

■ Land Conflict Resolution Approach by RELAPU

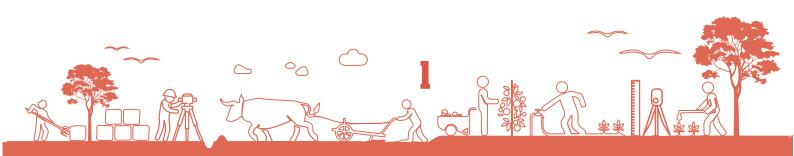


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List of Acronyms

ALC	Area Land Committee
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
cso	Civil Society Organisation
DCDO	District Community Development Officer
DLB	District Land Board
DLO	District Land Office
DPC	District Police Commander
GIZ	German International Cooperation
ICU	Iteso Cultural Union
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
ILGU	Improvement of Land Governance in Uganda
LC	Local Council
PDRT	Parish-based Dispute Resolution Team
PWD	Persons with Disability
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
RELAPU	Responsible Land Policy in Uganda
SEWOH	Special Initiative One World No Hunger
VDRT	Village-based Dispute Resolution Team





The RELAPU Land Rights Awareness Raising Approach

Introduction

With the current population of 40 million and 213 inhabitants per km², Uganda is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. Yet land is a fixed asset. Of all the land in Uganda, approximately 80% of the land area is administered under customary tenure system and approximately 5% only is titled under Mailo, leasehold and freehold tenure. There is a high amount of tenure insecurity in major parts of the population, as the land legislation is not well-known among the rural smallholder farmers. Women and other

marginalized groups of persons do not have secure access, user or ownership rights to land which is a key component in the fight against poverty and hunger.

Lack of capacity in some of the (informal & formal) institutional and administrative structures often make it difficult for vulnerable persons to meaningfully participate¹ and to hold those in authority to account for secured entitlements. Politicking and misconception by sections of the public on some of the land laws, (proposed) legislations and policy frameworks by the

¹ Participation here connotes the deliberate motivation of citizens to change attitudes, perceptions and practices that perpetuate exclusion of some from decision making, wealth creation and sharing and engage duty bearers to claim for appropriate services in fulfillment of their rights.



government has often raised public sentiments and resistance even against good intentioned interventions in enhancing land administration and management.

The 'most-at-risk' population the community ought to be well informed of their entitlements and in determining when and where to go first in matters concerning land in their locality. Key questions on the meritorious and preferred structures and executing powers ought to be well-known to the communities. For sustainability of interventions in land, everybody with influence in the community - government, cultural, social and religious actors - ought to take part in a continuous awareness raising and public dialogue about land that helps to bring transparency, peace and development to the population. The GIZ project on "Responsible Land Policy in Uganda" (RELAPU) envisages continuous awareness raising and information dissemination as vital in ensuring that national, district, sub-county, parish, and village level, as well as Civil Society and other stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities in promoting good land governance and can disseminate the same information in a sustainable manner.

The GIZ project "Responsible Land Policy in Uganda (RELAPU)" aims to improve "Access to land as a key prerequisite for poverty and hunger reduction in rural areas for certain population groups, especially women and marginalized groups, in Central and Eastern Uganda".

RELAPU is working in Teso (Soroti, Katakwi districts),
Eastern Uganda, and in Central Uganda (Mityana, Mubende, Kassanda districts). As of 2020 the RELAPU project will start scaling up its activities in two new regions: Lango, Northern and West Nile, Northwest Uganda.

The project is part of the Global Project Responsible Land Policy and belongs to the Special Initiative One World No Hunger (SEWOH) of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The Improvement of Land
Governance in Uganda to
increase productivity of
small-scale farmers on private
Mailo-land (ILGU) is part of the
RELAPU project and is co-funded
by the European Union and
the German Goverment. Both
projects, RELAPU and ILGU are
implemented by the German
International Cooperation (GIZ).



Background: Customary Land Context, Teso, Eastern Uganda

The RELAPU Teso awareness raising approach targets land rights holders with a special focus on vulnerable groups such as widows, youth, girls, orphans, Persons with Disability (PWD). These are informed of their land rights, obligations and redress mechanisms so that these rights holders are well instituted to proactively demand for and defend their land entitlement. The awareness raising also brings to the front the roles and responsibilities of the custodians of the land (i.e. head of family, traditional or state authority) in being dutybound and accountable to the rest of the family and future generations. The targeting of both, community leaders and the grass root person, is intended to reduce people's mistrust in government backed projects especially regarding land. In addition, the awareness raising communicates the benefits of the project to a lay person in order to promote buyin and active participation in the project.

Background: Private Mailo land Context, Buganda, Central Uganda

Interventions under the "Improvement of Land Governance in Uganda" (ILGU) project² on awareness raising are designed to bridge



the gap on limited information and awareness among the stakeholders on private Mailo land. RELAPU-ILGU and partners carry out sensitization campaigns to raise awareness on legal rights, roles, responsibilities and restrictions for both landowners and tenants within the target sub-counties. The messages also entail the project approach, intended project benefits, conflict resolution on Mailo approach and relevant land administration aspects on private Mailo. Due to the unique nature and complexities surrounding private Mailo, the RELAPU-ILGU project utilises community-based structures confidence and create by-in for the project. With substantial legal amendments on issues regarding bonafide and lawful tenants³, the RELAPU Mailo approach disseminates information on rights, roles and responsibilities of tenants and landlords using simplified, translated brochures, community dialogue meetings, landlord only meetings and local media.

Bonafide Occupant: A person who has stayed on and used, or improved the land for not less than twelve years before the coming into force of the Constitution on 8th October 1995, without being challenged or asked to leave by the owner.



² ILGU is part of the RELAPU project. It is co-funded by the European Union and the German Government and documents land use rights of tenants on private Mailo.

³ Lawful Occupant: A person occupying land by virtue of the repealed Busuulu and Envujjo Law of 1928; Toro Landlord and Tenants Law of 1937; Ankole Landlord and Tenant Law of 1937; or a person who entered the land with the permission of the registered owner including a buyer and a person who occupied land as a customary tenant.

The Approach description: Key steps and main activities

STEP 1: Project Inception and Social Preparation

This step entiles the RELAPU project to the district and sub-county political and technical leadership. The meetings aim at informing the key stakeholders about the intended project activities and the general project work plan to familiarize the stakeholders with the RELAPU project and its components.

The meeting intends to draw up key action points in a participatory manner for an informed intervention process including prioritization of which parishes within a sub-county to commence awareness raising activities.

The meetings at respective districts' and sub-counties' levels were initially convened by RELAPU. However, at the onset of community-based interventions by the contracted (CSO and sub-county) partners, a joint meeting is also held to introduce the partner organisations, the key staff, strategies, processes and the approved budget allocations for implementation at the sub county level.

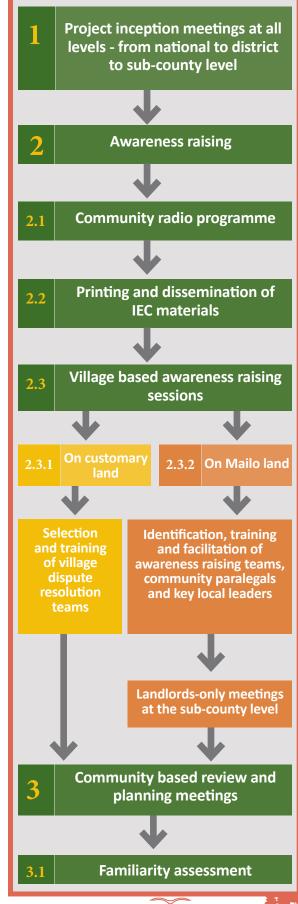
Green: Approach similar for Mailo land and Customary land

Orange: Specific characteristic Mailo

Yellow: Specific characteristics Customary

STEP 2: Awareness raising

Community based structures (i.e. the Village Dispute Resolution Teams (VDRT), the natural clans' leadership, Iteso Cultural Union (ICU), Local Councils and known local civil society organizations (CSO)) are particularly sought for inclusive participation in the project awareness raising processes. These structures undertake the project implementation at the grassroots and promote community ownership of the project.







What are the community-based structures?

Through the identified local based Civil Society Organizations (CSO), RELAPU utilizes community-based leaders and trained volunteers within the sub-counties to create awareness on the project, intended benefits and promote community ownership for the outcome.

Key implementors:

• -		
	RELAPU- ILGU on Mailo land:	RELAPU in Teso:
At Parish and Village level	 Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children Welfare (UCOBAC) Partners for Community Transformation (PACT) Local leaders, ALCs, Area Councillors, LC3 Chairperson of the sub-county Use of charismatic leaders, community champions that are trusted by the communities to take lead in conducting awareness raising activities 	 Teso Anti-Corruption Coalition (TAC). Teso Religious Leaders Efforts for Peace and Reconciliation (TERELEPAR). Teso Initiative for Peace (TIP) The ALCs The sub county local government authorities (SAS, Sub Accountants, LC3 chairperson, LC3 councilors, LC2, LC1
At National and district level	 Key district leaders, for example the Area Members of Parliament, Chairperson LC5, RDCs, DLOs, ALCs, LC3 among others Ministry for Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) 	 Key district leaders, for example the Area Members of Parliament, Chairperson LC5, RDCs, DLOs, DLBs, ALCs, LC3 among others Ministry for Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD)

2.1 Community Radio Program

Community sensitization events are held on local or national radio stations, to sensitize the communities on the project, intended activities, benefits of land rights, laws, roles and responsibilities for landlords and tenants. Radio plays a key role as it shares knowledge and exchange with the community of a wider reach. The panellists in the periodically scheduled issue-based radio-

talk shows may include: political, technical, or traditional leaders, project staff and the common residents. Topical deliberations may encompass: informing the mass listeners about the project, pronouncement of commitments to the project, sharing of experiences on the prevailing land context and the project execution processes.

Radio is harnessed as a platform to announce the upcoming engagements, meetings and



activities in the sub-county. The mandates of the key land management and administration structures are highlighted through the radio program. In addition to the messages on the project and land rights, roles and responsibilities of land owners, tenants and landlords, emphasis is put on highlighting the rights of marginalized groups too. Adequate time for the callers to ask questions to the panelists is ensured.

- Radio talk shows: Discussion topics are developed, typed on paper and shared with all panelists and the radio moderator. The discussion is conducted following the prepared discussion outline and the process is moderated by the radio presenter. Listeners must be allowed time to call in, ask clarifications, complement and as well get immediate feedback.
- Radio spot messages: RELAPU together with the implementation partners develop

issue-tailored radio spot messages. The messages are recorded on CDs and are taken to selected radio stations where they are aired out at agreed specific intervals, usually in the local language.

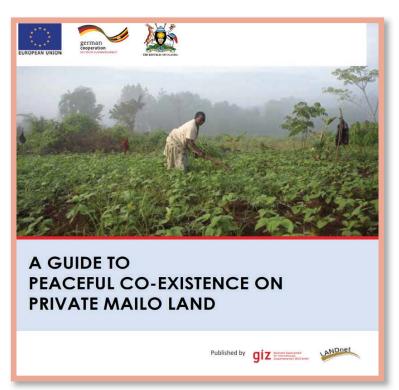
2.2 Printing and dissemination of IEC materials

This involves developing and printing of posters, brochures and distributing them to the community during village sensitization meetings. The brochures and posters carry key messages on the project, including key aspects of private Mailo or customary land rights, laws, roles and responsibilities, they are translated into local languages. Some of the materials have been validated by MLHUD to be used as guides for sensitization on private Mailo and customary land.

Developing Information, Education, Communication (IEC) materials must be done before community sensitization even starts so the materials are ready for distribution to the communities during awareness raising events. These materials must be simple to understand and translated into the local language. They need to be continuously updated depending on community information needs.









2.3 Village based Awareness Raising Sessions

2.3.1 On customary land:

Two meetings are held per village: first on customary tenure land rights and responsibilities as well as land rights of a vulnerable group of persons. The second meeting is on land mapping and the documentation process.

'Bulk Messaging' is used to inform or remind community stakeholders with known telephone numbers on the upcoming project events in their respective locations. Activity notices are pinned at key locations in the village, parish and sub-county on the scheduled occasions. Forum Theatre and public address systems have invaluably been used for spot-on mobilization, entertainment, 'broadcasting' project spot-messages on land and tailored education. Categorical IEC materials are also displayed at meeting venues for visualization of the thematic concepts of learning. Simplified thematic information leaflets are shared with participants.

The community at this level is tasked to popularly choose among themselves five reputable persons (largely from the existing clans' structures) to form into Village-based Dispute Resolution Team (VDRT) – for informed resolution of land cases that occur during the processes of the RELAPU interventions.

Whereas the respective CSO partners primarily organise and coordinate the awareness raising sessions (including land clinics, Teso land platform as well reviews and planning meetings), the categorical sub-county and districtbased officials participatory complement the scheduled proceedings.



2.3.2 On Private Mailo land:

Community project sensitization meetings are held at village level. One meeting is held per village until the whole subcounty is reached. Community leaders conduct the mobilisation through trained community volunteers, use of community announcements in the villages and public places. Information is relayed using community dialogues where translated Mailo brochures containing information on rights, roles, responsibilities and restrictions

of landlords and tenants are available. It equally brings forth the activities and the benefits of the project activities in the area.

This is done to enlist the support of the population and promotes community buyin for the project. Further, these village meetings are held to identify willing landlords and develop lists of their tenants who are ready and willing to be mapped.

The immediate output at this level are the lists of landlords and their tenants ready for mapping.



Identification, training and facilitation of awareness raising teams, community paralegals and key local leaders

Community support structures are set-up to create awareness about the project. These community-based structures support the project implementation at the grassroots and promote community ownership of the project.

Community working teams comprise of selected community volunteer members (referred to as community paralegals) identified from parish and village levels. In addition, the community leaders are respectable persons identified from the sub-county level. These two leaders can be chairperson LCIII (sub-county level), district councilor or a chairman of the Area Land Committee, or any two of them, although the chairman LCIII is usually crucial.

- Paralegals should be: respectable members of their communities, able to mobilize, able to read and teach in Luganda, able to read English and should be willing and ready to do voluntary work in their communities. Paralegals get an activity-based field allowance.
- The training for community paralegals is modeled along the parish meeting sensitization guide. On this, paralegals are also oriented into their roles especially during awareness raising and conflict resolution.

During the paralegal training key district leaders such as the chairman LCV. DCDO (District Community **Development** Officer) and DPC (District Police Commander) participate. The participation of these leaders helps to assure the participants that the project has an endorsement from the district leadership.





Paralegals (Community Legal Volunteers) undergoing a training in Mubende district

Landlords-only meeting at the sub-county level

Sensitization meetings are organized for landlords alone at the sub-county headquarters (one meeting is held per subcounty). Landlords are key stakeholders in the success of any intervention on private Mailo land. The meetings are purposely organized to formally introduce the project to the landlords, to enlist their support, discuss and address their specific concerns, allow their tenants to be mapped and in the further process to promote community buy-in for the project. This is one of the most important meetings on private Mailo. Landlords that are mainly not residents

The periodic review meetings held once in a quarter form a part of the M&E mechanism to account, learn from & forecast the various respective initiatives/experiences founded by the project upon implementation processes in the project areas.

on the land are mobilised for meetings through direct phone contact, radio announcements and utilising local leaders. Technical input from the District Land Office (DLO) and Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) is sought to offer clarity on some of the Mailo land registration issues that may affect the landlords at the meeting.

STEP 3: Community based Review and Planning Meetings

Just like introductory meetings, after the project has implemented some activities, the implementing partner calls back the stakeholders every 3-4 months, to assess project progress (i.e. achievements, challenges) and develop the best ways to move forward. Project key stakeholders from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD), District Local Governments, implementing partners and sub-county leaders are invited to participate. Reports are shared, and a follow-up is made by partners and GIZ.

Events held at parish level include participation from VDRTS, Parish-based Dispute Resolution Teams (PDRTs), representatives of mapping teams, Uganda Police representatives, county political and technical leaders as well as the project staff.

3.1 Familiarity Assessment

The Familiarity assessment is undertaken twice a year to assess the level of familiarity of community members on





tenure rights and responsibilities. It is an evaluation of the effect of land rights awareness initiatives undertaken by the project partners in the project area. Trend analysis of familiarity assessment i.e. percent of those who are at least familiar or very familiar with the principles of responsible land policy, are done.

Region	April 2018	Sept 2018	Sept 2019
RELAPU Teso	34%	92%	69%
RELAPU Mailo	38%	77%	68%

In April 2018 the project had just started with field activities. The awareness raising approach was improved to enable

having both more reach and depth in the awareness raising activities. The results for September 2018 were from two subcounties from each region, on average for the two regions, the overall average familiarity level was at 84.5% a notable improvement from the April 2018 results. The September 2019 results are based on three sub-counties from Teso in the East and five sub-counties from Mailo in Central. While the overall average familiarity assessment declined to 68.5%, there is more depth in appreciating land rights regarding women and marginalized groups, land rights and customary/ private Mailo roles and responsibilities of landlords and tenants.

Conclusion and Remarks

At the start of the RELAPU interventions. especially on private Mailo, stakeholders dismissed the initiative as too complicated, ambitious and political. Many expected the project on Mailo to fail. Today, because of continuous awareness raising and information dissemination efforts by the project and other project activities, not only are all stakeholders saying it is possible, but the Government of Uganda wants the initiative to be scaled-up in other Mailo districts of the Buganda Kingdom. GIZ sensitization materials have been adopted by MLHUD as guidance for community sensitization on Mailo. Being the first of its kind, the project has overcome the critical resistance. We hope other stakeholders

can draw experiences from this as they implement projects on private Mailo.

Similarly, a lot of local sentiments and reservations were initially raised or even politicked on the authenticity⁴ and motivation of the intervention and how the GIZ-RELAPU project would manage to transform land issues given the communal nature of customary land tenure (especially, without affecting the valued customs & practices in land) in Teso sub-region. Today, key stakeholders and communities, both from target areas and other districts in Teso, are demanding for the extension of the project lifecycle beyond 2021 and scaling-up of the intervention to benefit the entire sub-region.

⁴ The inception of RELAPU in 2016 coincided with vile public sentiments and misconceptions against the proposed legislative amendments for compulsory land acquisition by the state for development purposes. RELAPU being the first ever project on customary land mapping and documentation, in Teso, it was initially 'seen' as a potential ploy by the Ugandan state to gain access on to people's lands by the Itesots.



ANNEX I: Results of practice-outputs and outcomes

RELAPU on Mailo land

RELAPU in Teso

Project by-in at all levels: from MLHUD to the district and the community level there has been overwhelming support for the project.

Due to awareness raising efforts, the communities have been sensitised about their rights, duties and obligations. The result has been that tenants have known their landlords, tenants are not selling Kibanja in the absence of the landlord and community leaders.

Cases of land conflicts that had been kept silent often emerged after land rights awareness raising events have been held in the locality and especially after application forms to map land have been picked and registered at individual or household levels.

There is strong evidence of reduction in land disputes with most landlords accepting their tenants to be mapped. Landlords that previously could not access their land in fear of violence from tenants are now able to gain from their land.

There is a widespread demand by key stakeholders and communities for the RELAPU project lifecycle extension (beyond 2021) and scaling up to cover the entire Teso sub region.

Reports from sub-county leaders indicate that in the areas where sensitization and mapping has been done, more and more tenants are exploring the options of further strengthening their land rights such as buy-out and obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy, as provided for by the Land Act 1998.

Reduced rates of violence especially to the landlords and reduced forced land evictions are observed.

There are reports in which land that initially was owned and used collectively as a household or family has now been sub-divided for allocation to the respective beneficiary members in the household or family. Although this has in part motivated land fragmentation, the majority of the beneficiaries have since mapped and documented the parcels in their respective names.

With about 40,000 people reached, the result of the familiarity assessment shows that community members, tenants, landlords, local leaders and the district land administration are familiar significantly more with the principles of responsible land policy. The communities have knowledge of their rights, roles and obligations while the leaders continue with creating awareness raising in the communities.

There are documented testimonies on informed conscience, inclusive and secured land tenure rights especially for the vulnerable persons (widows, orphans, elderly, divorced and unmarried daughters) in their families. This is largely attributed to land rights awareness raising by the project.

ANNEX II: Lessons Learnt

RELAPU on Mailo land

RELAPU in Teso

For project success in awareness raising, the key community leaders at district, sub-county, parish and village level must be sensitized and enlisted before the project is rolled out to the communities. These include political, cultural, religious leaders and technical personnel. They ought to take part in a continuous and tailored public dialogue about land, that helps to bring informed reflections, transparency, consensus, peace and development to the population.

In all community sensitization events, it must be ensured that there are at least one to two key respectable community leaders taking part. Targeting and inclusively working with and through existing and renown community structures: role models (farmers, clan, religious and political leaders) enhances community buy-in of the project in the area.

There is need to have a reasonable gap of about two to three weeks between the awareness raising teams and the mapping teams to guard against unforeseen negative events. If the gap is too close, any challenge faced by the awareness raising teams will also immediately affect the mapping teams.

Closer sequencing of land mapping and documentation activities is needed. Only thereafter awareness raising in a village increases local community participation and buy-in to the project.

Private Mailo has for years been abused as a tool for political campaigns. Caution has to be applied while getting political leaders especially MPs, LCVs etc. in leading community awareness raising campaigns. However, it has to be ensured that they are informed and on board.

"Bulk messaging" to some of the key community members with known telephone numbers on the upcoming project activities in their localities, reinforces mass community mobilization and participation in the events.

Due to unique challenges faced by each mailo land owner and their tenants, constant dialogue and follow-up through direct phone calls beyond general community sensitization is key to getting by-in.

ANNEX III: Constraints and challenges

RELAPU on Mailo land

Awareness raising for the first time ever on private Mailo has come with some notable challenges, some of which stem from the fact that the project is on private Mailo land. That is to say: "my land my business"; with both landlords' and tenants' suspicion about who is behind the project. No systematic land mapping exercise had ever happened on Mailo before. Explaining the project activities and likely benefits proved a challenge especially at the start of the project.

RELAPU in Teso

The continued creation of new lower local government administrative units by the government creates a strong burden on available resources, as more local government entities have to be supported. In addition, hitherto affected areas develop levels of competition of the available limited resources and support of local government. This has tended to limit collective participation by other nearby villages in project awareness raising events convened in another village or location.

Limited number of CSOs with a presence in the project areas and experience of implementing land rights projects on private Mailo caused delays to start awareness raising for the project. The technologically aided systematic land mapping and documentation approach undertaken by RELAPU has not had sufficient 'institutionalization' in the Iteso Cultural Institution in the beginning.

Initial political interference, where communities were sensitized but political leaders stopped the communities from participating in project activities delayed the project. This was solved by close involvement and updates given to political leaders as representatives of the people.

Meetings that did not have forum theatre performances had a shortfall in attendance and participation. The monitoring data shows that when forum theatre was used in the first village meeting, there was high attendance by the local population.

Delayed support from the MLHUD affected the message especially at higher level, but confidence in the project has been built over time. MLHUD technical officials and district technical leaders participate now in most land awareness activities. Politicking and misconceptions by sections of the public on some of the (proposed) legislations and policy frameworks by the government raised public reservations, sentiments and resistance against interventions, especially during the project inception level. The level of legitimacy of local and central government has however improved through the project.

RELAPU on Mailo land	RELAPU in Teso
Developing IEC materials and the right message along implementation of awareness raising activities, focusing on legal provisions, attracted resistance. As a way forward, the message has been tailored according to the principles of responsible land policy but also catering for the unique needs of tenants and landlords.	In some communities, even after all the planned awareness raising events have been undertaken, the responsiveness to secure tenure land rights (mapping and documentation) remains very low.
Absent, uninterested landlords affect the progress of the project and awareness raising, as the consent and sensitization of landlords is crucial for the success of any project activities on private Mailo land. Where the landlord cannot be ascertained the tenants are not benefiting from the mapping exercise.	There have been some incidences where a few individuals especially breadwinners being employed far away from Teso and, who have not participated in the land rights awareness raising, tend to 'sway away' the decisions by the members of the households or community in mapping their land.

ANNEX IV: Outcomes: Challenges and Successes

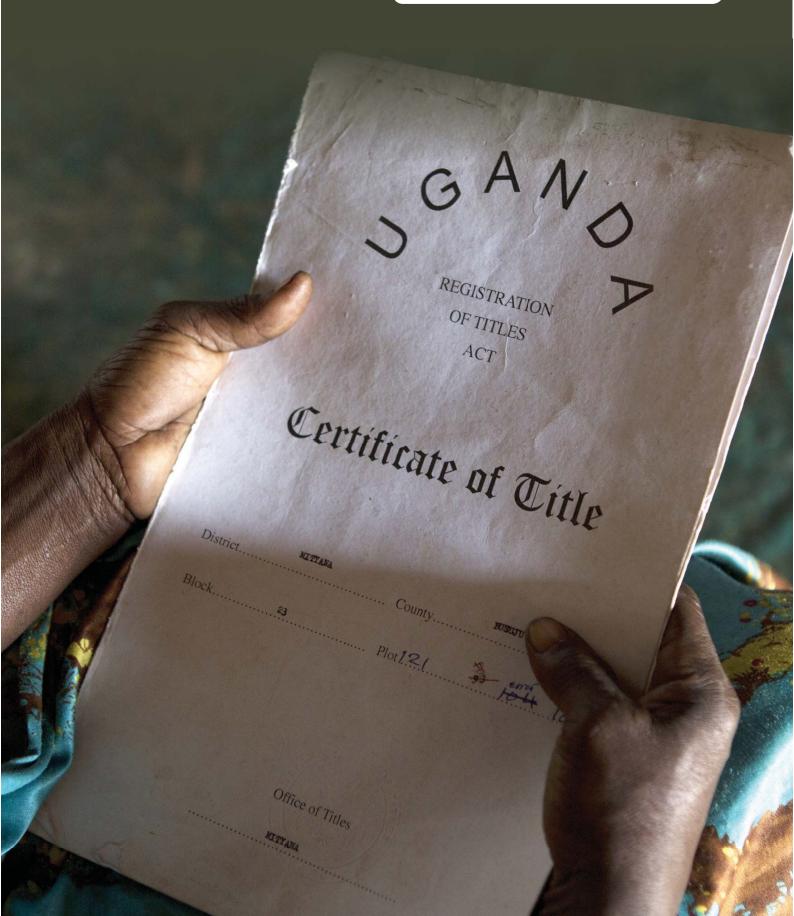
As of end of October 2019		Male	Femal	Total
Customary Land: Teso	Participants at awareness raising events	18,775	18,057	36,832
	of capacity building events			29
	of Multi-stakeholder dialogues			4
Mailo Land	Participants at awareness raising events	24,312	12,379	37,691
	of capacity building events			83
	of Multi-stakeholder dialogues			7
	of financial literacy trainings			2

Accompanying video clips can be found on:

















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