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## Gender Discrimination in Land Access, Ownership and Control in Oyo State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are widely recognised as key dimensions of livelihoods improvement and sustainability. This study examined the nature and extent of discrimination against gender groups with respect to access, ownership and control of land. The farming and rural systems approach was used in the research. The study location was purposively selected because it is a cocoa producing community hence land would have a high value. A total of 120 households were selected from two villages in the local government area and data were collected through oral interviews using structured questionnaires. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and a resource profile used to generate a Gender Discrimination Index (GDI) for the gender groups. The results showed that at least 70 percent of the households were male headed most (40%) of who had at least primary education, were mainly cocoa farmers (75%) and worked an average of 50 hours on the farm weekly. Most of the women had at least a junior school certificate (44%) and were mainly self employed (49%) though about 39 percent were farmers. About 10 percent of the households had dependants who were economically inactive. The GDI showed that adult men had always access (258), ownership (246) and control (251) of land while adult women sometimes had access (186), ownership (132) and control (128) of it; it also revealed that young men had better access (191) to land compared with women and young women but they never had control (18) and ownership (13) of it. Young women experienced the highest level of discrimination because they had the lowest level of access (179) and never have ownership (11) and control (14). This study suggests that policies or programs which will ensure transfer of land access, control and ownership to both young men and women who can use it efficiently should be pursued.

**Keywords:** Gender discrimination index, gender groups, land, resource, youths