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The Impacts of Land Conflicts on Womens' Livelihoods: The Case of Nakuru District, Kenya

Currently, many African countries are affected by land conflicts. They threaten people's life and hamper overall development. Research on their causes and consequences is, however, limited. This thesis focuses on land conflicts in Kenya and the effects they have had on women and the affected households in general. Nakuru District is taken as a case study.

Land conflicts in the African context are explored through literature review supported by data collected from five divisions in Nakuru District. Random sampling is employed in selecting 110 candidates for the research. Grounded theory method of data analysis is used to analyse the data, assess the types of land conflicts in Nakuru District and effects on the affected women and households in general. Types, causes and effects of land conflicts in Nakuru District are then identified. The types of conflicts identified are classified into conflicts with and without displacement effects. Conflicts with displacement effects are found to have very negative effects on the affected households. The women affected, however, were trying to cope by engaging themselves in various activities to support their families. Although they seemed to cope better than their male counterparts, the women are now more vulnerable and their preference remains farming. This is possible, but only after resolving the conflicts and resettling the displaced people.

Key Words: Land conflicts, land use conflicts, land ownership conflicts, displacement, women's coping strategies, gender studies, Nakuru District, Kenya.