**General Project Information**

**Project Title:** Enhancing Rural Women’s Inheritance and Property Rights Adherence and Socio-economic Well-being for Equitable Development  
**Organization:** Collaborative Efforts to Alleviate Social Problems (CEASOP), Uganda  
**Implemented in:** Aloit Sub-county (Kole District) and Adekokwok Sub-county (Lira District), Lango sub-region, Northern Uganda  
**Total Grant Approved:** $71,500

**Context**

For more than 20 years, the Lango sub-region of Northern Uganda was devastated by the conflict between the Lord’s Resistance Army and the Ugandan government. More than 40% of the population was internally displaced during the conflict, which contributed to a large increase in HIV infections. Today the Lango sub-region has the highest number of woman-headed households in Uganda. While women’s rights to own and inherit property are upheld by various laws in Uganda, traditional cultural norms, along with widespread ignorance about these rights, preclude many women from claiming their rightful assets. Widows are frequent victims of dispossession, property grabbing, and domestic violence, which can lead some women to engage in risky sexual practices that contribute to the spread of HIV.

**Objectives**

CEASOP sought to enhance the capacity of 180 women self-help groups reaching 3,600 members — in Lango, Northern Uganda, to advocate for property and inheritance rights by establishing community-level paralegal aid services to pursue their claims.

**Key results**

- Enhanced knowledge and skills of 24 female paralegals to support women’s access to property and inheritance rights. CEASOP is supporting these women to establish a community-based paralegal service.  
- Increased legal literacy and awareness of 3,600 women, including 108 women living with HIV and AIDS, about their property and inheritance rights. These women have also been trained on how to identify and follow up on cases of property and inheritance violations within clan and sub-county courts.  
- Enhanced knowledge and awareness of 46 local leaders on their obligations to protect and promote women’s property and inheritance rights. As a direct result of the project, local police have begun to provide increased support to the family and child protection unit to settle inheritance and property conflicts.  
- Establishment of a start-up fund to pursue pending property and inheritance claims among women in the community.  
- Engagement of clan leaders was especially essential: once educated on women’s property and inheritance rights, some clan leaders lobbied for change with their fellow decision makers in discriminatory traditional cultural practices.

**Lessons Learned**

- The demand for training in women’s inheritance and property rights is large, and expanded access to this knowledge, particularly paralegal skills, is critical. Some participants suggested more informal paralegal trainings to accommodate larger numbers of women.  
- Empowering women to identify and monitor cases of property and inheritance violations is an effective strategy for sustainability and capacity building at the community level.