

Responsible Land Policy in Uganda



Context

With an average of 213 inhabitants per km², population density in Uganda is very high in comparison with other African countries. The population is growing by more than 3.3% per year. Land in Uganda is increasingly being fragmented due to inheritance rules. As a result, land ownership is being split up and competition between different user groups is on the rise. This situation is exacerbated both by the presence of more than 1.4 million refugees from neighbouring countries (as of March 2020) and by large-scale land investment by

national

and international investors. Against this backdrop of growing competition for dwindling land resources, fair and secure land rights are increasingly important. Uganda has created a favourable framework for reform of land law through a progressive constitution and land policy. The global project is working with local institutions to advance the granting of use and ownership certificates for smallholders as a basis for economic growth and food security.

Activities in Uganda

The project works in three fields of action:

- Activities in field 1 aim at improving the institutional framework and processes for ensuring land rights. This involves a systematic inventory of land which is the basis for applications for land ownership or use certificates.
- As part of field 2, civil society is strengthened in regard to responsible land policy and in its capacities to provide information to the population and conducting dialogues with the Government and the private sector. The aim is also that civil society cooperates with the project as an implementing partner.

- The aim of field of action 3 is to raise agricultural investors' awareness of responsible land policy. The project is providing advisory services to familiarise investors with relevant international standards, such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT).

Our objective

Access to land as a core condition for combating poverty and hunger in rural areas is improved for specific population groups in Central and Northern and Eastern Uganda, particularly women and socially marginalised groups.



Region

Central Uganda (Mubende, Kassanda and Mityana districts) and North-western Uganda (Arua District), Northern Uganda (Dokolo and Amolatar Districts and Eastern Uganda (Katakwi and Soroti districts)

Term

May 2016 to October 2021 (Eastern Uganda)

January 2017 to June 2021 (Central Uganda)

January 2017 to June 2024 (North-western and Northern Uganda)

Budget

EUR 18.95 million, of which EUR 6.35 million is co-financed by the European Union

Implementing partners

A range of non-governmental organisations, research institutions (e.g. Makerere University and the World Bank Research Group), the private sector and other international organisations and GIZ projects

Lead executing agency

Ugandan Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development

Target group

Smallholders from eight districts (three in Central, one in North-western, two in Northern and two in Eastern Uganda)



An example from the field

Less than 10% of all land plots in Uganda are formally registered. Rural populations are particularly likely to lack the documentation to protect their land rights. For this reason, traditional land ownership rights can often be established only with testimony from neighbours, village elders or clan representatives. Attaining land titles or land certificates is a lengthy and costly process and, for most of the rural population, simply not possible.

The project Responsible Land Policy in Uganda is working in this area to ensure systematic documentation of the land rights of those living in rural areas. The first stage of the project involves informing the target population about its rights and its scope for protecting its land rights in the long term. One aspect is strengthening women's rights since land rights are often passed down exclusively to male descendants. The second stage is to establish systematic land inventories at village level, surveying individual land plots digitally and collecting the necessary information concerning owners and users.



Photo: Compiling a land registry plan in Uganda

The resulting land inventory protocols (LIPs) include all necessary information on neighbours, clans and parcels of land. The documented testimonies of neighbours and clans play a decisive role in avoiding future land conflicts. The LIPs are an adapted and pragmatic minimum standard for securing land rights: the systematic approach markedly reduces the work and costs involved. The LIPs also function as security when holders apply for small loans. LIPs therefore not only improve the land rights situation of those involved but also facilitate their access to credit to enable them to invest in their land. This gives entire families a better future

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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Germany

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On behalf of BMZ

January 2021