



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF SCIENCE FRONTIER RESEARCH: H
ENVIRONMENT & EARTH SCIENCE

Volume 20 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Year 2020

Type : Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal

Publisher: Global Journals

Online ISSN: 2249-4626 & Print ISSN: 0975-5896

Rights to land Ownership, Gender Inequality and Food Security in Rural Cameroon: The Case of Women in the North West Region

By Norah Aziamin Asongu & Achu Frida Njiei

Research Officer in the National Center for Education (CNE)

Abstract- This paper examines the relationship between land ownership, gender inequality and food security in Cameroon with a particular focus on women as food producers, consumers, and family food managers. It examines the constraints women face as farmers in terms of their rights to land ownership, access to production inputs, technology, and food. In most rural areas of Cameroon, women have access to land but are denied ownership rights. Access to land meets the practical gender needs of women but fails to meet the strategic gender needs of land ownership. Besides, women have inadequate access to production inputs and technology in rural Cameroon. In most cases, women still rely on traditional farming methods, limited farm inputs, and rudimentary tools for food production. Most women are also generally excluded from every inheritance and do not benefit from their natal or marital clans and thus have no possibility to control and take decisions over land.

Keywords: *land ownership, gender inequality, technology, food security, practical gender needs, strategic gender needs.*

GJSFR-H Classification: FOR Code: 070199



RIGHTS TO LAND OWNERSHIP | GENDER INEQUALITY AND FOOD SECURITY | IN RURAL CAMEROON | THE CASE OF WOMEN IN THE NORTH WEST REGION

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



RESEARCH | DIVERSITY | ETHICS

© 2020. Norah Aziamin Asongu & Achu Frida Njiei. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>, permitting all non commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Rights to land Ownership, Gender Inequality and Food Security in Rural Cameroon: The Case of Women in the North West Region

Norah Aziamin Asongu ^α & Achu Frida Njiei ^σ

Abstract- This paper examines the relationship between land ownership, gender inequality and food security in Cameroon with a particular focus on women as food producers, consumers, and family food managers. It examines the constraints women face as farmers in terms of their rights to land ownership, access to production inputs, technology, and food. In most rural areas of Cameroon, women have access to land but are denied ownership rights. Access to land meets the practical gender needs of women but fails to meet the strategic gender needs of land ownership. Besides, women have inadequate access to production inputs and technology in rural Cameroon. In most cases, women still rely on traditional farming methods, limited farm inputs, and rudimentary tools for food production. Most women are also generally excluded from every inheritance and do not benefit from their natal or marital clans and thus have no possibility to control and take decisions over land. In most of the villages studied, cultural stereotypes shape the mentality of men and women in that a woman who is considered a property cannot own property but can be allowed access to it since she has as a role to produce food to feed her family. Closing the gender gaps in food production, by allowing women to own land and providing them with improved technology and farm inputs, would significantly increase agricultural output in rural Cameroon.

Keywords: land ownership, gender inequality, technology, food security, practical gender needs, strategic gender needs.

I. INTRODUCTION

The agriculture sector is underperforming in Cameroon, and one of the key reasons is that women do not have access to the resources and opportunities they need to be more productive. Rural women form the majority of persons at the bottom of the ladder in terms of ownership to productive resources like land. According to the FAO (2012), achieving the Millennium Development Goal 3 (MDG3) can help us attain the MDG1. It implies that closing the gender gap in agricultural yields could help reduce the number of hungry people by as much as 100-150 million people. Women are the dominant food actors producing over 50% of the food consumed in most societies in Africa (Boserup, 1970). In the North west region, land

ownership, use and inheritance are regulated in practice by customary laws mostly unwritten but influential and based on gender distinctions. These customary laws have even superior influence than statutory law when it comes to women's property rights.

The role of gender in agriculture has been marked by the growing attention among researchers, donor agencies, and policy makers. The FAO'S state of food and agriculture 2010-2012 and the World Bank's development report 2012 turned their attention to gender issues in agriculture. There is a growing recognition worldwide that gender bias and blindness constitute significant constraints that contribute to food insecurity (FAO, 2012). Women play a critical role in determining and guaranteeing food security as food producers, food providers, and contributors to household nutritional security. Furthermore, there is a likelihood that reducing gender disparities promotes agricultural growth, better income for women, and healthier food and nutrition for all (Bina, 2011). The integration of a gender perspective that recognizes the different roles, constraints and, access to and control over resources of men and women in agriculture and rural development must, therefore, be at the center of any strategy for food security and poverty alleviation (Tempelman, 2002). Aggregate data shows that women comprise 43% of the agricultural labor force globally but, this figure varies according to regions and countries. Women constitute 70 - 90 % of the agricultural labor force in many Sub Saharan African countries (FAO, 1984). Women in Cameroon, for example, play a significant role in agricultural activities, particularly in subsistence food production, where they contribute an estimated 60-80% of the total labor force (Ministry of agriculture, 2003).

Despite the central role played by women in food production, in many developing countries, they face gender-specific constraints that reduce their productivity and limit their contributions to agricultural production (Boserup, 1970). They face a serious gender gap in access to productive resources. These gender gaps include the fact that women control less land than men, and the land they control is often of poor quality (Boserup, 1970). Women in some societies do not also control the income they get from their farms and are less likely than men to use modern inputs such as improved

Author α σ: Research officer in the National Center for Education (CNE) Yaounde, Cameroon. e-mails: norahasongu@yahoo.com, achufri2002@yahoo.com

seeds, fertilizers, and pest control measures. Besides, the chemicals and equipment required to control pests and diseases caused by poor tropical climate and soil conditions are scarce and expensive to the rural farmers. Female Farmers also lack financial means and skills to identify and control crop diseases (UNO, 2008). Deconstructing the notion of food security, Alcock (2009), argues that the world food problem is most often constructed as a natural phenomenon devoid of a political component. The international community and governments should instead develop new policies that will protect the world against the risk posed by the uncertainty and malice of nature rather than attributing food insecurity to environmental degradation and climate change. One of such policies could be closing the gender gap in access to food production resources. Governments need to come up with improved seeds, new technologies, gender-sensitive policies that can help solve the food crisis shortages in the world. Global food problems should not be seen as a supply problem; instead, the emphasis should be on the food production base of developing countries by promoting their self-sufficiency (FAO, 1974).

Maxwell (1988), on his part stated that, the focus on global hunger should not be on the availability of food but access to the hungry population. He emphasizes on shifts in thinking with the replacement of the old by the new. The global and national concern on food supply and production should be replaced by a new and more enlightened attention for the household or individual level of food demand and entitlements. The statement made by Maxwell implies that women who are responsible for about 80% of all agricultural production in Cameroon, for example, must be involved in agricultural policies and programs and the focus should be on the access to food by the different members of the household and not on global or national situations. The contribution of women in food production should be evaluated and more value attached to their work.

The attainment of global food security is described as a situation in which all people at all times have access to adequate, affordable, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary requirements and food preferences for productive and healthy life (FAO, 1996). Food security is presently being subverted by several challenges such as fast increasing demand and variations in consumption patterns, the competition of agricultural land for other uses, the effects of global environmental change, degradation of agricultural soil, erosion of the genetic base of agricultural biodiversity, water scarcity, poor governance and others (pretty, 2009). The government should reconsider the shift in farming practices from subsistence to mechanized agriculture with the use of improved technologies and seeds to increase food production. Globally, indicators of growth in agricultural production and food security are no longer as encouraging as they were before the

1980s (FAO, 2012). The strengthening of agriculture as a result of an increased demand and limited land requires the development and use of better tools, techniques, and organization of production thus an increase in the mobilization and use of capital. The outcome of the increase in output may even encourage innovation in technologies that can improve long term sustainability of resources contrary to Malthusian views (Dermont et al. 2007). Women in the North West region has weak economic autonomy as compared to men in that they are assigned or given parcels of land to work on by their husbands or relations. The above statement implies that women may have access to land, but the decision on the quantity, quality, and location of the land does not depend on the women themselves but their husbands or fathers. This explains why according to Boserup 1970, the fertile lands that are closer to homes are reserved by men for cash crops while women go further and in less productive valuable lands to plant food for subsistence.

A gendered role of women hinders access to technology, agricultural training, and rural infrastructure (World Bank, 2008). Women make crucial contributions in agriculture in all developing countries as farmers and workers. They face gender specific constraints that reduce their productivity and limit their contributions to agricultural production. Women face serious gender gap in access to productive resources. These gender gaps include the fact that women control less land than men and the land they control is often of poor quality (UNO, 2006). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO, 2009), indicates that women produce as much as 80% of basic food stuffs for household consumption and sales in sub-Saharan Africa (FAO-ILO-IUF, 2005). Achieving gender equality and empowering women is, therefore, crucial for agricultural development and food security. Closing the gender gap in agriculture will generate significant gains for the agricultural sector and society. If women were allowed same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 – 30%. Access to these resources by women could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 %, which could, in turn, reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 - 17 % (U N O, 2006). In particular, it has been suggested that the position of women farmers in both indigenous social organisations and national economies is different from men's; they work under diverse constraints in their farming and have different opportunities for alternative employment (Boserup 1970; Meillassoux 1975). If the gender division of labor is a vital aspect of farming, men's and women's differential access to resources might be expected to have an independent effect on cropping patterns.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study made use of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches with inter views, direct observation, focus group discussions, and questionnaires as our data collection techniques. We randomly selected some villages, which were Bafut, Bali, Santa, Akum, Bambui, Bambili, and Belo, as our study areas. The choice of the study site was because the culture of the North West is made up of patrilineal and matrilineal kinship systems. Researchers were, therefore, interested in understanding how land issues

are being managed in the two sub-systems. The only matrilineal society studied was Belo, while all the other areas were patrilineal societies. This is because, only two matrilineal societies in the North West region. Our sampling method was snow-ball. This is because of the gender-sensitive nature of the study. Our entry point was palaces, where we met the chiefs of the different villages, and from them, we could identify our key informants. Figure one below shows the number of informants who participated in the study based on kinship ties.

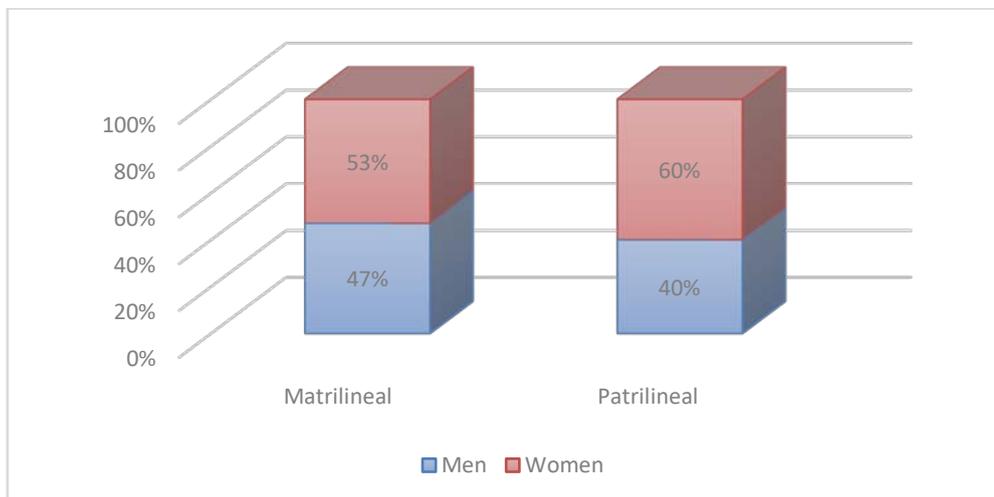


Fig. 1: Number of persons in the two kinship systems in the North West region

In the two sub-systems (matrilineal and patrilineal), our study population was made up of more men than women because men could easily make out time to talk to us than women who are always very busy. The daily activities of women in both areas were so charged that they leave their homes as early as 6am

and only return between 5-6pm to prepare supper for their families. We therefore, had only the market days to interview the women, while men often returned from their farms much earlier than women and had much more time for our interview conversations.

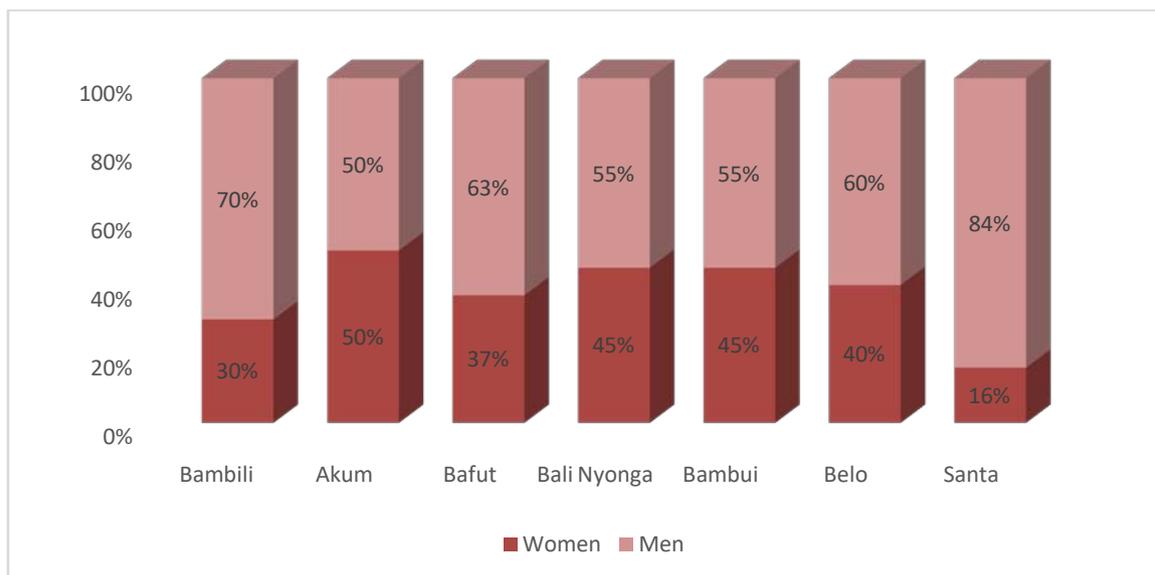


Fig. 2: Villages studied and gender distribution of the study sample

Figure 2 above shows the different villages studied in the North West region and the gender distribution of the studied population. Our study sample

was 160 people with a gender distribution 97 men and 63 women.

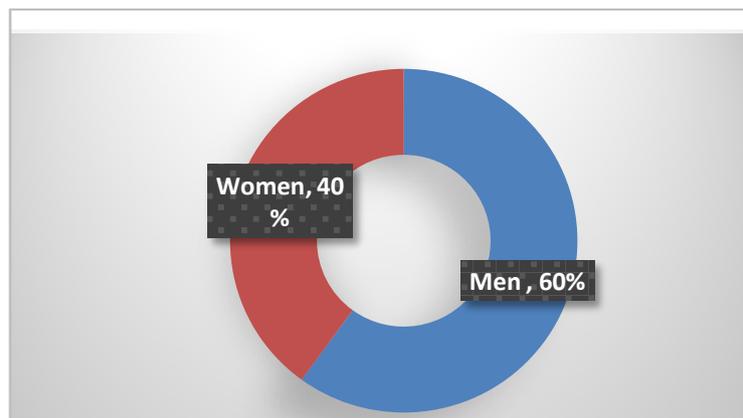


Fig. 3: The Sample size of the study

III. DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

• Data analysis

The data analysis methods used in this study were the descriptive statistics Analysis and Content Analysis.

a) Management of qualitative data

- *Transcribing Tape-Recorded Data and Completing Field notes*

All tape-recorded materials of conversations and interviews were transcribed as well as field notes completed for all discussions. Time was spent listening and transcribing recorded interviews. Field notes taken in the course of conversations were completed. The transcripts and documentary evidence were typed into word processing software. The transcripts captured features of discussions such as emphasis, speed, tone of voice, timing, and pauses. These elements made up the crucial aspect of interpreting data, given the multiple events that produced them. The data from transcripts were read transcript by transcript. Reading and completing the transcripts and making notes from them permitted the researchers to identify ideas, make observations and get insights, and inferences. All transcripts were labeled with file names, typed in a word processing package and stored using these file names. Once each transcript was read and classified, it was dissected, pulled apart and scrutinized transcript by transcript to enable the full understanding of the nature of the data collected.

IV. MANAGEMENT OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

The descriptive statistics method was used to describe the basic features of data in this study. This method provides simple summaries about the sample and the measures to describe what the data shows and makes available some comparisons across people or

other units. Only one of these characteristics of the descriptive statistics method was considered -the distribution, which is a summary of the frequency of individual values or ranges of values for a variable. Distribution was therefore represented in two ways which are, tables using percentages and graphs or diagrams. The Descriptive Statistics Analysis was calculated with excel version 2016. The steps used in calculating were: typing data into an excel table, labeling the rows, making graphs, and transferring them from the excel table to the word document.

V. RESULTS

a) Ownership and sale of land in patrilineal societies

In the North West region Land is a valuable and personal asset for the people and can be used for farming and construction of houses. It remains key to the livelihoods and survival of everybody in the region, and it is owned by individuals, but, still the Fon is the custodian of all the land in most communities. In Santa for example, the Fon said that he owns all the land and can sell it whenever he wants though he acknowledged the fact that individuals own land but must sell it in consultation with the Fon. Statistics from the fieldwork in the North West region show that 65% of all the informants said that land is owned by the traditional authorities while 28% said it men own it, and only 7% of the informants acknowledged that land is owned by women.

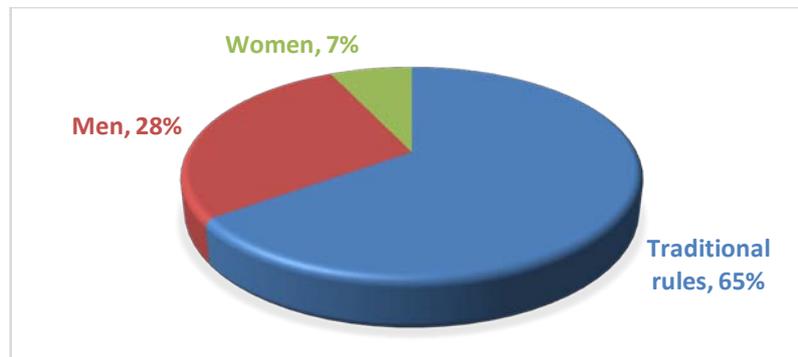


Fig. 4: Land ownership in the North West region

The few informants who agreed that women own land are probably the ones who have gone to school and are aware of the rights of women over land and those who do not understand the difference between land ownership and access to land. We discovered that, traditionally, Women in this region have the users right and not ownership rights over land.

The decision to sell land or not to sell depends mostly on the cultures of the areas studied. Though it remains a valuable asset in all the communities studied as earlier mentioned, there have cultural variations when it comes to the sale. In an interview with a quarter head in Bambui, Pa Gogomoh said: *“In the pas, t it was a taboo to sell the land because it had to be passed down to the younger generation. It is of recent that land is sold in Bambui because of the need for money. To date, the sale of land is discouraged though it can be bought for group farming. Individuals who had bought land can sell, but the tradition does not approve of it. This is because*

land belongs to families and not individuals. It is of recent that overzealous successors sell land to make money”.

In Santa, the Fon and men can sell land, but a woman cannot since she does not own it. If a woman has to sell land, an investigation is made to verify where she got the land. Land owned by women is expected to be handed over to their children and not to be sold. Women in Santa can, therefore, buy land but they cannot sell it.

In most cases, tradition handicaps women from enjoying their rights over land, especially as most of them are not well educated. Their inability to organize themselves and because they are ignorant of their rights to land ownership is a setback to women. Statistics from the field prove that 49% of the informants involved in the study said that only men could sell land in the areas studied in comparison to, 39% who said traditional authorities could sell land and only 12% acknowledged that women can sell it.

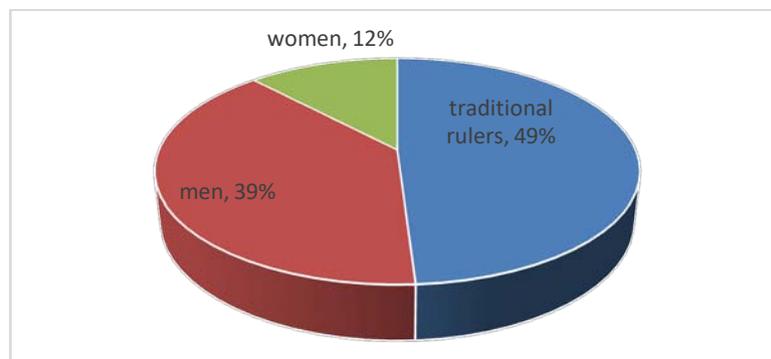


Fig. 5: Perception of who owns land in the North West region

From the above statistics, it is clear that with the changing economic situation of the country and the demands of the monetary economy, the culture of communal land ownership is giving way to that of individual land ownership with people becoming very individualistic in the North West region. Gender gaps in land ownership continue to widen as the traditional stereotype, which says women can use the land but cannot own it is still being promoted. Women still lack behind, perhaps because the culture has succeeded in

maintaining them in a subordinate position when it comes to land ownership.

VI. INHERITANCE OR SUCCESSION OF LAND IN THE NORTH WEST REGION

In the North West region, there exist two kinship systems, which are the matrilineal and patrilineal systems. Inheritance or succession largely depends on the kinship system of the study area. In the areas where

the patrilineal system is practiced such as Bambui, Akum, Santa, Bambili, Bafut, and Bali; It is possible for a woman to inherit her husband's land, but she is only a custodian, and once the male children are grown up, it is handed over to them. Most often, men prefer to hand their prosperities to their successors. These successors are usually male children. Female children can inherit from their fathers' only when they are no male children in the family or when the male children are very irresponsible. In the case where the man had no male child and handed his property to his daughter, it is expected that the daughter will give birth to a son who will inherit his grandfather. In the Bambui community, the male child succeeds the father, and the female child succeeds the mother. Inheritance in this community equally depends on the will of the deceased. According to the chief of Akum, the successor is designated without him knowing, the father can confine in an older adult, quarter head, or a lawyer or tell his best friend. In an interview conversation with Pa Gogomoh a notable in Bambi, he said,

"My wife cannot inherit my land; rather, my son will inherit and remain in the compound. My wife can only control my properties and not inherit it".

Customs and traditions of the North West region impose certain conditions that are detrimental to women when it comes to inheritance or succession. In Bali, for example, 'a woman whose dowry was never paid has no right over her husband's properties even if she has children. Usually, it is the children who take over their father's property. In this situation, when the woman dies, her corpse might not be buried in the late husband's compound, but the children can decide where to bury their mother. The relatives of the man can choose to take the corpse back to the woman's family. According to Mrs. Gemoh, a leader of a women's group in Bambui, tradition has evolved with many changes taking place in the community. Unlike in the past, where a deceased man's brother was supposed to inherit his properties and wife, it is no longer the same today. This is because many families have fought against it and also, men are becoming conscious of the need to hand over their wealth to their children. Field statistics show that 43% of all informants said that children are those who inherit from their parents while 31% said wives inherit their husband's property after death. The other informants who made up 16% for husbands' brothers and 10% for husband's nephews are from the matrilineal society where succession is traced through the female line.

VII. OWNERSHIP AND SALE OF LAND IN MATRILINEAL SOCIETIES

In matrilineal societies like Kom and Belo, it is the deceased man's brother who inherits his property. If

there is no living brother, the nephew inherits. In the Kom tradition there are no traditional rites carried out when the brother of a deceased man inherits, but when a nephew is a successor, certain rituals are performed. In this case the brother is usually considered as the care taker while the real successor is the nephew. The tradition detects that the successor collaborates with the widow so that proper care and control will be taken over the properties of the deceased, but still it is not usually the case because, most successors do not want to take care of the widow and the children of the deceased. They rather most often sell all the properties, and this sometimes ends up causing problems between the widow and successor. In some cases, where the widow cannot defend her rights, she abandons the compound and goes somewhere else. Most successors do not like to be under the control of the widow because they feel that a man should always be in control and not a woman.

VIII. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND ACCESS TO LAND BY WOMEN IN THE NORTH WEST REGION

Women in the North West region, be it in the patrilineal or matrilineal societies, are expected to remain in their husband's families after the death of their husbands. Talking about instances where a woman has had a conflict, Mrs. Lemma said "suppression of women by men is part of their culture, and has been maintained over the years. She said a typical example is when, "I bought my land with my money and the land documents were registered under my name but when I got home my husband was advised not to accept by his friends and kin. This matter brought us problems until we had to go back to the landowner to change the document. My name was replaced with my son's name on the documents." I was however, finally satisfied with the way the case was resolved".

In the North West, land conflicts are usually judged in the community at different levels, but women are most often not part of those who assess cases in the Fon's palace. According to Mrs. Lemma, "I will like women to be part of the court sitting so that they can defend other women in matters of land". The fact that very few women own land certificates in all the areas studied is an indicator that proves women have very little control over land in the North West region and, therefore, cannot make key decisions concerning it. This is because one cannot control something that does not belong to him or her.

Statistics from the field shows that 8% of women get land on which they plant crops through self-purchase, 31% through renting, 24% inherit from husbands, 22% inherit from their parents, in comparison 15% of women acquire land through donations (women are allowed to work on land for as

long as the real owner desire). This implies that women in the North West region are still being marginalized on issues of land ownership. 30% of the women in the North West region are farmers, while only 20 % of men have

farming as their major livelihood. Since women's main occupation is farming, they are supposed to be given the right to land ownership.

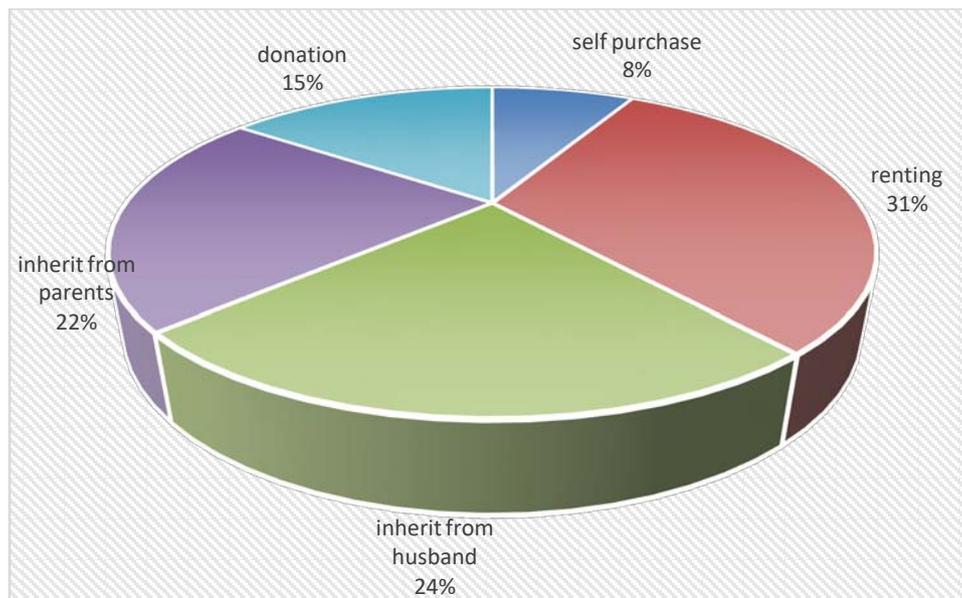


Fig. 6: Access to land for farming by women in the North West region

IX. GENDER AND FOOD SECURITY IN THE NORTH WEST REGION

According to Desjardins (2008), The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Food insecurity refers to the unavailability and the inaccessibility to food in sufficient quantity and quality. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also states that, food is a basic need and right of every human being. Food security is also a situation where at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for a healthy and active life (FAO, 2001). Food security, according to the FAO, does not only require an adequate supply of food but also entails availability, access, and utilization by all men and women of all ages, ethnicities, religions and socioeconomic levels. This implies that to achieve food security; there must be social justice and access to productive resources by both men and women. This is far from being the situation in the North West region of Cameroon. This social injustice is seen in their types of crops cultivated and the fact that many do not plant certain crops because of cultural constraints. Women in this region are still mostly responsible for subsistence as opposed to men who produce for the market. Food crops cultivated by most women in the North West region include: cocoyams, yams, maize, cassava,

plantains, and Irish potatoes. Also, market gardening crops commonly cultivated by women and men are; carrots, green beans, tomatoes, green spices, beans, lettuce, and cabbages. While agro forestry crops like coffee and cocoa were identified as crops cultivated mostly by men in the North West Region. This is because it takes a longer period to get to maturity, and it is believed that only men who own much land can cultivate agro forestry crops and still have land for food crops. Formally, men were not interested in food crop production because it was destined only for subsistence. The sudden interest of men in food crop production is probably for power negotiation in that men want to have money all year round. According to our informants, food crops now fetch them more money than agro forestry or cash crops. We found out that only 0.6% of women plant coffee or agro forestry crops in the North West region. Most of the women involved in this coffee cultivation inherited the produces from their late husbands or their parents. The reasons why women do not cultivate certain crops ranges from constraints, a choice, and tradition.

In the study, 69.4% of women say that the main reason why they do not grow agro forestry crops is because of constraints and not choice. Most women are not allowed to cultivate crops that take many years to be matured. This is because they do not own the land and therefore have no right to plant crops with long growth duration. These types of crops are meant for men who are land owners. Also, 21.9% hold that they do not cultivate crops like coffee, cocoa and cotton as a matter of choice, most women consider the cultivation of these

crops as strenuous, and meant for the men, while 8.7% said it was because of tradition. Cultural stereotypes shape the mentality of men and women in that coffee, for example, is considered a male crop by both men and women.

According to Gaymard et al. (2015), the effects of climate change on food production shows that Cameroon is one of the countries most threatened by climate change. The North West region is not left out of this phenomenon. In the field, the farmers complained of falling yields in food production due to extension of the dry or rainy seasons and the difficulties for them to adapt to the new climatic alterations. According to our respondents, women are most affected by the environmental, and climatic changes. However, they are struggling of adapt to these changes in different indigenous ways. If gender aspects are incorporated into the national agricultural policies, crop yields will undoubtedly increase and the region will be more food secured.

X. CONCLUSION

Land remains a strategic gender need for women in rural Cameroon. Unfortunately, women in the North West region are denied ownership of this very vital agricultural need. They are often allowed the practical gender need of access to land but do not have control or take key decisions on the land. However, in the field, we discovered that most women in this region have control over what they produce, sell, donate, and consume though it varies from one household to another. Land remains key to the livelihoods and survival of everybody in the North West region, and it is owned by individuals still, the Fon is the custodian of all the land in most communities. The decision to sell or not to sell it depends mostly on the cultures of the areas studied. Traditionally, Women in this region have the user's right and not ownership rights over land. Inheritance or succession largely depends on the kinship system of the study area. Land disputes are part and parcel of their daily lives. According to the Fon, cases judged in the palace are out for justice, and the verdict does not depend on whether the victim is a man or woman. Despite the fair judgments as pronounced by the Fon, women remain at the losing end due to the customary laws that are discriminatory. It was discovered that very few women own land certificates, and the majority of the women said they have never seen a land certificate. Land ownership issues in the North West region are therefore fundamentally regulated by the customary laws, which are most often gender bias.

Trefry et al. (2014), in the article 'Culture and food security, explore the relationship between culture and food security in a local context. An inductive approach to field research on cultural analysis reveals

that several elements of culture have direct influences on local food production. These elements include: gender, power, identity, and cultural change. The study offers insights into the multi-level dimensions of authority as it relates to individuals, households, and broader community dynamics that are central to understanding the local dynamics of food security. Trefry (1988) sees a lack of adequate technologies as the main problem of agricultural sustainability in Africa. This lack of technology is often at the level of maintaining soil fertility. The practice of leaving fields to fallow for long periods has been abandoned due to increase in population. This has forced farmers to make intensive use of land that was cultivated only after long cycles. To him, reduced fallows have led to an increase in nutrient depletion rate, erosion, and changes in soil texture, an increase in insects and pests and crop diseases.

Women in the North West region can be more productive if they are allowed ownership of land, provided with modern farm inputs and better technology. Many of these women need to be educated on their elementary human right to own land. The region could be better food secured if micro- financial institutions could help farmers, especially women, access loans, which they can use to acquire land, buy modern farm tools and inputs. Besides breaching the gaps in food production by eliminating all gender discriminatory laws and changing stereotypes that continue to maintain the women at a subordinate position will further boost the food production capacity of the region.

REFERENCES RÉFÉRENCES REFERENCIAS

1. Alcock Rupert (2009), Speaking Food: A Discourse Analytic Study of Food Insecurity. University of Bristol School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies Working Paper 0709.pdf
2. Bina A. (2011), Food crises and gender inequality. DESA working paper No. 107.
3. Boserup E., 1970, Women's role in Economic development. London: Earths can publication ltd.
4. Boserup, E. (1970), Women's Role in Economic Development, London: George Allen and Unwin.
5. Desjardins D. (2008), Researching the links between education and well-being, European Journal of Education, volume 43, issue 1.
6. FAO (1999), The state of food insecurity in the world 1975. Rome, Italy.
7. FAO (1999), The state of food insecurity in the world 1975. Rome, Italy
8. FAO (2009b), The global Information and Early warning system on food and Agriculture.
9. FAO (2011), Women in Agriculture: closing the gender gap for Development, Rome.
10. FAO (2011), Women in Agriculture: closing the gender gap for Development, Rome.

11. FAOSTAT, September 2009- May 2010, Food and Agricultural organisation statistics data base. Available online: <http://Faostat.Fao.org/default.aspx>.
12. FAO2012, The State of food insecurity in the World. Rome.
13. FAOSTAT (2010), Food and Agricultural organisation statistics data base. Available online: <http://Faostat.Fao.org/default.aspx> (September 2009- May 2010).
14. Food and Agricultural organization (1996), "Rome Declaration on Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action.
15. Gaymard, Kay and Etoundi (2015), Climate change and beliefs in Cameroon: A qualitative study among farmers in the Equatorial and Sudano-Sahelian zones ISSN 1721-8056, VOL: 11, No. 7, 2015, pp: 53-64. DOI; 10396817273, WWW. CS CANADA.org.
16. Jazairy, I. (1987) How to make Africa Self-Sufficient in Food', *Development*, (2/3), pp. 50-6.
17. Maxwell, S. and Fernando, A. (1987) Cash Crops in Developing Countries', Brighton (mimeo): Institute of Developmental Studies, University of Sussex, revised version in *World Development*, (1990), 18, (2).
18. Ministry of Agriculture-Minagric (2003), Rural Sector Development Strategy Paper, Yaounde Cameroon.
19. Mureithi, L. (1985) Crisis and Recovery in African Agriculture; *Development*, (2/3), pp.28-35.
20. Pretty, J.N. 1997 The sustainable intensification of agriculture, *natural resources forum*, 21, pp.247-256.
21. Templeman, D. E (1998) Rural women and food security: current situation and perspectives. FAO corporate document repository produced by the Economic and Social development department.
22. Trefry A., John R. Parkins, Georgina Cundill, 2014, "Culture and food security: a case study of homestead food production in South Africa", Springer Science+Business media Dordrecht and International society for plant pathology.
23. UNDP (2008) Increasing food prices and food security: Diagnosis issues and policy options paper prepared under coordination of the UNDP task force on high food prices, chaired by Selim Jahan, Director, New York.
24. World Bank (2007b) promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. In global monitoring report 2007: Millennium Development goals confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states, pp. 105-148, Washington D. C.
25. World Bank report (2008), World Development Report. Agriculture for Development, Washington Dc.
26. World bank, FAO, IFAD (2008), Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook, ISBN 978-0-8213-7587-7.
27. World Bank (2007b), Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. In global monitoring report 2007: Millennium Development goals confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states, pp. 105-148, Washington D. C.
28. Young K. (1993), *Planning Development with Women: Making a World of Difference*, Macmillan Education LTD, London.
29. Young, K. (1993), *Planning Development with women: making a world of difference*, MACMILLAN EDUCATION LTD, London and Basingstoke.