathile sub-county, Kaabong district.

#### **4. Purposes of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the contribution of gender mainstreaming to the socio-economic development of women in Kathile sub-county, Kaabong district

Specific Objective is:

To determine the level of income generation on socio-economic development of women in Kathile sub-county, Kaabong district, Uganda.

#### **5. Methodology**

The study was carried out from Kathile sub-county. The area is located in Kaabong District, Karamoja region, north eastern Uganda. The researcher used this area due to its huge cases of gender inequalities which impacts socio-economic development of women in the area. Income generation was used as the construct of

gender mainstreaming. The study covered information from 2014-2016. The period was chosen because it was the period when the Kathile sub-county recorded the highest cases of gender disparities

Both quantitative were used in data collection and analysis and general information on the subject matter was collected from the different stakeholders involved in the study. The quantitative design involved use of close-ended questionnaires which were issued to the officials from Ministry of Health, Uganda as the method was convenient for them to fill during thier free time.

The study population involved 133 participants where 15 Community Development officers (Kathile Sub-County), Community leaders (Kathile Sub-County), 35 Kathile Sub-county top authorities and 65 Selected women. The area was purposely selected because of its convenient location and also bore the necessary and required study elements. A sample size of 100 respondents was determined using Sloven's Formula. The result was analyzed using the percentage and Frequency.

### **6. Literature Review**

#### **6.1 Income Generation on Socio-Economic Development of Women**

Women comprise 50 per cent of the world's total population, perform two-third of the world's work hours, receive 10 per cent of world's income and own less than one per cent of total assets (Andrea, 2012). Women are 70% of the world's poor and 70% of agricultural labor in developing countries. Lack of land for farming is perhaps the severest constraint faced by the rural poor, and one that affects more women than men. In rural areas, there are very few employment opportunities. Moreover, they worked as casual and seasonal laborers in agriculture or construction may not be an option for women. There is a growing body of literature which argues that credit programs empower women by strengthening their economic roles, enhancing their capacity to contribute their family's income, helping them to establish their identity outside the family and giving them experience and self-confidence in the public

sphere. Many studies have been made to investigate whether self-help groups and micro credit programs have been efficacious in the empowerment of women (Aufhauser and Hafner, 2002)

Micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor, particularly women in predominantly developing countries has become one of the most popular development strategies of the last few years (Boughelaf, 2012). Despite the fact that micro credit has liberated the women from poverty and enhanced their empowerment to some extent, it has been seen that, many women are unable to use the loan for income generating activities. Rather they are forced to divert the use of their loans for other purposes. Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) may successfully facilitate a variety of micro-enterprise developments among the rural poor by helping women form groups in order to gain. A particularly successful approach may be implementing in the State where a project creates new income earning opportunities for rural women by developing organizations with both social and economic functions (Bruno, 2006). According to Brynard and Coning (2006), the major problems in the project villages are poverty, unemployment, failure of crops, heavy debts, no secondary income, lack of capital for investment and emergency needs, in addition to lack of knowledge and skills, lack of leadership, insufficient knowledge and skills in taking up feasible income generation programs, lack of awareness on mobilization and utilization of the locally available raw materials and natural resources, lack of marketing facilities and business skills etc. Due to all mentioned above people are living in low income level and economic status.

Considering the above problems and situation in the project area there is a need to organize the poor women of villages and councils communities in the State into women Self Help Groups (SHGs) to bring about changes in their social and economic aspects (Brynard, 2007). Hence there is a need to initiate savings, provide credit facilities, and improve the income level and economic conditions of the poor target women in the project villages. Many factors can contribute to the socio-economic development of

women such as land, technology, credit, employment etc (Cooper and Schedler, 2006). Of these various factors, access to credit constitutes the crucial input for their ability to earn an income, leading to an increase in their status and autonomy. In short, it contributes to their holistic development. In any country, there are mainly two sources of credit for any production activity. They are the owned sources and debt sources of finance. For those with little or no land, some of FAO projects may provide strong support for non-farming activities, such as marketing, milk processing, and other micro - enterprises

Women's enterprises tend to be relatively small, have informal structures, flexibility, low capital needs, modest educational requirements, high labor intensity, and depend on local raw materials (Cornwall and Whitehead, 2007). They are also characterized by their dependence on family labor and limited technical and managerial skills. Commonly, these enterprises are not registered, maintain no business records and do not have access to credit from formal credit institutions. Women in developing countries must often rely on informal financing sources that demand high interest. They take loans from the moneylenders at high rate of interest which is making them to live in debts.

Rural women are playing pivotal roles in almost every aspect of our society from time immemorial. They have made important contributions in creating access to human, natural, financial, physical and social capital for making their livelihood sustainable (Council of Europe, 1998)

All phases of agricultural activities from seed sowing to harvesting and processing of crops are intimately done by rural women. The women are participating in both farming and nonfarming activities directly or indirectly with men. The small farmland and homestead area is being used intensively mostly by women (African Development Bank, 2004). However, the majority of new livelihood opportunities are still considered to fall under the male domain, including work in the private sector, in small-scale businesses, or at the marketplace. In rural areas, interest of resource poor women in income-generating activities is high and they are involved in various non-farm income activities

(ADB, 2001; Zunes, 2007). Khan And Rahaman (2007) state that at the individual level, IGAs are perceived to be the ultimate liberator, which bring about a positive change to poor women’s income and provide not only the financial help to household but also have positive impact on other factors of daily life. Some of the literature indicates that women’s income is the key to sources of power and opportunities that may otherwise hinder their lives

The involvement of women in income-generation activities changes their attitudes (Daly, 2005). A number of studies recognize that women’s IGAs are not only crucial but also an urgent priority to reduce poverty and improving their livelihoods or living standard. It has been found that growing economic power of Situation of women in Bangladesh: A brief overview women entails significant improvement in women's participation in household decision making, family planning, children survival rate, health and nutrition and children education especially girls' education (Daly, 2005).

**7. Data Presentation**

**Income Generation on Socio-Economic Development of Women**

To achieve this objective, questionnaires were administered to the subject. These are presented in the tables below:

Table 1: Credit programs empower women by strengthening their economic roles, enhancing their capacity to contribute their family’s income

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	4
Disagree	14	14
Not sure	18	18
Agree	44	44
Strongly Agree	20	20
Total	100	100

Table 1 above indicates that 4% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 14% of the respondents disagreed, 18% of the respondents were not sure, 44% agreed and the remaining 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that credit programs empower women by strengthening their economic roles, enhancing their capacity to contribute their family’s income. This implies that majority of the respondents were aware that credit programs play a vital role on boosting the income levels of households hence contributing to improved socio-economic development of women

Table 2: Micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	3
Disagree	7	7
Not sure	12	12
Agree	28	28
Strongly Agree	50	50
Total	100	100

Table 2 above reveals that 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 7% of the respondents disagreed, 12% of the respondents were not sure, 28% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 50% strongly agreed that micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor. This implies that majority of the residents in the Sub-county were of the view that extending small loans to them can help to improve on their income status since these can be invested in different income generating activities hence improve on their socio-economic development especially women

Table 3: Women’s enterprises tend to be relatively small, have informal structures, flexibility, low capital needs, modest educational requirements, high labor intensity, and depend on local raw materials

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	5
Disagree	12	12
Not sure	13	13
Agree	37	37
Strongly Agree	33	33
Total	100	100

Table 3 above indicates that 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 12% of the respondents disagreed, 13% of the respondents were not sure, 37% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 33% of the respondents strongly agreed that women’s enterprises tend to be relatively small, have informal structures, flexibility, low capital needs, modest educational requirements, high labor intensity, and depend on local raw materials. This implies that it is vital to enable women to generate incomes in order to improve on the social welfare and hence develop within their communities

Table 4: Rural women are playing pivotal roles in almost every aspect of our society from time immemorial

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	5
Disagree	3	3
Not sure	12	12
Agree	50	50
Strongly Agree	30	30
Total	100	100

The study results presented in the table 4 above indicate that 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 3% of the respondents disagreed, 12% of the respondents were not sure, 50% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 30% strongly agreed. This implies that the majority of the respondents revealed that rural women are playing pivotal roles in almost every aspect of our society from time immemorial. This implies that it is vital to equip rural women with appropriate entrepreneurial skills in order to start up their own businesses hence improve on the socio-economic development

Table 5 : Women’s income is the key to sources of power and opportunities that may otherwise hinder their lives

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	5
Disagree	10	10
Not sure	9	9
Agree	50	50
Strongly Agree	26	26
Total	100	100

Table 5 reveals that 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 10% of the respondents disagreed, 9% of the respondents were not sure,

50% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 26% of the respondents strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents revealed that Women’s income is the key to sources of power and opportunities that may otherwise hinder their lives. This further implies that enabling women to access income helps them to widen their opportunities hence minimizing gender discrimination and improving on their socio-economic development

Table 6: The involvement of women in income-generation activities changes their attitudes

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	12	12
Disagree	5	5
Not sure	12	12
Agree	33	33
Strongly Agree	38	38
Total	100	100

According to the table above, 12% of the respondents, 5% of the respondents disagreed, 12% of the respondents were not sure, 33% of the respondents agreed and 38% strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents revealed that the involvement of women in income-generation activities changes their attitudes. This implies that a lot needs to be done to involve women in income generating activities.

### 8. Discussion of the Findings

It was found out that 4% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 14% of the respondents disagreed, 18% of the respondents were not sure, 44% agreed and the remaining 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that credit programs empower women by strengthening their economic roles, enhancing their capacity to contribute their family’s income. This implies that majority of the respondents were aware that credit programs play a vital role on boosting the income levels of households hence contributing to improved socio-economic development of women. This is in line with Aufhauser and Hafner, (2002) who noted that there is a growing body of literature which argues that credit programs empower women by strengthening their economic roles, enhancing their capacity to

contribute their family's income, helping them to establish their identity outside the family and giving them experience and self-confidence in the public sphere. Many studies have been made to investigate whether self-help groups and micro credit programs have been efficacious in the empowerment of women.

The study results reveals that 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 7% of the respondents disagreed, 12% of the respondents were not sure, 28% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 50% strongly agreed that micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor. This implies that majority of the residents in the Sub-county were of the view that extending small loans to them can help to improve on their income status since these can be invested in different income generating activities hence improve on their socio-economic development especially women. This is in line with Boughelaf, (2012) who stressed that micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor, particularly women in predominantly developing countries has become one of the most popular development strategies of the last few years.

It was revealed that 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 12% of the respondents disagreed, 13% of the respondents were not sure, 37% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 33% of the respondents strongly agreed that women's enterprises tend to be relatively small, have informal structures, flexibility, low capital needs, modest educational requirements, high labor intensity, and depend on local raw materials. This implies that it is vital to enable women to generate incomes in order to improve on the social welfare and hence develop within their communities. This is in line with Cornwall and Whitehead (2007) who noted that women's enterprises tend to be relatively small, have informal structures, flexibility, low capital needs, modest educational requirements, high labor intensity, and depend on local raw materials. They are also characterized by their dependence on family labor and limited technical and managerial skills. Commonly, these enterprises are not registered, maintain no business records and do not have access to credit from formal credit institutions.

The finding reveals that 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 3% of the respondents disagreed, 12% of the respondents were not sure, 50% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 30% strongly agreed. This implies that the majority of the respondents revealed that rural women are playing pivotal roles in almost every aspect of our society from time immemorial. This implies that it is vital to equip rural women with appropriate entrepreneurial skills in order to start up their own businesses hence improve on the socio-economic development. This is in line with World Bank, (2008b) who noted that women's participation in agricultural decision-making is also very limited. Still, rural women are the dominant decision-makers in areas such as home gardening, cattle, goat and poultry rearing, and post-harvest activities such as seed production and storage.

It was revealed that 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 10% of the respondents disagreed, 9% of the respondents were not sure, 50% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 26% of the respondents strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents revealed that Women's income is the key to sources of power and opportunities that may otherwise hinder their lives. This further implies that enabling women to access income helps them to widen their opportunities hence minimizing gender discrimination and improving on their socio-economic development. This is in line with Khan And Rahaman (2007) who stated that at the individual level, IGAs are perceived to be the ultimate liberator, which bring about a positive change to poor women's income and provide not only the financial help to household but also have positive impact on other factors of daily life. Some of the literature indicates that women's income is the key to sources of power and opportunities that may otherwise hinder their lives

According to the finding, 12% of the respondents, 5% of the respondents disagreed, 12% of the respondents were not sure, 33% of the respondents agreed and 38% strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents revealed that the involvement of women in income-generation activities changes their

attitudes. This implies that a lot needs to be done to involve women in income generating activities. This is in agreement with Daly, (2005) who noted that the involvement of women in income-generation activities changes their attitudes. A number of studies recognize that women's IGAs are not only crucial but also an urgent priority to reduce poverty and improving their livelihoods or living standard. It has been found that growing economic power of Situation of women

## 9. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the level of income generation in Kathile area is low, there are very few employment opportunities. Moreover, they worked as casual and seasonal laborers in agriculture or construction may not be an option for women. In addition, micro credit or extending small loans for income generating activities to the poor, particularly women in predominantly developing countries has become one of the most popular development strategies of the last few years.

## 10. Recommendation

The study recommends that civil society, NGOs and CBOs should advocate for the need to create income generating activities for women in the sub-country. This is because the involvement of civil society, public consultation, and polling can have different outcomes on income generating activities which can help to promote socio-economic status of the women

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