WOMEN’S PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THE LAWS OF SUCCESSION IN UGANDA: REFORM PROPOSITIONS

By Anthony Luyirika Kafumbe

ABSTRACT

The article argues that in a patriarchal, multiethnic and multi religious country like Uganda, where people’s lives are governed mainly by customary and religious laws, it is difficult to realize gender equality. Only a radical secular law reforms opposed to legal pluralism can truly emancipate women. If the state endorses legal pluralism, it would be abandoning women to the perils of patriarchy. If Uganda’s Domestic Relations Bill is to effectively emancipate women, legal pluralism in family and succession laws must be eliminated—one modern uniform secular law of succession applicable to all is the way forward. The article delves into the merits of secular laws and the need to eradicate legal pluralism for true women’s emancipation in multicultural Uganda. It also analyses the circumstances that make women the more adversely affected by the laws of succession, and makes a number of propositions to reform these laws.