

Oil-Induced Land Compensation Dispossession and Women's Experiences in Albertine Graben, Uganda

Specioza Twinamasiko^{*}, Frank Ahimbisibwe, and Charles Muchunguzi

Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Uganda

Article History: Received: July 4, 2019; Revised: October 30, 2019; Accepted: November 3, 2019

Abstract: In the last thirteen years since the discovery of oil and gas resources in Uganda, numerous developments have taken place to pave way for the development of oil and gas sector which necessitated land acquisition. In response, interventions such as cash compensation, partial land acquisition and resettlement were undertaken. The lacuna for this study is that, there is limited research that focuses on the experiences of women in oil-induced land dispossession, compensation and resettlement in relation to their reliance on the land for livelihood. This paper, therefore, aims at evaluating these experiences on land compensation dispossession for oil and gas development activities and the impact on women's livelihoods in Albertine region. A phenomenological study research design was adopted through multimethod such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, covert observation and documentary evidence. Purposive sampling was used to select women in categories and snowball sampling to trace displaced women who were not resettled. Findings indicate that cash compensation and resettlement process had loopholes that failed to deal with social, cultural and economic aspects of the affected communities. In conclusion, oil induced compensation process has had devastating experiences on women and many have become more vulnerable. We argue that the negative lived experiences by women as a result of compensation process were attributed to their subordinate status in the rural communities in respect to property ownership and household decision making. The study recommends that future land compensation, resettlement and implementation strategies be gender-inclusive in order to mitigate negative impacts on women livelihoods.

Keywords: Compensation; Dispossession; Livelihood; Oil-induced development

Licensed under a Creative Commons. Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.



*Corresponding author. E-mail: speciozatwnmsk@gmail.com
ISSN 2521-2192 (Print)

Haramaya University, 2018

1. Introduction

The discovery of oil and gas resources in Uganda in the year 2006 has been associated with both positive and negative expectations. The optimism about the estimated 6.5 billion barrels of oil is how the oil and gas production on commercial scale will affect the country performance both in short term and medium term performance (World Bank, 2015). It is expected that oil and gas revenues will drive the country's real GDP growth, projected to average 8.8 percent until 2025. The development of oil industry and increased public investment would enable Uganda achieve per capita GDP of \$1,000 by the end of 2040 transforming the country into middle income status. National Planning Authority (NPA, 2014) estimates show that Uganda's transformation to a middle income status requires US\$18 billion. The current Oil Production Sharing Agreements (PSAs) could provide \$5 billion annually, implying that in three years Uganda should be able to earn sufficient revenues for the economic transformation envisaged by the National Development Plan Uganda Vision 2040 (NPA, 2015). The oil sector will also have multiplier effects to other businesses linked directly or indirectly to oil activities. This would eventually stimulate production and creation of new and higher paying jobs in the country. Gelb & Majerowicz (2011) have argued that like citizens elsewhere in the world, Ugandans have high hopes of positive gains from the oil discovery and exploitation such as employment opportunities, increase in gross domestic product, increased local expenditure on goods and services, reduced oil prices and infrastructure development.

However, notwithstanding the above huge positive expectations from oil exploitations, there is fear among Ugandans that oil discovery and exploitation is likely to be a curse rather than a blessing as it has been elsewhere in Africa (Bategeka, Kiiza & Ssewanyana, 2009; Mbabazi, 2013; Manyak, 2015). For example, the discovery and exploitation of oil in many African countries that was expected to spur economic growth and development, and improved standards of living (Scott, Heller & Eftimie, 2013; Odularu, 2007) has been associated with mixed outcomes (Onyejiuwa, 2016; AFDB, 2007; Basedau, 2005). Therefore, the oil and gas sector development in Uganda has been pursued within the above two contexts. However, since it is inevitable to develop the oil and gas sector without land acquisition, the oil induced developments in Albertine region have required large tracts of land especially for roads construction, airport and oil refinery, pipeline passages and camps for workers in various oil infrastructure development sectors. Extant literature on development induced displacement and resettlements projects whether for oil or other natural resources shows that complexities associated with different ways of compensation, the affected people tend to be made worse-off (Behrman, Meinzen-Dick & Quisumbing, 2011; Terminski, 2011; Bennett & McDowell, 2012; Asthana, 2018; Harvey, 2017; Reddy, Symith & Steyn, 2015; Vanclay, 2017; Smyth & Vanclay, 2017; Ogwang, Vanclay & Assem, 2018). In many oil emerging countries including Uganda, evidence on impact of oil induced development projects is still limited. The major studies so far have been done on the effects of oil discovery on the Albertine Graben communities such as effects on the

environment, livelihoods of the people, oil being a source of land conflicts and resource curse. However, limited research focused on the experiences of women on oil-induced land compensation dispossession and resettlement and how their reliance on the land for livelihood has been impacted in the compensation process.

Nonetheless, whereas the earliest work on dispossession and displacement effects in particular and extractive industry in general acknowledged gender differentiated effects due to the subordinate position of women in respect to property and decision making in most countries in Africa and Asia, empirical studies on gender and oil induced development are disparate in nature and therefore makes it difficult to distil a clear picture of how women livelihood is altered by land displacement due to oil induced development particularly for emerging economies. The need for examining how women are affected by oil induced developments emanates from the vast literature that shows that unlike men who often directly get the compensation benefits or easily move to get alternative livelihoods, women are constrained (see Macdonald, 2017). The need for gender sensitive compensation policies is inevitably required in any extractive industry development.

Theoretically, the models that have monopolized research studies on Development Induced Displacement and Resettlement include Chamber's Three Stage Model (Chamber, 1970), Theory of Institutions (Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1996), Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Ashley & Carney, 1999), John Rawls's "General Conception" of Justice (Rawls, 1971), Scudder and Colson's (1982) model, and Cernea's (2000) IRR model. However, evidence shows that Scudder and Colson's model and Cernea's Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) have been considered important in understanding displacement and resettlement effects.

Therefore, the analysis and interpretation of data was anchored based on Cernea's IRR model of 1990s. Cernea's Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) analyses risks experienced by displaced and resettled people due to induced-developments in general. IRR model specifically positions women among the vulnerable groups who experience severe impacts of land dispossession due to limited power. However, given the limitations of the IRR model to comprehensively unpack the gender and power related issues of access and control, power, participation and the political sub-text of gender-aware planning theoretical approach (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996) was considered as the alternative theory. The experiences of women as a result of land compensation can be positioned in the wider debates of the power of social constructed conditioning in shaping the 'choices' of women to the extent that these social conditioning may influence policies and distribution of resources. The two theories provided the blueprint to follow and build an argument, establish the context of the problem, and explain findings (Grant & Osanloo, 2014).

Studying oil-induced developments, land compensation dispossession and resettlement and women's experiences in Albertine region in Uganda is relevant for three reasons; firstly, the process of land acquisition for the oil refinery project by the government of Uganda that started in 2006 evicted approximately 8,000 people from 29 sq.kms of land in thirteen villages in Kabaale parish. The government in

collaboration with Strategic Friends Uganda, compensated some households and others were resettled (AFIEGO, 2016). In Buliisa where most of the offshore oil wells were discovered, covering an area of 3200 sq.kms, approximately 400 households and 1,276 people were displaced from the land for oil exploitation activities (RAP1, 2018). Oil induced displacement directly affects women. For instance, Global Rights Alert (2015) reported that of 8,000 people affected by oil in Hoima district, a significant number of about 3,707 were women.

Secondly, although less than 10% of women own land, land is the main source of livelihood for women by virtue of having access. In Uganda, most women depend on land as a source of livelihood. For instance, 80% of women participate in crop production and related activities for household livelihoods but only 8% of women own land as compared to 92% of men (Ellis, Manuel & Blackden, 2006). Therefore, any development that disrupts land use and ownership both directly and indirectly affects women's livelihood severely.

Thirdly, the traditional social norms and values in Uganda place men over women in property ownership and decision-making. This subordinate position of women in property and decision making undermines their participation or benefiting from land compensation process. The aim of this paper is to analyze the lived experiences of both groups of women; 8% who possess land and those 80% whose livelihoods are based on land related activities and their access to land is based on the relationship they have with the land owners who are mainly men, who belonged to the compensated household for oil development activities in Albertine Graben. The master research question focused on is: how has land compensation process during displacement and resettlement of people for oil development and exploitation instituted women's new livelihoods experiences?

2. Research Methods

2.1. Research Approach and Design

To understand the predicaments women faced in Albertine regions as result of oil induced development, the study adopted a qualitative research approach. A phenomenological study research design was adopted to obtain in-depth lived experiences of women during land compensation and dispossession in Albertine region. Qualitative phenomenological research design was preferred because of the flexibility it allows in getting extensive data through detailed probing of respondents.

2.2. Study Population

The study focused on women who were affected by land displacement and resettlement. It included: (1) Women who were displaced but cash compensated, (2) displaced and not compensated women, (3) those awaiting compensation, (4) those awaiting resettlement, (5) those who have been resettled, and (6) women whose land was monthly hired for oil extraction activities. Within the above mentioned categories, women who were widows, single mothers, those who were separated from their husbands during and after compensation process, and those who were still living with their husbands were considered.

2.3. Methods and Sites of Data Collection

A multi method approach was used to obtain qualitative data and these included in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, Key informant interviews, covert observation and documentary evidence. Triangulation and respondent validation strategies were applied to test data validity and quality. In addition to the affected women in their particular categories, men heads of the families, district and local leaders were also interviewed to obtain their opinions and information about land compensation during the acquisition of land for oil activities and how it has impacted women's livelihoods. These included Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) directly or indirectly involved in supporting displaced persons, district lands officer, men, community development officer, Resident District Commissioner (RDC), and women political leaders.

In Hoima district, the study participants were selected from villages where many people who were resettled had acquired land and/or worked and lived. The villages selected included Nyamasoga, Kijumba, Kyapolni, Kitegwa and Bukoona, Buseruka trading centre and Hoima municipality. The reason for selecting these areas is that most affected people migrated to those villages by buying an alternative piece of land, live with relatives and others came in to do petty business within the parish while others are still awaiting compensation. Kyakabooga resettlement area was also selected because some of the people who were affected by land compensation dispossession and opted for resettlement. In Buliisa district, the villages selected included Kigwere, Buliisa town council, Kakindo, Avogera, Ngwedo farm and Kasenyi. As opposed to selected sites in Hoima, the villages in Buliisa were selected because they are where the oil wells were discovered and most people were forcibly displaced and compensated.

2.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

To obtain women who had been affected by oil induced development, purposive sampling method was used to select them from different categories described above. Snowball sampling method was used to trace displaced women who were not resettled with houses and were living in various areas within the district through their network links¹. Data collection methods included in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, covert observation and documentary evidence. In total, 6 women Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted (4 FGDs in Hoima and 2 FGDs in Bulisa district). Each of FGD had an average of 9 women. Multi data collection methods were important in enhancing each other in case one method was weak in generating specific data. A total of 25 key informant interviews were conducted with CSO representatives, men, community development officers, lands officers, Local Council 1 (LC1) chair persons, women political councilors, Resident District Commissioners (RDC's) and District Internal Security Officers

¹ These are women who lived in households that opted for resettlement but during implantation their households were resettled with land but no houses. They are scattered in the district and hard to reach but could be traced through their network links.

(DISO) in Buliisa and Hoima. Key informant and in-depth interviews were conducted in local languages (Runyoro, Alur, Luo and Rugungu) for most respondents who were learned English language was used. During data collection, standard procedures for conducting interviews and group discussions were followed such as explaining the purpose of study to participants, obtaining consent, privacy, confidentiality and ethical approvals. For instance, all participants were asked to provide consent, their free will to take part in the interview, and the entire data collected was anonymous. Ethically, the study was approved by Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) Research Ethics Committee (REC) and cleared by Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST).

2.5. Data Analysis and Quality Control

Thematic content analysis was used based on the inductive approach of analysis. Triangulation and respondent validation strategies were applied to test data quality and reliability.

The results presented in this paper, therefore, were generated from qualitative field interviews following the specific research questions that explored experiences of women: (a) how were land compensation activities conducted during displacement and resettlement of people?, and (b) in what ways were women involved in the compensation process in Albertine Graben? The main source of qualitative data were women whose households were beneficiaries of compensation process. However, to obtain comprehensive experience of the whole compensation process and activities that were undertaken, the women experiences were backed by interviews of other key informants and these included male heads of the compensated families, political leaders, government representatives and NGOs officials.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of interviews and focus group discussions revealed that oil discovery-induced land compensation resulted into both physical (relocation or loss of shelter) and economic (loss of assets or access to assets that leads to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood) displacements. The three forms of compensation were employed during displacement and land dispossession operations in study areas. These included cash compensation, compensation by partial acquisition and monthly rent payments, and compensation in kind or resettlement. These compensations are commonly practiced where the affected persons or communities do not have the right to refuse land acquisition or restrictions (World Bank, 2012). Each of these compensation practices or modalities had its own predicaments to women as described below.

3.1. Cash Compensation

Cash compensation was the most opted option by the affected people in both Buliisa and Hoima districts. The option involved monetary payment for the land, houses, crops, trees and graves that would be lost as a result of land acquisition. Measurements differed in terms of items, and land was paid in terms of square metre

or acreage. During the compensation, one square metre of land was valued at UGX 12,000 which translates into 3.3 US dollars at exchange rate of 3600 Uganda shillings per dollar. On the other hand, in terms of acreage, one acre of land was valued at UGX 3,500,000 million shillings, approximately 972 US dollars. However, it was revealed that use of different measurement and payment modalities for the land was not fair. For instance, whereas people who measured their land per square metre were fairly compensated, those whose land was compensated in acres got a low deal. This, however, dented the importance of compensation and choice.

Valuation of houses was differing in cost according to the quality and type. The major contention in house valuation was the issue of subjectivity related to what is considered good quality house. Agricultural crops, trees and other properties owned were also valued and valuation like houses depended upon the type and quantity. Among the other types of property cash compensation catered for were graves. Payment was only made for those graves that could be visually reorganized and are cemented or they are fresh looking. The graves were paid to be transferred to another place or the owner would accept the company to do transfer for them at their own cost. In terms of rates, the interviews revealed that a cemented grave commanded a rate of UGX 350,000 (approximately 97 US dollars); a grave made of marble commanded a rate of UGX 700,000 (approximately 194 US dollars; and a grave without cement or marble (on a bare ground) commanded a rate of UGX 150,000 (approximately 42 US dollars). However, an interview with a male head of family revealed that assets and property that received compensation were only those that had existed in 2009, the time when the valuation was conducted. The revealed compensation payments were mainly transferred to the heads of the households who are mostly men because most of the households in the area are headed by men and in other instances some women did not own bank accounts. However, notwithstanding the cash compensation guidelines in respect to its payment composition, the compensation valuation and who received the money, many respondents echoed some misgivings about the compensation option. There were concerns that the cash compensation arrived at were not sufficient for affected person to obtain alternative land elsewhere. Long delays in getting payments which in one way or another affected people's productivity and inability to acquire alternative land due to land price appreciation were certain to the affected persons. Others grumbled about different rates they received for their land. Although this affected a number of compensated people, some women who were fully in charge of households survival, especially widows and single mothers (heads of the families), commonly mentioned to have experienced it worse as narrated during an in-depth interview.

Compensation was not fair especially to us women who were single mothers and widows. When they were compensating us, one acre in this village was being sold at 7 million shillings. But these people from government were paying us 3,500,000/= for one hectare in Kitegwa village and other neighboring villages. For women who were in charge of all the family livelihoods single handedly, it was unfair for us since we did not have any other source of income to top up for alternative land around (Interview in Kabaale, 2018).

A similar feeling about discrepancies and unfair treatment in compensation rates was expressed below by one of women FGD discussants in Hoima.

The people in charge of compensation came already determined to pay what they wanted not what we had. We were asked to show our gardens and for them they picked what they wanted, some mango trees were not counted, for example if one had 5 trees, they counted 3 and 2 left out; I had a garden of sugarcane but only for trees were counted and not the whole garden and to many women in this area those tree fruits were our sources of cash income. To most of us all were lost during compensation (Focus Group Discussion Nyaihara Hoima, May 2018).

Delays in the compensation process especially paying the compensated money and resettlement were commonly mentioned by women to have been one of the causes of negative impacts such as; being food insecure, living landless lives and losing livelihoods at large. This was experienced by women both in Buliisa and Hoima. Resettling people after seven years of displacement and payment of cash compensation without specific timelines where most families ended up missing out made women's lives more affected than men since most of them derived their livelihoods on land. In an interview with one woman whose land was under partial land acquisition, she stated that:

For me the government started using my land for oil in 2009 and I was stopped from using the land. I kept waiting for the agreement and money in vain. I received them in 2015 when they were returning my land back. I am not sure whether I got the right amount or not. I do not know how much they had valued my land. I came to learn about it.

The above expressions revealed the loopholes that surrounded the compensation process. The unfairness compensation valuation and rates in treatment undermined the real value people received from their properties. The interviews further revealed that cash payments were gender blind. It was noted that women especially the married ones and those who were still under males' care did directly benefit from cash payments. The frustrations faced by women who belonged to cash compensated homes were echoed by one of the woman who explained that:

At the time of opening bank accounts, our husbands did not inform us. They registered their phone numbers and the messages of bank credits came directly to their phones. Because some people were receiving and others not, it was difficult to know that our husbands had received the money until some started buying things like cars, motorcycles, land while others disappeared or married new wives (Focus group discussion in Hoima, May 2018).

Although some amendments were made on cash compensation after complaints that most women had started suffering as a result of compensation, men would still trick them and misuse the money. The requirement was that married people were supposed to open joint accounts. In one of the in-depth interviews with a woman on whether their participation in opening a bank account meant for cash compensation had positive results, she had this to say:

For me I got to know that, we have been mandated by the compensation companies to open joint accounts. When I asked my husband when we should go to Hoima town to open it, he promised to tell me when he is ready. I waited forever. Then I went to ask one of the Resettlement Action Plan members in another village to check for me what could be happening. After a week, he told me that my husband declared me dead and that he had attached a death certificate containing my name. He later disappeared with the money up to now.

Overall, land compensation had many irregularities that affected women. There was complaint of many irregularities related to valuation errors. For example, it was noted that there were discrepancies in monies people expected to get and what actually received on their bank accounts. Some people who had expected to find particular amount of money on their account based on the assessment and cost values, they were shocked to find less sums. For instance, someone expecting to get UGX 40,000,000 million, would find UGX 4,000,000 million instead on bank account. This discrepancy was cited in many transactions among the people who opted for cash compensation. In one of the community meetings in Nyaihara village, a 78-year-old man narrated his shocking experience as follows:

We were in the meeting of signing for the compensated money. I was asked to sign which I did. They told me to check on the account after three months. The day I checked in the bank, I noticed I was compensated only 200,000, yet I was asked to sign for 20,000,000 million shillings. My land was big because it was sustaining me and my family; it had other things which were worth valuing. That was 2013, I went to the district to complain, they took long to respond, I went to a lawyer who asked the office which compensated us and he was told I had signed for 200,000.

The above narration depicts the unlikely event that surrounded land compensation in Albertine region. It contradicts with the Republic of Uganda Compensation Guidelines and Assessment under Land Acquisition (GCALA, 2017) principle 1. The Principle of Equivalence states that “Compensation followed by involuntary displacement or compulsory land acquisition is based on the principle of fairness, adequacy and prior and prompt compensation, where the project affected person should not be worse off in financial or any terms after the acquisition than he or she was before (GCALA, 2017: 10).” The spirit of the principle is aimed at harmonizing and improving the overall practice of valuation assessment to achieve fair and adequate compensation to the project affected persons in accordance with the constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

3.2. Compensation by Partial Acquisition and Monthly Rent Payments

The second compensation option that was available to the affected people was compensation by partial acquisition and payment of rents on monthly basis. This was mainly implemented in Buliisa district and it was characterized by: (a) Land is identified for oil activities such as exploration and ground testing; (b) The owners of land are paid cash compensation on a monthly basis. The land was valued on acreage basis whereby one acre of land fetched between UGX 80,000-130,000/= (approximately between 22-36 US dollars) and this depended on the location of land. The land owners were paid a six-month lump sum of monies; (c) The agreement between the owners of the land and companies specified that when land was no longer needed for oil activities, it would be returned to the owner otherwise the government/company would continue having the right to use; (d) If the government/company decides to own the rented land for good, the monthly payments would be nullified and the owner gets full compensation in cash; (e) At the time of return, the agreement specified that the soil would be rehabilitated to normal soil.

It was evident from the findings that the agreements were written in English, a language not understood by the most affected persons. It is not surprising that during the interviews most affected people echoed various misunderstanding about the whole land compensation process. The excitement people had turned into disappointments and sorrows to the extent that some families lost their loved ones due to delayed and insufficient compensation payments. The following voices extracted from the interviews and group discussions are illustrative of the people's disappointments and frustrations about the land compensation.

For me, my land and other property were valued in 2010. I waited for the feedback forever. I saw people going to the bank to receive their money and buying pieces of land in other areas and my husband had had a backache. I went to ask our village representative; he revealed to me that for us the computer refused to put our name on the list. Someone offered to help us but nothing was positive. My husband spent most of his time telling me that it seems we will never get our compensation. The following morning on waking him up he was dead. Later, I was told that someone else received the money on our behalf, who also denied the allegations.

Similar expressions were echoed by women concerning the frustrations that surrounded land compensation:

We were actually six women in that area carrying out our usual agricultural activities in Kigwera. We learnt that Tullow oil is interested in hiring our land for exploring more oil and that we will be paid 80,000 or more per month. We got excited and started planning to use the money to hire another land for planting crops. That was 2010, we signed agreements and we were asked to stop using the land. We waited for three years, we received 16 months at once and others slowly. During the waiting for the compensation money, we were confused since we had to suspend our agriculture activities.

Another beneficiary, a widow from Buliisa municipality, had also her experience to share about land compensation irregularities.

For me they started using my land in 2009 and I was stopped from using it immediately. I kept waiting for the agreement and money in vain. I received it in 2015 when they were confirming to me that the government is taking land for good and I am meant to receive cash compensation for my land. Since 2009 up to 2016, I switched to doing other things like vending fish which was not catering for all my needs.

The above foregoing demonstrates that whereas compensation had well stated guidelines and modalities to follow in the course of compensation, what actually took place during compensation were faulted because of various frustrations people faced in course of compensation. The delays were too long; property valuation rates were not clear; and the agreements were not well understood by affected persons.

3.3. Compensation in Kind or Resettlement

The focus group interviews with affected people revealed that the third form of compensation was referred to as compensation in kind. The rationale behind this compensation arose from the community response that they desired to be resettled with equivalent land and houses they owned in their former land rather than cash compensation. The compensation mechanism was characterized by (a) resettling one head of the family, (b) a three-bed room house was to be given and the land equivalent to what he/she owned before it was returned, (c) the head of the family

who was polygamous (if a man) and/or staying with members of the extended family on the same compound would be entitled to register only one wife and members of the extended family even if married, were not considered in the resettlement process, (d) resettlement benefits such as transport, seeds, food aid, and equipment for gardening such as pangas, slashers, hoes and livestock distribution were registered under the head of the family, (e) land titles were expected to be written in the names of the person resettled as a head of the family.

However, during the focus group discussions, it was noted that unlike cash compensation which did not require many things to consider, resettlement took longer given the fact that the process necessitated the construction of the basic infrastructure, among others things. In an interview with one male head of the family in the resettlement area, he revealed how lengthy the resettlement process was including the dynamics of choosing the land, construction of houses and commission periods. He narrated the process as follows:

[...] They first compensated those who wanted cash and later they come to us who wanted resettlement. In the beginning, we were told to choose from the three chunks of land, where we went and realized that one of them looked good for agriculture but it did not have any water source while the other two looked unproductive and unfit for agriculture. We opted for one where we thought the soils and vegetation looked fairer as compared to the other two. We were, therefore, told to settle in the land we had not selected, we do not know why they did so. The process of making a decision on where to settle took us almost a year because we visited those pieces of land at different times. The construction of houses took them six years and another whole year waiting for commissioning them. Heads of the families were required to come and check the houses and land given to them before occupying the houses.

The manner in which the head of the household was made supreme without the consideration of other household members was a challenge of this compensation mechanism. It was noted that in Albertine region most of the households or families are huge in size and are polygamous. For instance, it was noted that women who were living in polygamous marriages remained stranded because the compensation by resettlement did not cater for their plight. Their living conditions were drastically fragmented, as most of them were detached from their husbands. The study participants echoed that whereas the compensation plan included land, home and provision of auxiliary public services, some of these were not honored by the government. One civil servant at the community level during the resettled community meeting in Kyakabooga resettlement had this to say:

Resettlement in kind was formerly to offer each person the benefits equally but later they changed to resettling some with land and house while others with land only. The other things to be resettled were churches, public market and water sources which were not yet honored by the government at the time of resettlement (Interview, senior civil servant, Kyakaboga, May, 2018).

Other things that were part of the resettlement process were receiving cash for transport to the resettlement area and land titles for the new piece of land. Resettlement assistance for Kiziranfumbi-Kidoma, Kikoob-Kyapoloni villages in Kabaale parish, according to Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) (2016), was to be received by the people who opted for resettlement. A total amount of 300,000 was

promised for transport by the government which was paid in later months after resettlement. It was revealed by the leader in resettlement area that there were people who had waited for this money to move and were not yet in the resettlement by May 2018. Other people also bemoaned more unfulfilled promises of the resettlement programme. For instance, in one of the interviews with woman who opted for resettlement in Hoima district, she narrated her experience with resettlement transport:

[...] Unfortunately, I was resettled without a house. I requested my friend to borrow for me money from her saving group with an intention to pay after the refund from government. At the time of coming here in the resettlement, I reminded the person in charge of disbursing the money to remember my transport refund. He only advised me to wait while many people were tired of waiting and decided to transport themselves to the resettlement. I went ahead and moved. I received the 300,000 after six months.

The concept of ‘empty promises’ was repeatedly mentioned by almost all resettled men and women in Kyakaboga resettlement area. Land titles were promised as part of resettlement package but its fulfilment did not come easily. The promise from the government agents was that on arrival in the resettlement, the beneficiaries would get land titles and these would be delivered to each and every head of the family.

It should be noted that the compensation framework of the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development emphasized land compensation with a land title to avoid future land grabbing and psychological related stress. At household level, land titles were meant to assure legal ownership of resettlees and to help them advance in recovering their livelihoods as a collateral security for acquiring loans. Therefore, as it was retaliated by RAP representative, the delays in the delivery of land titles have led to, and is continuing to cause, psychological stress as well as fear among the resettled because it is one of the things which motivated many of them to opt for resettlement option.



Figure 1: The only primary school constructed in the resettlement area

Source: Field photo, May 2018

Notwithstanding the above, the resettlement implementers were expected to provide health centres facilities and other social and economic services infrastructure such as churches and market centres as promised by the government during community

sensitization meetings. These unfulfilled promises affected the welfare of the people in resettlement areas because they could not have or enjoy the social services they used to have in their former areas such as churches and markets. In the one of the interviews with a local leader about the resettlement process, he narrated that:

Whereas people now are resettled and happy, the resettlement process had many hiccups that caused sufferings to the affected people. He stated that: Much as we are happy and celebrating resettlement of people to their promised land and smiling because our people now have hope, the resettlement process was basically a long process. This was because of a lot of delays which caused anguish as they had limited resources to sustain themselves. Unlike cash compensation, resettlement registered a number of let-downs on construction of health centres, market area and handing over land titles to the resettles and unresettling most women in polygamous marriages.

Generally, evidences collected from documents and interviews showed that 2,615 households were cash compensated and 93 households were meant to be resettled in Hoima (Hoima District Annual Draft Work Plan (2014/2015)). In Buliisa, the records showed that 400 people were displaced by offshore oil wells (Kuteesa, 2014). Nonetheless, it was found out that the number of people who were cash compensated increased from time to time as many households opted out from in kind compensation mechanism described above. For instance, at the time of data collection, the records indicated that the number of household who were cash compensated had increased from 2,615 household to 2,635. The 20 households who joined the cash compensations group came from the 93 households who had opted for resettlement in Hoima. The increase was mainly driven by the resettlement delays and changes in some promises the government compensation agents had included in the memorandum of understanding. For example, in the beginning everybody who opted for resettlement was promised a land and a house, but later information was received that only 43 households were to receive both a land and a house. During data collection, many affected persons took a swipe at how the compensation activities were unfolding at their expense. As one of the key informants expressed:

Some of us had waited for resettlement for almost four years but all of a sudden the Strategic Friends International (SFI) came to meet us and they mentioned that the program for resettlement has changed. That there are only 43 households which will be resettled with land and the rest will only get land. We went into shock because they did not tell us who was affected by what. We started inquiring about the probability of applying for cash compensation; we mobilized ourselves and succeeded in getting cash, though at that time we did not get money for other property such as crops and plantations because we had stopped using the land four years back. We only received money for land in a community meeting organized by one CSO

Nonetheless, a large number of women experienced negative outcomes from land compensation modalities caused by delays, unequal compensation, poor valuation of property and limited participation in the whole compensation process. It was surprising to find out that some women were excited about land compensation programs. The results indicated that at least out of ten (10) women interviewed, one (1) woman expressed positive achievements. Women who were heading families and those who were under male heads of the families and at the time of compensation the authorities allowed them to be considered as individual owners of the property

compensation process was an opportunity. There are other few married women too who positively benefitted after cash compensation. Success stories from women in different categories were captured. For instance, a woman respondent in Kabaale narrates how her life has been changed positively by land compensation:

I am a widow with five children. After realizing that my husband's brother, who was in charge of my children's property, had registered it under himself and none of us was going to access any kind of compensation, I registered the case and went into court of laws; I and my children won. We are now resettled with a very nice looking house which we had never dreamt about and above all we are no longer under any body's control as far as my children's property is concerned.

Furthermore, to some women whose households were compensated and were able to plan for the received cash, positive experiences were narrated. According to a few women mostly coming from households which received cash compensation on time and their family property valuation was properly done, one respondent's narration was captured as she stated that:

When we heard that our 15 acres of land was valued and were getting money soon, my husband started looking for land which was bought. He also acquired a plot of land in the Hoima town where we constructed a commercial house. One entrance is rented and in another one I sell hardware materials. My husband is also doing mobile business. I mean, our life changed for better because of oil discovery in our area.

However, it was found out to be for few individual women in all districts of Hoima and Buliisa. It was commonly emphasized in most focus group discussions that it was not too late for the government to intervene and save some homeless women especially those who were meant to be resettled with full benefits but were left out because of change of policies. Further to mention was the idea of resettling one head of the family which impacted a number of women in polygamous marriages negatively. If the policies could be revised, more positive experiences would be registered. Nonetheless, we observed that much more impacts were clearly associated with cash compensation that was insufficient for affected persons to obtain alternative land elsewhere. Women participation in the process being limited, people did not understand the terms and conditions of the compensations due to limited information, language barrier and delays in payments *inter alia*. These aspects have been found to be critical in mitigating the negative experiences of women in displaced situation especially when oil-induced displacement impacts daily livelihoods.

4. Discussions

In respect to land compensation process as a result of land acquisition for oil development activities in the Albertine Graben, three forms of compensation included cash compensation, compensation by partial acquisition and monthly rent payments, and compensation in kind resettlement. However, the results showed that affected people in Buliisa and Hoima preferred mostly the cash compensation. This is consistent with government statistics which showed that 98% of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) opted for cash compensation (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, 2017). The option involved monetary payment for the land, houses,

crops, trees and graves that were lost as result of land acquisition. This finding is consistent with numerous studies on displacement, which show that displaced people tend to prefer cash compensation to other options such as compensation in kind for many different reasons (Reddy, Smyth & Steyn, 2017; Moore, 2015; World Bank, 2012).

The study findings also show that there are embedded barriers that limit women's participation in land compensation and benefitting from compensation which results in negative experiences. The expressions of men not involving their women in spending compensation monies, and spending or wasting money on goods or services that are considered unproductive is well documented in the literature (Macdonald, 2017). For example, results revealed that many men married new wives, bought motor vehicles, started businesses and other unintended expenses other than using the money to secure lost property (land and houses).

The devastating negative effects of oil induced developments to women were driven mainly by irregularities associated with land compensation. For instance, although the compensation had set standard procedures concerning the payment composition, valuation and payment, results revealed that many respondents had negative sentiments about the cash compensation option. There were concerns that the cash compensation arrived at, was not sufficient for the affected person to obtain alternative land elsewhere. Affected women also had complaints about the long delays in getting payments which in one way or the other affected their productivity and caused inability to acquire alternative land due to land price appreciation. Others complained about different rates of compensation they received for their land. It was not surprising that people mentioned that the excitement about cash compensation turned into disappointment and sorrow to the extent that some families lost their loved ones due to delayed and insufficient compensation payments.

Evidence has shown that compensation does not sufficiently replace the lost property, lost livelihoods, improve the incomes rather worsen the standards of living of the people and most especially the vulnerable groups such as women, children and the aged (FAO, 2017). Studies further show that cash compensation for land has not yielded tangible benefits in terms of restoring household livelihoods to the affected persons (Lahiff, 2013). *Inter alia*, this is due to limited land, local markets, ignorance about banking services and lack of experience in handling large amounts of money in cash by local people (Cotula, Vermeulen, Leonard, Keele (2009).

In kind compensation, although highly recommended and a priority in poor countries' setting, the findings revealed that the manner in which it was implemented caused challenges. The implementation of in kind compensation ignored the social and cultural dynamics of the affected persons such as family composition, marriage values, land ownership, and rights and position of marginalized groups such as women, children and the aged. A resettlement that does not take into account these dynamics is subject to create problems to affected persons and marginalized groups. For instance, cases of women and children from polygamous families lost out from compensation because the resettlement did not consider this fact. Nonetheless, the study finding also revealed that key critical compensation and resettlement activities

such as people's participation, information sharing, and language and signing of agreement, among others did not follow the standard procedural practices. For instance, the involvement of affected persons, particularly women, was limited and even those who participated did not understand the whole compensation process. These findings, however, have limited scholarly works that directly talk to them in relation to women livelihoods in particular. This is because of the nature of large land acquisition and compensation practices which are new in its kind to be looked at in the lens of gender perspective. However, in general, scholars such as Mender (2014), Downing (2002), and Cernea & McDowell (2000) have argued that displacement of any kind causes many similar consequences everywhere it occurs. However, the findings on the experiences of women in Albertine Graben have, to a small extent, disapproved Downing, McDowell and Cernea's arguments of negative consequences of development-induced displacement due to success stories women expressed in having more positive gains from cash compensation and resettlement programs.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study findings show that women's experiences from land compensation were majorly adverse due to the impacts it caused on their livelihoods. The loss of land that was an important livelihood asset which supported women's welfare instituted the status of women's survival profile in post compensation process. Cash compensation process and resettlement programmes had loopholes that failed to deal with social, cultural and economic aspects of the affected communities. The negative lived experiences by women as a result of compensation process were attributed to their subordinate status in the rural communities in respect to property ownership and household decision making status. Overall, the land compensation and resettlement activities were gender-blind resulting into many adverse effects to women in various proportions. Many affected women have been made helpless. The future of their livelihood is uncertain and yet the conditions of compensation and resettlement could not allow them to go back to their status quo. An indication that when institutions such as the government, Civil Society Organizations and NGOs do not come up for intervention to reconstruct women's livelihood status quo, the negative impacts on women will be severe. The study recommends that future land compensation, resettlement and implementation strategies be gender-inclusive in order to mitigate negative impacts on women livelihoods.

6. References

- African Development Report. 2007. *Africa's natural resources: The paradox of plenty*. Abidjan: African Development Bank.
- African Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO). 2016. The role of social impact assessments in promoting human rights. Policy. Republic of Uganda, Kampala.
- Ashley, C. & Carney, D. 1999. *Sustainable livelihoods: Lessons from early experience*. London: Department for International Development.

- Asthana, V. 2018. Forced displacement: a gendered analysis of the Tehri Dam project. In *India migration report 2017*. Routledge, India.
- Basedau, M. 2005. *Context matters—rethinking the resource curse in Sub-Saharan Africa*. G. O. Hamburg (Ed.). (www.duei.de/workingpapers). (Accessed on July 11, 2018).
- Bategeka, L., Kiiza, J., Ssewanyana, S. 2009. *Oil discovery in Uganda: Managing expectations*. Kampala: Economic Policy Research Centre and Makerere University.
- Behrman, J., Meinzen-Dick, R. & Quisumbing, A. 2011. The gender implications of large-scale land deals. *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, 1-33.
- Bennett, O. & McDowell, C. 2012. *The human cost of development and resettlement*. Washing D. C: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cernea, M. & McDowell, C. 2000. *Risks and reconstruction experiences of resettler and refugees*. Washington D. C: The World Bank.
- Chambers, R. 1970. *The volta resettlement experience*. London: Pall Mall Press. (<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/679>).
- Cotula, L., Vermeulen, S., Leonard, R. & Keeley, J. 2009. *Land grab or development opportunity? Agriculture investment and international land deals in Africa*. IIED/FAO/IFAD, London/Rome.
- Downing, T. 2002. *Avoiding new poverty: Mining-induced displacement and resettlement*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development, Briefing paper no.2.
- Ellis, A., Manuel, C. & Blackden, C. M. 2006. *Gender and economic growth in Uganda: Unleashing the power of women*. Washington D. C: The World Bank.
- FAO. 2017. Forced migration and protracted crises: A multilayered approach. Rome.
- Gelb, A. & Majerowicz, S. 2011. "Oil for Uganda - or Ugandans? Can cash transfers prevent the resource curse?". *Center for Global Development*, 1-21. (<http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1425327/>). (Accessed on December 11, 2015).
- Global Rights Alert. 2015. *Acquisition of land for the oil refinery: Tracking progress in resettling project affected persons who opted for land compensation*. Kampala: Global Rights Alert. Retrieved from (www.globalrightsalert.org). (Accessed on July 11, 2018).
- Grant, C. & Osanloo, A. 2014. Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: *Creating the blueprint for your "House"*. *Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research*, 4 (2): 1-26. DOI: 10.5929/2014.4.2.9.
- Guidelines for Compensation Assessment under Land Acquisition (GCALA). 2017. Ministry of Lands and Housing and Urban Development. Kampala.
- Harvey, B. 2017. The methodological trap: In reply to Kemp and Owen. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 4 (5): 1-5.

- (doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2016.12.002>). (Accessed on July 23, 2018).
- Hoima district annual draft work plan. 2014/2015. Structure of budget framework paper. Local government budget framework paper. (<https://budget.go.ug/sites>). (Accessed on October 27, 2018).
- Kabeer, N. & Subrahmanian, R. 1996. *Institutions, relations and outcomes: Framework and tools for gender-aware planning*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies University of Sussex.
- Kuteesa, A. 2014. *Local communities and oil discoveries: A study in Uganda's Albertine Graben Region*. Washington D.C: Brookings.
- Lahiff, E. 2013. *The land question in southern Africa: A political economy perspective* (1st ed.). B. Chigara (Ed.). London: Routledge.
- Macdonald, C. 2017. The role of gender in the extractives industries. *United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research*, 1-22.
- Manyak, T. G. 2015. Oil and governance in Uganda. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 5 (1): 41-53. doi:10.5296/jpag.v5i1.7170
- Mbabazi, P. K. 2013. The oil industry in Uganda; A blessing in disguise or an all too familiar curse? *The 2012 Claude Ake Memorial Lecture* (5).
- Mender, J. 2014. *The case against the global economy: And for a turn towards localization*. Edward, Goldsmith and Jerry, Mender (Eds.). New York: Routledge.
- Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. 2017. *Annual report*. Kampala: The Republic of Uganda.
- Moore. 2015. *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy: Lord and peasant in the making of modern world*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- National Planning Authority (NPA) 16-29/2020. 2015. *Strategic planning: Consolidating the development capacity of the authority*. Kampala: Republic of Uganda.
- Odularu, O. G. 2007. *Crude oil and the Nigerian economic performance*. (<http://www.ogbus.ru/eng/>). (Accessed on July 28, 2018).
- Ogwang, T., Vanclay, F. & Assem, A. V. 2018. Impacts of the oil boom on the lives of people living in the Albertine Graben region of Uganda. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 5 (1): 98–103.
- Onyejiuwa, D. C. 2016. Resource rents and dependence in Sub-Saharan African countries economies. *Open Access Library Journal*, 3(4): 23-78.
- Rawls, J. 1971. 1999. *A theory of justice*. Revised edition. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Reddy, G., Smyth, E. & Steyn, M. 2015. Land access and resettlement. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 33 (4): 290-290. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2015.1069667>).
- Reddy, G., Smyth, E., Steyn, M. 2017. *Land access and resettlement: A guide to best practice*. London: Routledge.

- Resettlement Action Plan. 2016. *Resettlement action plan for Kizirafumbi-Kadoma-Kikoob-Kyapoloni-Kabaale power line. Rural Electrification Agency SFG2550V3*. Republic of Uganda, Kampala.
- Resettlement Affected People (RAP) 1. 2018. Tilenga project–resettlement action plan 1. Atacama /Synergy/Nomad. Kampala.
- Scott, J., Dakin, R., Heller, K., & Eftimie, A. 2013. *Extracting lessons on gender in the oil and gas sector*. Washington, D. C.: The World Bank.
- Scudder, T. & Colson, E. 1982. From welfare to development: A framework for the analysis of dislocated people. In A. Hansen & A. Ohver-Smith (Eds.), *Involuntary migration and resettlement: The problems and responses of dislocated people*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Smyth, E., & Vanclay, F. 2017. The social framework for projects: A conceptual but practical model to assist in assessing, planning and managing the social impact of the projects. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 35 (1): 65-80. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2016.1271539>
- Terminski, B. 2011. *Mining-induced displacement and resettlement: Social problem and human rights issue (a global perspective)*. Akademickie Łośgraf, Warszawa.
- Uganda Vision 2040 National Planning Authority. 2014. Transforming Uganda society from peasant to a modern and a prosperous country within 30 years. Kampala.
- Vanclay, F. 2017. Project-induced displacement and resettlement: From impoverishment to risks to opportunity for development. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 35 (1): 3-21. (doi:10.1080/14615517.2017.1278671).
- World Bank. 2012. *A strategy for development*. Washington D C: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- World Bank. 2015. *Uganda country economic memorandum: Economic diversification and growth in the era of oil and volatility*. Kampala: World Bank. (<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24789>). (Accessed on June 27, 2019).

