

The Role of Property Rights on Rural Women's Land Use Security and Household Food Security for Improved Livelihood in Limpopo Province

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KEYWORDS Gender. Agriculture. Customary Law. User Rights. Limpopo Province

ABSTRACT Small scale agriculture is a key land based activity for rural women, yet they own very little land. Rural land access is mediated by patrilineal customary law where women have mostly secondary property rights as wives. Consequently their land use security was derived from the family and other means of fostering accountability. As these have been lost with the developments in customary law, what is the source of women's land use security? Three communities in Limpopo Province were selected purposively; data was collected using a questionnaire, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and observation. Data analysis was through descriptive analyses and content analysis. The results show gendered access land access and secure access for mostly married women. In spite of their insecurities, women are motivated to farm for household consumption. A framework that recognises women as land users and rural development is essential to strengthen women's land use security.