

## HOUSEHOLD PERSPECTIVES

By

**Gwen N. Lesetedi**  
University of Botswana

**Abstract:** The household has been used most frequently as a unit of analysis in the collection of census and survey data. It has become a standard unit of analysis for ecological and economic purposes because pooling and sharing of resources, processing of food, cooking, eating and sheltering from elements of weather, all tend to happen in the household. In addition, the household is a fundamental social unit and it is the next biggest thing on the social map after the individual. It is within the household that gender and social dynamics are socially constructed and manifested. The major objective of this study is to analyse dynamics prevailing in the household utilising the 2011 Population and Housing Census data. Data from the 1981 and 1991 censuses will also be utilized as a basis for comparison. The key demographic areas to be considered will be household size, household headship, economic activity and remittances. In addition the paper will also discuss issues of ownership of durables and ICT Equipment. Given variations among households and the flexibility characteristic of households, it is imperative to also interrogate the concept of household. The concept of family will also be interrogated within the context of this study.

### 1.0 Introduction

This paper profiles the household perspectives in Botswana utilising the 2011 Population and Housing Census data. The concept of household is an important unit of analysis and is utilised in the collection of information for statistical and planning purposes. The paper is organised into four sections. The first section is the introduction and also highlights the policies and programmes having an impact on households followed by a discussion on the methodological issues concerning the utilisation of the household and other related concepts like household headship and family in data collection in section two. Section three presents a discussion on the trends obtaining based on the data from the 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses. The comparative analysis will provide a better understanding of the changes households have undergone. Section four also presents an analysis of household perspectives of the 2011 census. The perspectives are analysed in terms of household size, household headship, economic activity, ownership of land and of durables just to mention a few.

### 1.2 Policies and Programmes

Government policies and programmes are designed to benefit all members of the population equally and therefore access to economic opportunities for all Botswana citizens in all sectors of development is an overall goal clearly stated in the various National Development Plans, Vision 2016, and the National Population Policy. For instance the National Population Policy which, in recognition of the fact that female-headed households are more vulnerable to poverty, has come up with several strategies to improve women's status (Ministry of Finance, 1997). The strategies include targeting programmes to these vulnerable female-headed households to enhance their participation in the economy. Despite such policy efforts geared towards improving the status of women, unequal gender relations persist in the different sectors of the economy. Inequalities between women and men are pronounced as far as access to income and resources are concerned, varying in degrees between urban and rural areas. Income distribution remains skewed in terms of gender.

## 2.0 Methodological Considerations: Household, Household Headship and Family

### 2.1 Household

A household may mean different things to different people in different places. There is no universal meaning of the term 'household'. This has resulted in a growing debate among scholars on trying to generate definitions that might be universally applicable. For the purposes of the 2011 Population and Housing Census, household is defined as a unit composed of one or more persons 'living together under the same roof' and 'eating from the same pot' and /or making common provision for food and other living arrangements (CSO, 2011). The two concepts need not be interpreted literally, because they have a broader meaning. 'Eating from the same pot' attempts to summarise a variety

of situations where a group of people may combine all or part of their incomes for their maintenance as one unit. While, 'living under the same roof' may serve to strengthen the first concept by confining it to a specific physical location. In this regard household may be understood as kinship unit or economic unit rather than a housing unit. A household often consists of individuals related by blood or marriage, but they are not always family-based entities. They may comprise of unrelated persons such as colleagues and friends. A family can be a household but a household is not always a family. While the use of the term household depicts the family as a group of people who live together and share shelter, food and other basic requirements, the term kinship stretches the notion of family to include three or more generations and all their collateral relations. The household is regarded as a socio-economic unit where production, distribution and consumption activities take place.

## 2.2 Household Headship

A concept interlinked with household is household headship. It implies the power to make important decisions in a number of matters such as allocation of household resources, responsibilities, organization of household production, schooling of children and supporting the household economically (Chant 1997). In the 2011 census, consistent with previous censuses, it was specified that the head of household is any male or female, at least 12 years old who is regarded by other members of the household as head (CSO, 2011). The person can be a blood relative or not. In cases where there is no one aged 12 or over, the eldest child will have to be entered as the head. A household headship is complicated and fluctuating. A household may be headed by a woman at one time and by a man at another and women may head other households forever.

Household headship is complicated and fluctuating. At one time a household may be headed by a woman and by a man at another. Past research has shown that the female-headed households are economically disadvantaged than the male headed ones. Male-headed households are economically better than the female-headed ones because they have access to productive resources and they could also migrate to mines and other places to seek alternatives. They are male-headed households, which are poorer than the female headed ones. Most of the female-headed households are poor because they do not have access and control of the productive resources, and this is attributable to a number of reasons that may differ from one case to another. The main reason is that they face very serious socio-economic limitations in their lives. A single woman heading her household can marry at a later stage and become a member of a male-headed household. She may later become a widow and take over the headship. Most of the national and international data report a 'female headed household' as a unit where an adult woman (usually with children) resides without a male partner. In other words, a head of a household is female in the absence of a co-resident legal or traditional-law spouse or in some cases, another adult male such as a father or brother.

Relative to the family, the household has certain advantages as a unit of analysis. First, it is a much broader and diversified concept which may include within it the family (Burkey, 1985; Motts, 1994; Datta et al, 2000). Not only is the household more flexible in terms of collecting standardised data than the family, it is also more easily identifiable and much easier to work with as unit of analysis and for other data collection tasks. Unlike the family, the household is also more "static" or "stable" in terms of consumption and production purposes. Second, the household has been used most frequently as a unit of analysis in the collection of census and survey data. It has become a standard unit of analysis for ecological and economic purposes because pooling and sharing of resources, processing of food, cooking, eating and sheltering from elements of weather, all tend to happen in the household. In addition, the household is a fundamental social unit and it is the next biggest thing on the social map after the individual and most people in the majority of societies at most times live in households (McC.Netting et al, 1984). According to McC.Netting et al, (1984) it is in the household where most decisions are made, through negotiations, disagreement, conflict and bargaining.

## 2.3 Family

Closely related to the concept of the household is the family. In light of the definition of the household highlighted earlier, a family can be a household but a household is not necessarily a family (WLSA, Botswana, 1997). Similarly a household may contain one or more separate families and may also include members who are not related to one another. During population and housing censuses members of the household are asked to state their relationship to the household head. Based on this information one can deduce they types of family forms in existence.

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### 3.0 Data Analysis

#### 3.1 Past Trends: 1981, 1991 and 2011 Household and Population Censuses

Over the years the number of households just like the population has been increasing. In 1981 the census recorded 170,833 households, in 1991 the number of households rose to 276,209 and by 2001 the number had risen to 404,706. In the 2011 Population and Housing Census 550,926 households were enumerated. The increase in the population size as well as in the number of households has been accompanied by a decline the average household size. Based on the 1981 census the average household size was 5.5, in 1991 it went down to 4.8 and by 2001 it was 4.2. By 2011 the average household size had decreased to 3.7. The significant increase in the number of households can be attributed to the formation of new households. Households are breaking into smaller units as seen by the declining household size from an average of 5.5 persons per household in 1981 to 3.7 persons in 2011. Table 1 presents a summary of these trends from 1981 to 2011.

**Table 1: Total Population, Number of Households and Household Size 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011**

Year	Population	Number of Households	Average Household size
1981	941,027	170,833	5.5
1991	1,326,796	276,209	4.8
2001	1,680,863	404,706	4.2
2011	2,024,904	550,926	3.7

#### 3.2 Household Headship

As indicated earlier a total of 550,926 households were enumerated in 2011. Of these 52.5 percent were headed by males while the remaining 47.5 percent were headed by females. These figures are consistent with those obtained in for 2001 where 53.86 percent of the households were male-headed while 46.14 percent were female-headed and 1991 during which 53 percent of households were male headed while women headed 47 percent. The corresponding figures for 1981 census were 54.8 percent households headed by males and 45.2 percent headed by men. On the whole males head more households than females in the country.

#### 3.3 Tenure ship Of Housing Unit

A question was posed to how the respondents had acquired the housing unit they were residing in. The responses included that the unit was self built, rented from different institutions, purchased or acquired through the job they were engaged in. The majority of the household heads that is both males and females reported that the housing unit that they occupied had been self built. Out of a total of 289,360 households headed by males 46.4% were self built. Quite a good number of the housing headed by males resided in rented housing units. They rent from individuals, Central Government, company, Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) and Village Development Committees (VDC). The rented units made up a total of 34.1 percent. The same pattern of housing prevails amongst the female headed households. Almost 60 percent of them lived in housing units they had built for themselves and at least 29.8 percent of them rented their housing units from various institutions. Very few of the households reported that they had purchased their

housing unit. Close to two percent (1.8 percent) of the male heads of households had bought the unit while only 1.3 percent of the female headed households had purchased the housing unit they were living in. It should be noted that close to one percent of the heads both males and females reported that they were living in housing which had been donated. See table 2 for a breakdown of the data.

Tenure of housing	Sex of Household Head				Total
	Male		Female		
	No.	%	No.	%	
Self built	134,259	46.4	156,300	59.8	290,559
Rent individual	83,646	28.9	55,759	21.3	139,405
Job related-free	29,738	10.3	16,595	6.3	46,333
Rent Central Government	11,066	3.8	10,736	4.1	21,802
Free: Inheritance	6,150	2.1	5,332	2.0	11,482
Purchased	5,129	1.8	3,374	1.3	8,503
Rent: Company	8,189	2.8	2,757	1.1	10,946
Rent: BHC	3,503	1.2	2,662	1.0	6,165
Rent: Local institution	3,523	1.2	4,079	1.6	7,602
Rent: VDC	1,779	0.6	1,797	0.7	3,576
Donated	1,380	0.5	1,585	0.6	2,965
Do not know	998	0.3	590	0.2	1,588
<b>Total</b>	<b>289,360</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>261,566</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>550,926</b>

A further analysis revealed that female heads of household were more likely to live in units which had been self built than their male counterparts. While 53.8 percent of the female heads lived in self built accommodation compared to 46.2 percent of the male household heads. At the same time 60.3 percent of the male heads resided in accommodation that had been purchased and only 39.7 percent of the female heads were accommodated in units which had been purchased. When it came to rented accommodation more male headed household units lived in rented accommodation than the female headed ones. For instance 74.8 percent of the male headed households lived in housing which had been rented from a company compared to 25.2 percent of the female headed households. This is also evident when you consider the households renting from individuals and BHC. Male heads of households outnumber the female heads of households. However, there are some exceptions in this regards, more female heads rent from local institutions (53.7 percent) than their male counterparts (46.3 percent). Almost an equal number of both male heads and female heads rented from Central Government and from VDCs. A good number of male headed household (53.6 percent) lived in property they had inherited compared to 46.4 percent of their female counterparts. On the other hand 53.5 percent of female headed households resided in donated accommodation as compared to 46.5 percent of male headed households.

### 3.4 Economic Activities

Data on economic activity is intended to show the number of people who are economically active and the type of activities they are engaged in. The economically active refers to those who are employed as well as the unemployed. This question was addressed to those 12 years and above.

#### 3.4.1. Headship and Usual economic activity

Usual economic activity referred to activity in which the head of household was engaged in during the last twelve months before the census. These activities included Seasonal work, paid or unpaid; non seasonal, paid or unpaid; job-seeker, homemaker, student, those who had retired; the sick and prisoners. For both male heads of household and female head of household the main activity that they are engaged in unpaid non-seasonal work. It was registered that 48.0 percent of the male heads were engaged in non-seasonal unpaid work while 39.6 percent of the female heads were also engaged in non-seasonal unpaid work. The next significant category was that of students were 13.3 percent of the male heads and 23.0 percent of the female heads registered that they were students. This was followed by 11.1 percent male heads and 12.3 of female heads who reported that they were home makers. The

heads of households also indicated that they were involved in seasonal work both paid and unpaid. Amongst the male headed household heads, 6.9 percent and 2.5 percent were involved in paid and unpaid seasonal work respectively. With reference to the female headed households 5.7 percent and 2.2 percent indicated that they were engaged in paid and unpaid seasonal work respectively. An insignificant number of both males and female heads reported that they were in prison.

Examining the gender differentials i.e. comparing the male heads of household to the female heads of households against the different economic activities listed, there are more male heads of households involved in economic activities in comparison to the female heads. For instance in the category non-seasonal unpaid activity, 75 percent were male heads compared to 25 percent. This pattern is reflected in most of the categories except for the category of student and those who reported that they were sick. Amongst those who reported that they were students 54.4 percent were female heads compared to 45.6 male heads. Those who reported that they were sick comprised of 54.4 percent female heads and 45.6 percent males. Table 3 presents a summary of the data on usual activity of head of household by sex.

**Table 3: Usual Economic Activity by Sex of Head of Household**

Usual Economic Activity	Sex of Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
	No	%	No	%	
Seasonal - Paid	14,381	63.6	8,213	36.4	22,594
Seasonal - Unpaid	5,173	60.3	3,402	36.7	8,575
Non-seasonal - Paid	99,582	63.7	56,677	36.3	156,259
Non-seasonal - Unpaid	10,231	75.0	3,416	25.0	13,647
Job seeker	21,377	58.4	15,231	41.6	36,608
Home maker	23,137	56.8	17,589	43.2	40,726
Student	27,598	45.7	32,831	54.3	60,429
Retired	2,711	63.0	1,595	37.0	4,306
Sick	3,385	45.6	4,043	54.4	7,428
Prisoners	86	67.7	41	32.3	127
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>207,661</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>143,038</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>350,699</b>

### 3.4.2 Receipt of Cash from Household Activities

Respondents were also asked as to whether any member of the household had received cash from household activities that they were engaged in. These activities included traditional beer, other beverages, craftwork, clothes and cooked food. Most households that are 92 percent of them male headed and 88.3 percent female headed reported as having received no cash from any of the household activities that they were engaged in. However, 2.7 percent of the male headed households and 5.5 percent of those headed by females reported that that they had received cash from selling traditional beer. Very few of the respondents indicated as to whether any member of the household as having received cash from activities such as craftwork, clothes and cooked food.

Most members in female headed households were involved in dealing in traditional beer i.e. 64.8 percent compared to 35.2 percent of members living in male headed households. 57.1 percent of female headed households and 42.9 percent of male headed households of the households got cash from other beverages. More members in female head households were also involved in selling clothes compared to those members in households headed by males. Those who reported as having received cash from clothes included 60.0 percent female headed households and 40 percent male headed households. The same applied to cooked food as a source of cash. In this regard 60.2 percent of households headed by females compared to 39.2 percent of households headed by males received cash from cooked food. On the other hand they were more households headed by males than female headed households who were involved in craft work. Amongst male headed households 60.8 percent engaged in craft work as a source of cash compared to 39.2 percent of the female headed households. This is illustrated in table 4.

**Table 4: Receipt of Cash from household activities by Sex of household head**

Household activities	Sex of Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
	No	%	No	%	
Traditional Beer	7,697	35.2	14,141	64.8	21,838
Other beverages	2,274	42.9	3,028	57.1	5,302
Craftwork	3,733	60.8	2,403	39.2	6,136
Clothes	3,357	40.0	5,038	60.0	8,395
Cooked Food	3,235	39.8	4,891	60.2	8,126
None	265,278	53.9	227,069	46.1	492,347
Other	411	43.8	527	56.2	938
<b>Total</b>	<b>285,985</b>	<b>52.7</b>	<b>257,097</b>	<b>47.3</b>	<b>543,082</b>

### 3.4.3 Other Cash Receipts

In addition to receiving cash from household activities like traditional beer, other beverages, craft work, clothes and cooked food, other sources of cash receipts were considered. These included remittances from both inside and outside Botswana, pension, rent maintenance, employment, and destitute allowance and Government rations. In this regards for both male and female headed households employment was a major source of cash. Of the households headed by male 69.3 percent reported that their other source of cash was employment while 56.4 percent of female headed households also indicated that they had received cash from employment. Households also received cash through remittances from inside as well as outside Botswana. Out of the total number of female headed households 7.5 percent indicated that they had received remittances from inside Botswana and only 0.4 percent from outside Botswana. Amongst the male headed households 4.5 percent had received remittances from inside Botswana and only 0.4 percent had received cash from outside Botswana. A substantial number of both male and female headed households indicated that they had not received any cash i.e. 18.4 percent male headed households and 23.5 percent female headed households.

Based on gender differentials more female headed households received remittances from both inside and outside Botswana, pension, rent, maintenance, destitute allowance, government rations than the male headed households. On the other hand more male headed households received cash from employment than the female headed households. However a majority of the female headed households i.e. 51.9 percent compared to 48.4 percent of the male headed households reported that they had not received any cash. This information is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Other cash receipts by Sex of Head of household**

Other cash receipts	Sex of Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
	No	%	No	%	
Inside Botswana	8,759	41.9	12,170	58.1	<b>20,929</b>
Outside Botswana	721	43.0	956	57.0	<b>1,677</b>
Pension	8,703	46.1	10,188	53.9	<b>18,891</b>
Rent	1,508	42.5	2,039	57.5	<b>3,547</b>
Maintenance	609	30.4	1,394	69.6	<b>2,003</b>
Employment	134,378	59.6	91,266	40.4	<b>225,644</b>
Destitute Allowance	939	34.9	1,754	65.1	<b>2,693</b>
Government rations	2,038	37.2	3,439	62.8	<b>5,477</b>
None	35,757	48.4	38,049	51.6	<b>73,806</b>
Other	635	48.1	685	51.9	<b>1,320</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>194,047</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>161,940</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>355,987</b>



### 3.4.4 Receipt of Cash from Agricultural Produce

Over 50% of the households headed by males had received no cash from sale agricultural produce. Of the male headed households that had received cash from agricultural produce at least 10.2 percent received cash from cattle and 5.5 percent from goats and sheep. In terms of crops 2.6 percent of households headed by males received cash from the sale of maize and 2.5 percent from melon and sweet reeds. Majority of the female headed households reported that they had not received any cash for agricultural produce. Amongst those who had received cash only 6.6 percent 4.0 percent of them received cash from the sale of cattle and goats and/ or sheep respectively. At least 3.2 percent of the female headed households also realised cash from the sale of phane. With regard to melon and sweet reeds 2.4 percent of the female headed households had received cash from their sale.

Sale of livestock is generally a source of cash for male headed households in comparison to those headed by females. Of those households which received cash from cattle males 63.8 percent were male headed households compared to 36.2 percent of the households headed by females. The same applies to receipt of cash from goats and sheep, 61.2 percent were male headed and 38.8 percent were female headed. Of those households headed by reported that they had received cash for cattle compare to percent of the females. More male headed households also received cash from produce such as maize; sorghum/millet; and melon/ sweet reeds. On the other hand female headed households fared better compared to the male headed households when it came to receipt of cash from agricultural produce like fruits and vegetables; phane and legume. Details are provided in Table 6.

**Table 6: Receipt of Cash from Agricultural Produce by Sex of Household Head**

Agricultural Produce	Sex of Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
	No	%	No	%	
Cattle	33,586	63.8	19,061	36.2	52,647
Goats/Sheep	18,169	61.2	11,501	38.8	29,670
Poultry	11,725	54.1	9,958	45.9	21,683
Maize	8,498	55.7	6,762	44.3	15,260
Sorghum/Millet	3,920	54.8	3,235	45.2	7,155
Melons/Sweet reeds	8,325	54.6	6,926	45.4	15,251
Fruits & vegetables	5,337	47.6	5,871	52.4	11,208
Phane	6,107	39.6	9,333	60.4	15,440
Fish	1,470	56.0	1,157	44.0	2,627
Thatch/Poles/Reeds	3,331	51.0	3,197	49.0	6,528
Firewood	5,308	63.6	3,040	36.4	8,348
Legumes*	703	46.5	810	53.5	1,513
None	221,902	51.6	208,021	48.4	429,923
<b>Total</b>	<b>328,381</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>288,872</b>	<b>46.8</b>	<b>617,253</b>

\*Beans, Ditloo, Manoko, Cow-Peas etc

## 3.5 ICT Equipment and Internet Access

### 3.5.1 Household Ownership of ICT Equipment

The respondent was asked whether any member of household owned ICT equipment which was in working condition. Amongst those residing in male headed households, 21.9 percent indicated that they did not own any ICT equipment. Of those members in male headed households who had indicated that they did own ICT equipment 19.3 percent owned a radio and 6.7 percent had a TV. The rest of the members in these households reported that they owned desktop computer (0.8 percent), laptop computer (0.5 percent) and telephone landline (0.4 percent). With the female headed households, 29.6 percent of the members had no ICT equipment. Of those who had ICT equipment, 15.9 percent said they owned a radio and 8.9 percent owned a TV. Very few members in the members in male headed households owned a desktop computer (0.3 percent), laptop computer (0.4 percent) and telephone landline (0.7 percent).

Comparing the ownership of ICT equipment along gender lines members in male headed households had more ICT equipment in working condition in comparison to those members who belonged to female headed households. As presented in Table 7, more members in male headed households owned desktop computer, laptop and radio in comparison to those members who belonged to female headed households. On the other hand they were more members in households headed by females in contrast to those headed by males who owned telephone landline and TV.

ICT Equipments	Sex of Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
	No.	%	No.	%	
Desktop	1,188	58.3	851	41.7	2,039
Laptop	1,508	57.5	1,113	42.5	2,621
Radio	55,861	57.3	41,551	42.7	97,412
TV	19,517	45.6	23,323	54.4	42,840
Telephone (Landline)	1,157	37.4	1,938	62.6	3,095
None	63,414	45	77,416	55	140,830
<b>Total</b>	<b>289,361</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>261,563</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>550,924</b>

### 3.5.2. Household Members Access to Internet

Respondents were asked to indicate whether any member of the household had access to the internet. Amongst members of the household belonging to male headed households 55.2 percent had no access to internet. Of those who had access, 6.7 percent said they accessed the internet at work, 4.4 percent through the cellular phone internet, 3.9 percent at internet cafes and 1.7 percent at home. The rest of the members in male headed households accessed the internet through the school (0.7 percent, other institutions (0.7 percent), at the post office (0.3 percent), library (0.5 percent) and elsewhere (0.4 percent). While 59.0 percent of the members belonging to female headed households said they had no access, 5.5 percent accessed it at work, 4.0 percent through the cellular phone internet, and 3.6 percent at the internet cafe. Other accessed the internet through the home (1.1 percent), school (1.1 percent, other institutions (1.0 percent). Very few access the net at the post office (0.3 percent), library (0.6 percent) and elsewhere (0.4 percent).

Table 8 illustrates the gender differentials of accessing internet between members belonging to male and female headed households. There is a slight difference in those who don't know and those who have no access to the internet. There are almost equal proportions of those who don't know and have no access in both male and female headed households. However when it come to access through the home or the work place, a higher proportion of members belonging to male headed households have access to the internet through the home (65 percent) and workplace (57.6percent). While only 36.5 percent and 42.4 percent of member belonging to female headed households had access to the internet through the home and the workplace respectively. Higher proportions of members in female headed than those in male headed households are able to access the internet through primary school (59.4 percent), secondary school (60.3 percent) and other institutions (54.7 percent). See table 8.



**Table 8: Household Members Access to Internet by Sex of Household Head**

Access to Internet	Sex of Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
Home	5,014	63.5	2,887	36.5	7,901
Workplace	19,437	57.6	14,310	42.4	33,747
Primary school	232	40.6	340	59.4	572
Secondary school	1,646	39.7	2,502	60.3	4,148
Other institution	2,067	45.3	2,495	54.7	4,562
Internet cafe	11,319	54.5	9,442	45.5	20,761
Cellular phone internet	12,624	54.6	10,502	45.4	23,126
Post Office	734	48.7	774	51.3	1,508
Library	1,346	46.3	1,560	53.7	2,906
Elsewhere	1,085	52.8	971	47.2	2,056
No access	159,775	50.9	154,257	49.1	314,032
Don't know	33,139	50.1	33,040	49.9	66,179
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>289,350</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>261,564</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>550,914</b>

#### 4.0 Discussion and Conclusion

There has been an increase in the number of households in country from 1981 to 2011. This is a reflection of the formation of new households due to the breakdown of households into smaller units. The breakdown of households into smaller units is evidenced by a decrease in household sizes over the same period. The 2011 data also showed that the gender variation in the household headship remains the same with males heading more households than females. This figure is consistent with what was obtained in 1981, 1991 and 2001 population censuses.

Based on the 2011 data male headed households seem to fare much better in comparison to female headed households. This is with reference to economic activity, receipt of cash from household produce and agricultural produce as well as ownership of durables and ICT equipment. Although a majority of the household heads that is both males and females reported that the housing unit that they occupied had been self-built, they were more female headed households who resided in donated accommodation as compared to male headed households. When comparing the male heads of household to the female heads of households against the different economic activities listed, there are more male heads of households who are economically active in comparison to the female heads. Despite the fact that most households, both male headed and female headed household members reported as having received no cash from any of the household activities that they were engaged in, members in male heads of household tend to be involved in more lucrative activities than the female heads. For instance most members of female headed households reported as having received cash from activities like the sale of beer or clothes members belonging to male headed households were engaged in craftwork which is more lucrative and stable.

More female headed households reported as having received remittances from both inside and outside Botswana, pension, rent, maintenance, destitute allowance, government rations than the male headed households. This could be an indication of the vulnerability of female headed households as they have depended on remittances, maintenance, and destitute allowance as a source of cash. Whereas more male headed households reported as having received cash from employment than the female headed households. Employment is a more reliable and consistent source of cash. Other source of cash included sale of agriculture produce such as livestock, maize, sorghum, fruits and vegetables. Male headed households seem to benefit more from the sale of livestock and commercial crops like maize and sorghum. Whereas female headed households tend to benefit from the sale of produce such as fruits, vegetables and phane. Most of which like phane are seasonal.

When it came to comparing the ownership of ICT equipment in working condition along gender lines members in male headed households had more ICT equipment than those members who belonged to female headed households. More members in male headed households owned desktop computer, laptop and radio in comparison to those members who belonged to female headed households. They were more members in households headed by females in contrast to those headed by males who owned telephone landline and TV.

Although this analysis of the 2011 data shows that female headed households are more vulnerable than those headed by males further analysis is necessary in order to reach a conclusion as to how vulnerable they are. It is also important to draw upon other surveys as a basis of comparison. It will important to look into other census variables like family structure and education, What should also be examined is the impact of the different government policies and programmes which have been implemented in order to address issues of poverty and gender inequalities and yet the gap between male and female headed households still continue to persist. Based on this analysis once can also conclude that the household is a more effective unit of analysis as evidenced from the reliable and consistent data that has been produced across all the censuses and surveys conducted over the years.

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