



# Diversification and Differentiation; The Livelihood Experience of Men and Women in Samene

Emily Van Houweling

Urban and Regional Planning

Masters Thesis



# Mali

- Mali was site of three great African Empires
- 13.9 million people
- 80% rural
- Ethnically diverse
- Muslim majority
- One of the poorest countries in the world



# Samene

- 50 km south of Segou
- 4,500 people, mostly all Bambara
- Commune Seat

















# Research Question

---

How do assets and access (social rules and norms) influence livelihood diversification options for men and women?

- What is the composition of men's and women's livelihood portfolios?
- How are assets held differently by men and women?
- What are the major access restrictions that affect livelihood success for men and women?
- What accounts for the intra-gender differences in men's and women's livelihood success?



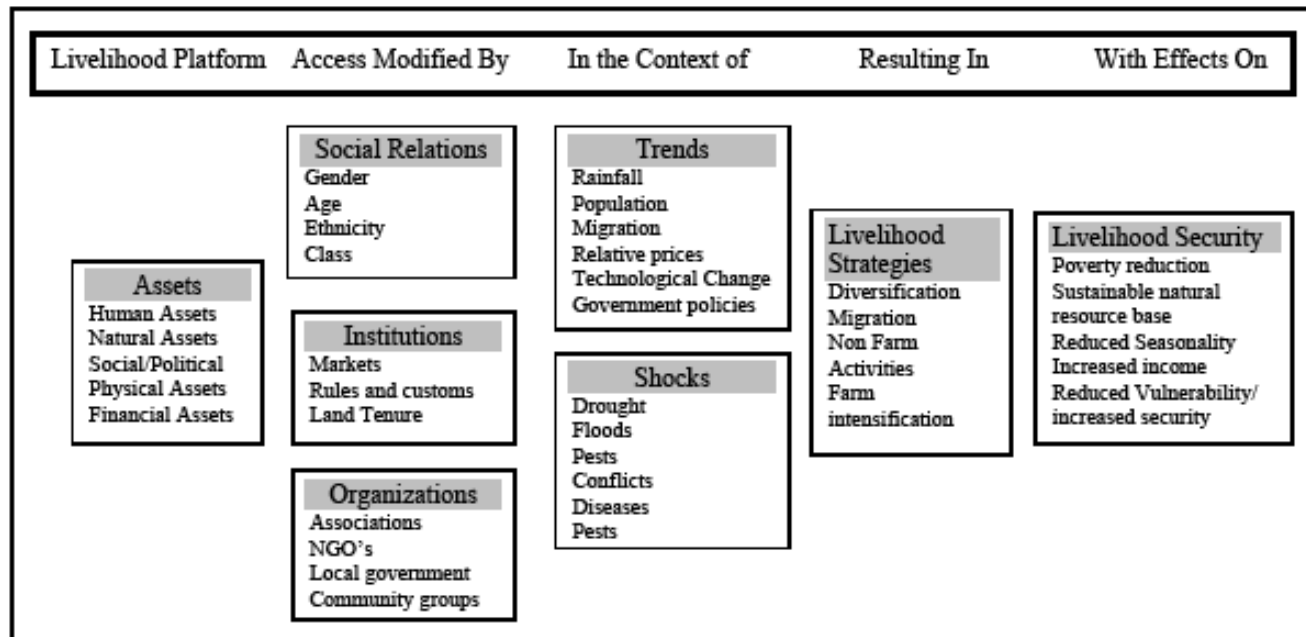
# Theoretical Framework

---

## The livelihood approach

- “The central objective of the livelihood approach was to search for more effective methods to support people and communities in ways that are more meaningful to their daily lives and needs, as opposed to ready-made interventionist instruments” (Appendini 2001, pp 3).
- “A livelihood comprises the assets (natural, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household” (Ellis 2000).

# The Livelihood Framework



Source: Ellis 2000

# Diversification

- What is diversification
- Nonfarm Diversification
- Farm Diversification
- 35-50% in rural areas
- High vs low return activities





# Methodology

---

- Mixed Methods
- Participant Observation
- 121 Household Surveys
- 168 Individuals surveys
- 5 Extended household surveys
- A series of focus group discussions
- Key interviews, informal interviews



# Findings-Activities

---

- Activity diversification is important in Samene
- Women are involved in more activities than men
- Most activities are highly gender segregated
- Women are more likely to diversify their activities within the farming sector, while men are more likely to be involved in nonfarm activities
- For all activities (except for farming) both men and women participate in men earn substantially more















## Percentage of Men and Women Involved in Low and High Return Activities for the Major Activity Sectors both Men and Women are Involved in

	Low Return*	High Return*
<b>Farming</b>		
Men	90%	10%
Women	96%	4%
<b>Livestock</b>		
Men	53%	47%
Women	91%	9%
<b>Migration</b>		
Men	27%	73%
Women	100%	0%
<b>Service</b>		
men	17%	83%
Women	80%	20%
<b>Commercial</b>		
Men	11%	89%
Women	82%	18%



Key Assets	
Human	Age, gender, position in HH, education level, migration experience
Physical	Farming equipment, transportation, capital investments, livelihood tools
Financial Assets	Cattle, sheep, goats, poultry
Social	Membership in organizations, participation in decision making institutions, control over income
Natural Assets	Size of farm plot, garden space



# Findings-Assets

---

- Men and women hold their assets differently
- Women have strong natural assets
- Men have stronger physical and financial assets than women
- Social assets are important for both men and women
- Important to consider personal attributes: age and position in the HH



# Farming equipment by position in the household

Number of Plows or Carts owned	Male			Female		
	Household Head	Brother	Son	Household Head	Wife	Daughter or Sister
0 Plows	3%	81%	86%	100%	100%	100%
1-2 Plows	62%	13%	11%	0%	0%	0%
3 or more Plows	35%	6%	3%	0%	0%	0%
0 Carts	12%	75%	89%	94%	0%	0%
1-2 Carts	65%	25%	5%	6%	0%	0%
3 or more Carts	24%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%





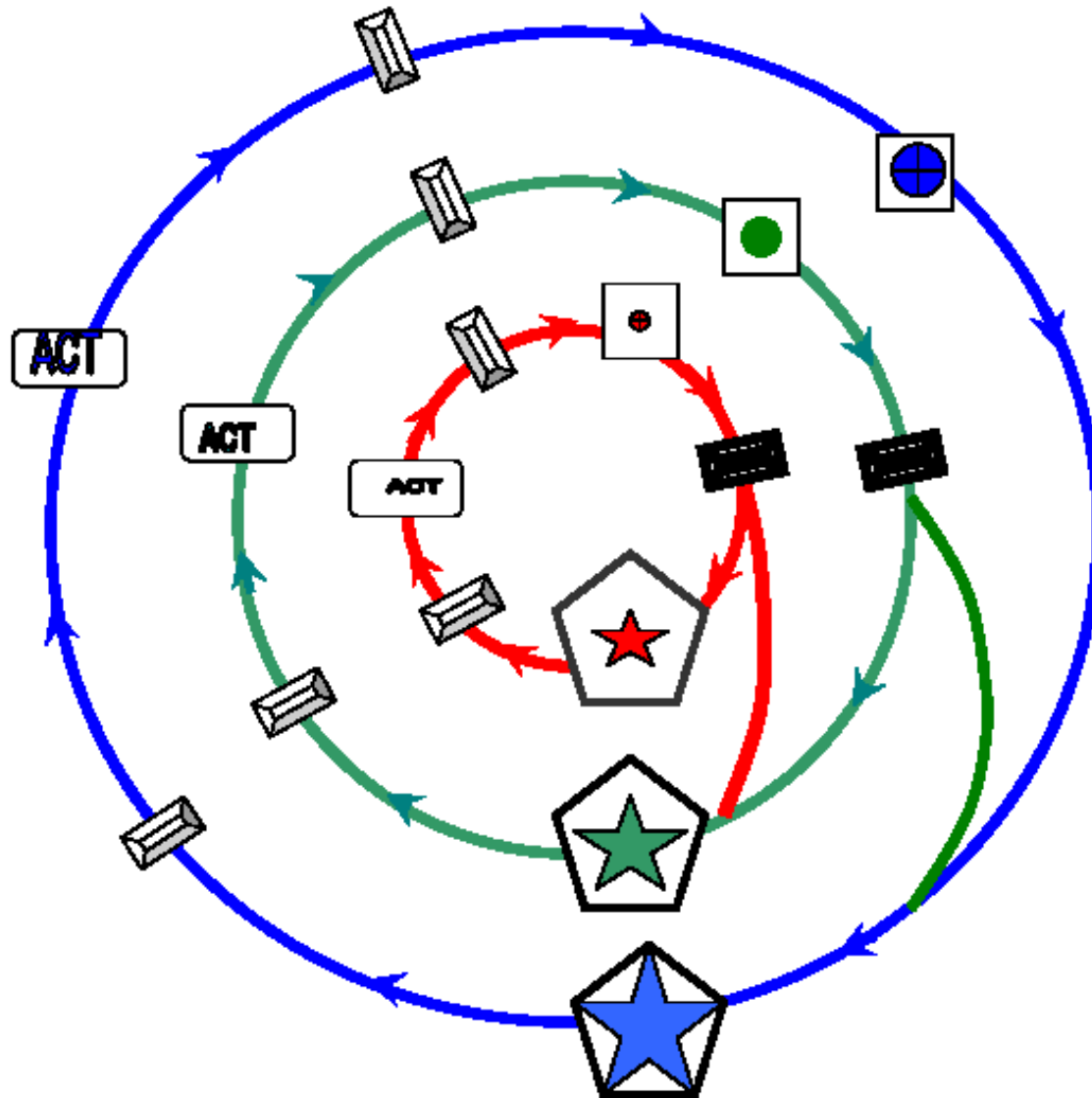
# Premises of my Livelihood framework

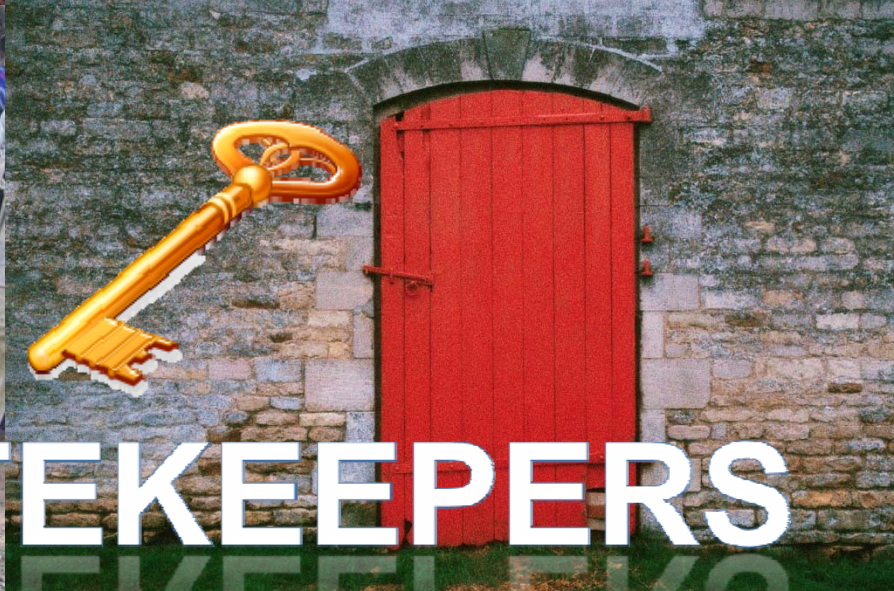
---

- Not all diversification is the same.
- The livelihood experience is different for different social groups.
- Access embedded in power and social relations is critical in understanding livelihoods.
- Social differentiation is a central process in the livelihood framework.



# Samene's Livelihood Framework





# GATEKEEPERS



# Household Wealth

- Household size
- Cattle holdings
- Field size

Household Size	Avg. # Cattle	Avg. Field Size
1-15 people	3.2	3.7
16-30 people	6	6.2
31-50 people	7.1	12.1
More than 50 people	36.6	34.8

# Men in the First Orbit

Personal Attributes: Poor household or not head of HH

Activities: Low return subsistence activities at household level

Assets: Own labor and Household fields

Access Constraints: Poverty of the household, lack of control over income and labor, weak assets



How to Access Orbit 2:

- Animal ownership
- Acquire livelihood tools
- Education/skill development
- Migration work
- Support of household head



# Men in the second orbit

- Activities: livestock raising, migration, commerce/service at village level
- Assets: More freedom over income and activities, household farming assets, animal ownership, may own livelihood tools
- Access Constraints: Can't farm own field, lack strong social assets, lack total control over income/labor
- How to access Orbit 3: Connections/work outside village, Start own business, Wealth of Household, Education



# Men in the Third Orbit

Personal Attributes: From a wealthy/powerful HH, Household head

Activities: High return activities  
3 or more activities, based outside village

Assets: strong farm assets, cattle herds,  
strong social capital,  
own fields, literacy/skills



# Women in the First Orbit

Personal Attributes: Low social standing in the household

Activities: Low return activities, no income accumulation

Assets: Labor power, natural assets

Access Constraints: little control of own income/labor, poor farming assets-land, time constraints, weak financial and social assets

How to access second orbit: support of household head, sell forest products or garden/field crops, animal ownership, join organization, migration activities or wage work







# Women in the Second Orbit

Personal Attributes: Likely to be female household head

Activities: Animal raising, commerce-based outside HH. gardening, farming, forest products

Assets: Husbands support, animal ownership, time, ability to travel, skills/literacy, personal field, garden plot, member of organization, leadership role



Access to the third level:

Lack of connections outside village, lack of mobility, lack of financial assets, Gender division of labor, gatekeepers and patriarchal norms



# My Contribution

---

- Gender disaggregated data on activities and assets
- Understanding of access difficulties
- A conceptual framework
- Uses of framework-identify key assets and pathways used to improve livelihoods for targeted groups
- Why it is important?



# Gaps and limitations

---

- No income data
- More sophisticated data analysis
- More theory on household decision making, power, resource distribution, social exclusion, gender relations



# Determinants of Men's Livelihood Experience

## Assets

- Wealth and social position of household
- Position in the Household
- Ability to control own income and labor
- Financial capital and access to credit
- Size of cattle herd
- Connections outside of the village
- Education/special skills
- Livelihood tools and physical capital
- Migration experience

## Access

- The household head controls the livelihood activities and incomes of all household members
- Men's responsibility as the household providers
- Restrictions against personal land ownership





# Determinants of Women's Livelihood Experience

## Assets

- Husband's support
- Position in the household and the community
- Time availability
- Animal ownership
- Financial assets and access to credit
- Mobility
- Personal field size
- Gardening space
- Involvement in an organization

## Access

- Gender division of labor
- Traditional land tenure rights
- Marriage patterns
- Lack of decision making power
- Women's position in society
- Lack of inheritance rights

