



THE NORTHERN UGANDA LAND PLATFORM

REPORT ON NULP MEETING HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2023 AT LESLONA HOTEL, MOROTO DISTRICT UNDER THE THEME ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PRACTICES IN THE WAKE OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT.



INTRODUCTION

NULP is a loose coalition that brings together land actors from across the greater North region that is Teso, Acholi, Karamoja, Lango and West Nile, with intention to exchange ideas, experiences and best practices. The NULP meeting is a coalition that began ten (10) years ago with about five partners being supported by Trocaire. Currently being hosted by Land Justice Network (LJN), the NULP holds meetings twice or thrice a year to discuss strategic land actions and matters arising in the region.

NULP organized a one-day meeting consisting of both state and non-state actors under the theme; ***Accelerating Sustainable Land Use Practices in the Wake Of Technological Advancement***. The overall objective of the meeting was to internalize the unique needs and interests of land owners in the face of pressure for development, through forming opinions from different land actors in order to reach a fair and just position on matters of sustainable land use. The agenda of the meeting was presented and it was seconded by all the participants.

ORGANISATIONS PRESENT

Land Justice Network, OXFAM, GIZ civil peace, UCOBAC, Lango Cultural Foundation, Kotido, Dokolo and Lira District Local governments, FRA, TI- Uganda, UWONET, Center for women and children, Kotido NGO forum, Kotido Women Development Organization, Nature at Peace, AID Uganda, New Vision, TEKWIP, TEYMIDEC (U), Women of Peace, kica Obanga, LandNet (U), AFSRT, KDF, CDFU, Parliament of Uganda, RRA, Vision Group, JPC, MTA, ESAFF Uganda, Hamiza women and girls initiative, COMWO, GIU, CLASS, CLAP.

OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Reverend Janet Akurut from TEKWIP.

WELCOME REMARKS BY LAND JUSTICE NETWORK - NULP HOST

The Executive Director Land Justice Network observed protocol and welcomed all the members.

She gave a brief background of the NULP as a loose coalition formed in 2011 by Trocaire Uganda an international NGO that closed out of Uganda in 2021 in order for organizations working on land related issues to meet, learn, share ideas and once in a while commission research. The idea behind the meeting was to bring together the Trocaire partners which were 5-7 in numbers mainly from Acholi, Lango and Teso to brainstorm on matters of land rights they were implementing.

When the Trocaire partners came together, they realized there was need to bring in other stake holders, hence bringing on board Ministry of Lands, housing and urban development and Land officers from the districts of Lango, Acholi and Teso to brainstorm on matters of land governance, land rights. The hottest issue then was the issuance of Certificate of Customary Ownership (CCOs).

After four years, the partners together with Min. of Lands agreed to bring on board other land partners e.g., Oxfam, GIZ, ActionAid. When the group came together, implementing partners of the IJLOS also decided that their partners also be included as part of NULP.

She said that by 2010, NULP had grown to 100 members. She said that the purpose of the NULP meeting was for the members to come together, brainstorm ideas, share experiences and forge a way forward on how best to handle land matters in our region.

She stated that the NULP meeting is held 2-3 times a year and members decide on which region the meeting should be held. She thanked members for honoring the invitation despite the short notice.

The ED also talked about Land Justice Network as a civil society organization that started in 2019 and works around land rights for all as it is entailed in the Mission and Vision. LNJ wants to see that the practical aspects of land rights coming out and how best to ensure that land tenure security works for every Ugandan.

She thanked all the development partners that made the meeting possible, noting Oxfam, GIZ, UCOBAC and ESAFF among others.

She also thanked the LNJ staff for coordinating the meeting and thanked Hon. Faith Nakut Loru, the woman member of parliament of Napak district for gracing the occasion and noted that it was the first NULP meeting where a member of parliament was in attendance.

OPENING REMARKS – RDC KOTIDO Hon. Onoria Ambrose

He noted the following;

He thanked Hon. Faith Nakut woman member of parliament for Napak district, the vice chairpersons of the local governments in absentia and those present, the members of land alliance, Oxfam, technical persons from other districts, GIZ Civil Peace Service and all other stakeholders who were present.

He was grateful to God for giving him another opportunity to share with the team the issues that is affecting their land and having the opportunity to meet some of the people who have been on board struggling to achieve the vision of sustainable land use.

Once land is not used appropriately, we end up buying more food, we end up importing food, we get affected by wars of white men which would have not affected us, get under threats by other countries for example America threatening to cut off some of the aid and yet some of these threats could be ignored if we used land productively as a country.

He advised the people of Karamoja to secure their land because at the end of the day, land is everything and if their land is taken, they will have no where to go with their animals.

He noted that the issue of land has security aspects and he was glad that as the head of security, he was the one opening the meeting. He requested that such meetings should be held regularly to advocate for policies that create conducive environment for the citizens of Uganda to exercise and enjoy their rights.

There is less productivity where land is more vacant that is in Karamoja region and urged leaders to sensitize the community on sustainable land use.

He declared the meeting officially opened, tasking Hon. Faith Nakut to relay matters to be discussed and recommendations made, to the attention of Parliament of Uganda.

PREVIOUS MINUTES – MARY NYATHO (Secretariat)

Reference was made to the last meeting of NULP held on the 27th and 28th October 2022 in Margarita hotel Lira district under the theme ***“Strengthening the Involvement of Women in the Formal Justice Systems”***.

Specific focus was on the ways forward/recommendations developed during meeting which included; the need to empower and train the clan structure on how to handle some of the issues that violate the rights of women from accessing land, to advocate for empowerment of men and women economically with knowledge, the need for capacity building of all land actors so they're able to do their work effectively, The need for mind-set change specifically on customary laws and practices needs to be further engaged on, development of a guideline of Informal Justice Systems and a technical working group, need to further engage the ministry of Land on subsequent transactions, NULP should be engaged on the ongoing review of laws and policies on land.

Keynote Address; Hon. Faith Nakut Loru -Woman MP, Napak district

She welcomed the RDC, the leaders of the region present, all the members of the NULP, the developing partners, the land actors present and thanked NULP for choosing Karamoja. She pointed out the following;

Platforms like NULP is playing a significant role in safeguarding the land rights of our people in the greater North.

Issues of land and security go together and she noted that there are two options in N. Uganda and Karamoja which are; issues from armed conflict and insecurity arising from land use.

She recollected that in 2018, she had a face to face interaction with land conflict specifically in Karamoja. This was at a time Karamoja had enjoyed 7 years of peace and she thought that maybe peace opened doors to conflict, she visited the Ministry of Lands and requested them to halt land transactions in the region because she felt that they were not yet ready to face the reality on land grabbing, land use, to handle land management due to their illiteracy and to make informed decisions on land use. Yet, her thoughts were wrong. She realized that the solution to land matters was to have a conversation with land actors and land owners because they know how best to keep their land and use it better.

She noted that the question of land came like a wind that no one can hide away from and thanked the organizers of the NULP conversation for taking a bold step in engaging people on land use and management.

The characteristics of illiteracy in Karamoja cuts across the greater north making people vulnerable. This makes it hard for the land actors to unpack what is supposed to be done.

The combination of security and technology doesn't leave the land use practices the same. Technology brings in two things; it helps to utilize the land well or makes it easy to lose land. Whether we accept it or postpone it, its coming like the wind and we can not bury our heads in the sand.

In utilizing the land sustainably, we must be cognizant of the competing demands. We have limited resources and too many demands for land due to increasing population yet we also have to think of the future generation. She pointed out some of the competing demands as follows;

- (i) The demand for individual settlement vs communal settlement; in the past settlement was for all the relatives e.g. a son would marry his wife and build his house within the communal settlement yet now they want to settle on their own land.
- (ii) Demand for land for infrastructure like roads, hospitals. She noted that in one of her sub counties people are complaining that development infrastructure is taking up their land
- (iii) Speculative acquisition of land by business men and elites who see potential in the land and sometimes buy or gazette it, hoping that it's value will increase in future.
- (iv) Demand for land for grazing, for crop farming in the greater north is increasing.
- (v) Existing reserves e.g. forest reserves in the greater north leaves less land for farming, grazing and other activities because we have to conserve nature.
- (vi) Mineral development, the demand for minerals directly affects the demand for land for example some developers think a license for mining means a license for ownership of land.

Amidst the demand for land, there is the question of technology which will help land owners utilize the land well or help them lose it.

The positives of technology in her perspective were;

- It simplifies the planning e.g. the use of drones for physical mapping of land and land survey has made it quicker and easier.
- Provides alternative options for maximizing a small area, as urban centers are coming up in the greater North, there is migration to these centers and the use of technology has made it possible to utilize the small spaces in towns for production.
- It eases linkages to markets for land and its products for example land sales, land rentals, disease control, produce sales.
- It eases communication, networking e.g. reporting land frauds

The negative perspectives of technology included;

- Has increased the gaps between the elites and the elite in the grater north. Technology has made it possible for the elite to take over whatever they feel regardless of considering the majority population who need the same resources.
- The land being titled without the knowledge of the owners.
- It opens room for harmful products to get to our areas for example bad chemicals used for weeding which reduce soil fertility.

- Technology has promoted laziness among the youth who think by attending to their phones everything will be done and end up being less productive.
- Technology is being used by surveyors to manipulate boundaries and cause conflicts between communities for example borders between districts.

Previously there was sustainable land use practice options in the context of Karamoja which helped to keep the land for future generation;

- Traditional land mechanisms which is now being distorted by the new normal of elite capture and people making individual settlements rather than the communal settlement.
- People were buried in the soil in the home gazetted burial grounds to allow their bodies decompose and the land be reuse for other activities like grazing animals, crop production and settlement which is no longer there.
- Rotational use of land for crop production and livestock. there was proper allocation of where livestock should be, wetlands were conserved for livestock keeping during dry seasons while in the current context, wetland is occupied by individuals making it unsustainable for the future.
- The question of temporary settlement. Traditionally it was ok to welcome a visitor who could have had a complaint or other issues in their areas to settle on your land for even for over 20 years and they would still leave the land peacefully with their children which is not the case today.

She concluded her keynote address by giving the following recommendations;

- There is need to support our people to understand the future stakes of land in the greater north, so that the habits of selling land to buy motor cycles, marrying another wife is stopped.
- Support the restoration of sustainable traditional land use mechanisms for example communal land ownership to reduce on land fragmentations.
- Registration of clan owned land to avoid the elite capture.
- Need to support the upcoming urban centers in the greater north with planning to create space for other activities like settlement and production.
- Having a functional District Land Board in the neighboring districts in the greater north.
- Transparency on land matters. Information on land matters should be made public.

PRESENTATIONS BY DIFFERENT CSOS

Presentation 1; Byaruhanga Andrew -ED Resource Rights Africa

Policies, Rights, and Land Use Change Patterns; Reality Check

Resource Rights Africa is an advocacy and development organization that works in Karamoja sub region mainly in the mining sector.

His presentation entailed the following;

1. The three livelihood zones with distinct defining attributes which included the following;

- The sub- humid wet: that runs the western part of the sub region and receives the highest rainfall total in the region. On average 800 to 1200 mm per annum.
- The semi-arid Agro-Pastoral zone that represents the crop-livestock mixed farming system and runs through much of central to northern
- Karamoja with annual rainfall averaged at 500 to 800 mm, which is often poorly distributed.
- The Arid- Pastoral zone that occurs in the eastern part of the sub region, covering parts of kotido, eastern Moroto and Amudat. This zone is characterized by variable, poorly distributed and low rainfall not exceeding 700 mm per annum (GoU,2009)

Unlike the rest of the country, with two rainy seasons and two planting seasons, Karamoja has only one rainy season and one planting season (OPM,2009)

2. The drivers of land use pattern changes;

- The Karamoja's focus on livestock is often associated with poverty and backwardness, yet it has been shown that households in Karamoja that have livestock assets have better food security than those that do not and 70% of households in the "food secure" category were those that owned livestock or poultry (Akabwai and Ateyo, 2007)
- Crop farming has been on the rise in the last decade with a tenfold increase in subsistence farmlands (Egeru et al 2014a)
- This is despite strong evidence that livestock provides more food security than growing crops in semi-arid areas; the food crisis in these regions is actually a livestock crisis (Krati et al,2013)
- Then, comes the mining sector that has gained momentum in the region.

3. The reality check;

- Over 50 different minerals exist in the region, including gold, limestone, marble, silver, copper, iron and many more are yet to be discovered. For example, over 300 million tons of commercial limestone deposits in Kosiroi alone.
- A total of 17,083.34sq.km i.e., 61.67% of total land area is licensed for mineral exploration and extraction activities.
- The remaining land is institutional land i.e. prisons, schools, protected areas, hospitals etc.
- Mining activities. Officially registered mining companies (both local and international), Artisanal and small-scale miners exist in the region.

4. Rights issues (Case study of Kosiroi)

- In the case of Kosiroy, TCL acquired the first mining lease for ML4622 to extract limestone in 2002 and the second lease in April 2010. However, the company was accused of obtaining the two mining leases without surface rights compensation of the land owners. This contravenes the Mining Act indicates that the company applying for the mining lease should secure surface rights of the land that is the subject of the application.
- Under terms for artisanal small-scale miners involved in breaking limestone, marble in Kosiroy (Tapac), Nanyidik (Rupa)
- Using hammers and crow, the artisans break the large boulders into smaller ones of between 30 and 50 cm manageable sizes.
- A different set of workers (loaders) load the limestone onto trucks; Migrant workers.
- Was the environmental social impact assessment (ESIA) done?

5. The nature of rights violation in the mines;

- Economic deprivation arising from lack of an alternative source of livelihood.
- Low payment of casual laborer, a 10-wheeler truck carries between 30 and 35 tones of stones and the miner who fills it, gets UGX 240,000. It takes a team of four miners five days to fill a UGX 240,000 truck with limestone.
- Alcoholism causing death in the mines, people come to the place of work when they are drunk and this leads to a lot of accidents.
- Inefficient payment of surface rights.
- Land grab intent for the clinker construction by TCL; better marbles stones (Nanyidik community by sun belt).
- Child labor. Children are used to collect firewood for baking the rocks.

Presentation 2; Strengthening women access and decision making on land in Karamoja sub region.

UCOBAC - Onying Ottober

UCOBAC is Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children's welfare. Its mission is to promote human rights and welfare of women and children using community-based initiatives. The Program areas are Women's Land and Property Rights, Orphans and vulnerable Children, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, Gender Based Violence and Gender and Climate Change. They operate in the districts of Napak in Nabwal and Leregecora sub counties.

1. Land rights in Karamoja

Land is divided into communal and family land and it is governed by traditional norms and customs, mainly owned by men.

In Karamoja land is apportioned to a girl in the family until they get married. As a married woman, land is allocated by mothers in law. At divorce, the woman forfeits her right to land to her children. At death, the children will inherit the land of their mothers.

2. Promoting Access and Decision making.

Access means that a person can use the land e.g. for cultivation, housing – but s/he does not necessarily have legal rights to transfer. Access can be acquired through informal concessions granted by individuals to kin or friends. In some instances, access to land can be willed and inherited.

Decision making is a deliberate process of making choices by gathering information, and assessing alternative resolutions. Decision can only be made by someone who holds control & ownership rights and mostly men in Karamoja.

In promoting access and decision making, the underlying issues have to be dealt with, which are the main problem, causes and consequences through the ecological model which include; household level interventions, male engagement, media engagements, advocacy and work with the reference groups such as traditional leaders, local land actors.

3.Limitations to digitalization of land rights in Karamoja.

The presenter discussed the limitations to digitalization of technology for documenting, securing and keeping records of women land rights and he noted that internet reliance excludes women with limited financial means, internet enabled phones excludes the end users of the technological products who cannot afford phones, low number of women who are able to read and write and technology is designed in English.

Presentation 3; Exploring technology's role in achieving sustainable land use in Uganda: Customary land registration as a case study. LANDnet Bethel Kisaarwot

LANDnet offers capacity development, research and organizational management and development to the public, private sectors and civil society organizations. It seeks to build capacity of young professionals in land governance taking into consideration the emerging body of knowledge in land and natural resources management practices. Building in to this the fundamentals of gender equality and other social and cultural rights.

1. Understanding sustainable land use;

Sustainable land use refers to the management and utilization of land resources in a way that promotes long-term ecological balance, economic viability and social well-being.

It involves practices that aim to minimize negative environmental impacts while maximizing the benefits derived from the land. Some of the key practices associated with sustainable land use include but are not limited to;

- Conservation and restoration of land parcels.
- Smart Land planning and zoning to ensure that urbanization and land use practices co-exist with the available land resources and not destroy them.
- Sustainable agriculture through use of natural material and not application of dangerous and toxic chemicals that could destroy the land.
- Land use diversification so that land and its available resources are utilized fully in a sustainable manner.
- Community engagement and stakeholder participation to garner a variety of opinions and come up with best practices towards enhancing sustainable land use.
- Development of policies and rules of procedure that further promote sustainable land use. This in turn calls for advocacy and awareness creation on the already existing policy frameworks so individuals and communities can adopt sustainable land practices.

2. Security of tenure;

Security of tenure is the bedrock for sustainable land use and is a fundamental principle recognized by international frameworks and agreements, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests (VGGT).

These global frameworks emphasize the importance of secure tenure for achieving sustainable development and managing land resources in a responsible and inclusive manner.

- Secure tenure encourages responsible land use by reducing the risk of land grabbing, encroachment, and unauthorized exploitation of resources. It discourages unsustainable practices that prioritize short-term gains over long-term environmental and social sustainability.
- It serves as a bedrock for sustainable land use by providing stability, certainty, and incentives for responsible land management practices.
- When individuals or communities have secure tenure rights, they are more likely to make long-term investments in land, such as sustainable agriculture, reforestation, or conservation efforts, knowing that they will benefit from their investments.

3. customary land registration in Uganda

- Customary land constitutes a significant portion of the country's land resources, particularly in rural areas (about 80%).
- It plays a crucial role in supporting the livelihoods of millions of people who rely on agriculture, livestock rearing, and natural resource-based activities for their sustenance.
- Customary land is often characterized by communal ownership, intergenerational transfer, and a strong sense of community attachment and responsibility.
- Until recently it has been largely unregistered.

- While customary land is recognized under the Constitution of Uganda, there have been ongoing efforts to balance customary land rights with formal land tenure systems and land registration processes.
- Driven by Large Scale Land Acquisitions, technological advancements have been pursued to ensure quick and affordable registration of such land.

4. Recommendations on Sustainability through a customary land registry;

- Consolidate the spatial framework (review the technology being used and create standards with reference to the existing cadaster/National Land Information System)
- Restructure the Institutions (take advantage of the decentralization through the Ministry Zonal Offices, Strengthen Traditional Institutions)

She concluded that by adopting sustainable land use practices, preservation and restoration of available natural resources will be evident through environmental degradation minimized and enhanced access to land and use of the land will be maximized by individuals and communities.

As technology continues to evolve and provide immense opportunities this should be at the center of our interventions.

Presentation 4; Functioning Mechanisms to Access Critical Land Rights Information.

ESAFF Uganda- David Oming

ESAFF Uganda is a small-scale farmer-led advocacy movement formed to facilitate processes through which small-scale farmers' development concerns can be solicited, articulated, and ultimately addressed through polices and policies and programs.

ESAFF Uganda focuses on advancing economic empowerment, agroecology and food sovereignty and currently has a membership of 12,543 farmer groups with 384,056 individual small-scale farmers of which 64% are women in 54 districts.

1. Land Rights Support Centre;

ESAFF Uganda was concerned by the increasing land disputes across the country in terms of boundary discrepancies (32.1%), land ownership wrangles (18.8%), inheritance and succession wrangles (15.5%), and illegal land occupation (12.3%) among others (Lugadya 2016), yet the 2019 World Bank report states that only 3.3% of the 78% of landholders in Uganda can manage to access critical land rights information. Also, other events like Land Awareness Week engage farming communities for a week and leave farmers with information gaps on land rights. On that note, ESAFF Uganda launched the land rights support centre in 2022.

The Centre was developed with the objective of promoting land rights for inclusive and sustainable development and sustaining communication and discussions between land actors and the affected communities.

Its role is to provide basic pro bono services for the under-served communities through legal clinics, Community Legal Libraries, and SMS service free of charge. The Centre is building the technical and infrastructural capacity of small-scale farmers and other affected land users. Some of the issues handled in the centre include land registration processes, land conflicts, succession issues, and land grabs.

He talked about how to access land rights support centre and he gave the following guidelines.

- Save the Land Rights Support Centre number (+256-776892211) in your phone book.
- Go to your WhatsApp or SMS
- Text or use a voice note on your land rights challenge (s) or issue (s) in any of the above languages ie. English, Lukiga, Rufumbira, Luganda, Luo, Madi and Lugbara.
- Indicate your name, area of residence, and personal contact.
- Sit back, relax, and wait for legal advice or information from the Centre.

ESAFF is in the process of synchronizing the centre with the ESAFF Chat Bot and website. He gave more information about Land Rights Support Centre;

- Number of translators: 12
- Legal team doing pro bono work in partnership with ULS, MoLHUD and other Land Actors.
- Number of Small-scale farmers and other citizens that have engaged the platform: 703 (60% men and 40% women).
- 24% satisfaction rate has been realized.
- Target: 5,000 citizens accessing information per quota.

ESAFF is also developing the following in relation to the land rights support Centre;

- Building a more automated information system that gives real-time information. This will reduce the time it takes for small-scale farmers and citizens to receive feedback.
- Developing a team of legal personnel to give legal support to some of the small-scale farmers/citizens whose land rights are being affected.
- Provide Informative and Educative materials on land rights in more than 30 languages in Uganda.
- Creating regional Land Rights Information Libraries.
- Create a comprehensive Land Rights Course for Journalists and rights defenders.

Other ESAFF Uganda work on securing land rights for small- scale farmers include;

- Guaranteeing gender justice through Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology in land rights.
- Amplifying grassroots voices of environmental & human rights defenders through Timby.

- Supporting stakeholders to track and monitor investment compliance to Responsible Agriculture Investment frameworks using the Investor Compliance Monitoring Tool (ICMT).
- Building and strengthening capacities of communities to defend their legitimate rights to land, and to advocate for meaningful participation in land and investment processes using the Community Engagement Tool.
- strengthening the capacities of local government land departments i.e ALC to promote responsible land governance, guide grassroots investment structures in accordance with established national legislation and recognized international principles and frameworks.
- Creating Awareness on Women’s Land Rights ie. during the Land Awareness Weeks.

Presentation 5; Digitalization and Sustainable Land Use: What is the Impact on Land Rights?

Food Rights Alliance (FRA) - Orochi Freda Laura

Food Rights Alliance is a Registered Coalition of over 40 Members with a mission to promote sustainable access and consumption of adequate, safe and nutritious food for all. The presentation entailed the following;

1.The Nexus between Land Use and Digitalization.

- Digitalization and land use refers to the interconnected relationship between the adoption of digital technologies and their impact on how land is utilized, managed, and planned
- It's important to note that the impact of digitalization on land use is complex and context-specific, varying across regions and sectors.
- The adoption of digital technologies presents both opportunities and challenges, requiring careful consideration of social, economic, and environmental factors to harness their benefits while addressing potential risks and inequalities.

2.What is the Impact of Digitalization on Land Rights

Access to Information; improved access to land-related information, including property rights, land titles, and land-use regulations. This can enhance transparency and help protect land rights by providing individuals and communities with better access to information about their land.

Strengthening land tenure; Digital land registries and land administration systems can contribute to secure land tenure by reducing the risk of land disputes and fraudulent transactions. By recording land rights digitally, it becomes easier to establish and verify ownership, protecting individuals' rights against encroachment and illegal land grabs

Inclusion and participation; Digital platforms can facilitate greater participation and inclusion in land governance processes. They can enable marginalized groups, such as indigenous communities and small-scale farmers, to have a voice in decision-making regarding land use and resource management.

Displacement risks; There is a potential risk of displacement when large-scale land acquisitions or infrastructure projects are facilitated by digital systems. In some cases, digital land mapping and planning processes may not adequately consider the rights and interests of local communities, leading to forced evictions or loss of customary land rights.

Data privacy and security; The digitalization of land information raises concerns about data privacy and security. Safeguards must be in place to protect personal data and ensure that sensitive land-related information does not fall into the wrong hands. It is essential to have robust legal frameworks and data protection regulations to mitigate these risks.

Unequal access to technology; The digital divide and unequal access to technology can exacerbate existing inequalities in land rights. Marginalized communities, particularly in rural areas or developing countries, may have limited access to digital tools and knowledge, further marginalizing them in land governance processes.

Where do we go from here? / Recommendations.

Develop user-friendly mobile applications that enable citizens to report and document land related issues such as, encroachments or fraudulent activities. These applications can facilitate real-time reporting, allowing authorities to take action.

Implement a secure digital land titling system that utilizes blockchain or other secure technologies to ensure tamper-proof land records. This can enhance trust in the land administration system and prevent fraudulent transactions.

Interagency Collaboration: Foster collaboration between different government agencies involved in land administration such as Ministry of Lands, local authorities and law enforcement agencies. Ensure that the digital systems are integrated to facilitate seamless data sharing and coordination.

Capacity Building: Invest in training programs to enhance the digital skills of land administrators and other stakeholders involved in land management. This includes training on data management, GIS, cybersecurity, and the use of digital tools for effective land administration.

Data Security and Privacy: Implement robust data security measures to protect sensitive land-related information and ensure privacy. This includes employing encryption techniques, access controls, and regular audits of the digital systems to identify and address any vulnerabilities.

Dispute Resolution Mechanism; develop online platforms or portal to facilitate alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation or arbitration for land related conflicts. This can help resolve disputes more efficiently and reduce the burden on the judiciary system.

She concluded her presentation by noting that it is important to take into consideration that implementing these recommendations requires strong political will, sufficient financial resources, and stakeholder engagement. Collaborating with international organizations,

NGOs, and technology partners can also provide additional support and expertise in leveraging digitalization for land rights protection in Uganda

7.0 QUESTION AND ANSWER

NO	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism failing to address land issues in our communities?	<p>-Gaps in the land act that give cultural institutions the right to mediate but not the power to act.</p> <p>-Corruption within the existing system which makes the extremely vulnerable people lose their land.</p> <p>-Lack of enabling law to back up the decisions mediated on.</p>
2	Why can't we encourage communities to embrace the issue of physical planning in the upcoming urban centers?	There is need to advocate together with other sectors so that Government can channel more resources for urban planning.
3	How can the issue of cementing or tiling graves be controlled to ensure sustainable land use practices?	It can be controlled by putting a minimum standard for burial
4	Why is the government not supporting the cultural institutions?	Only recognized cultural institutions are supported by government.
5	What has Resource Rights Africa done in the issue of child labor in the mines?	Mining in Karamoja is done as a family as a means of survival, parents find it hard to leave there children behind with no one to look after them. However, a three-year project has been designed to address the effects of child labor
6	Is there any level of engagement with the small-scale miners?	RRA has lobbied and advocated for respect of artisan small scale miners especially in the

		amendment of 2003 Mining Act, Mining and Mineral Act of 2002
7	Is there any enforcement put in place to ensure that investors in the mines do environmental restoration after mining to ensure sustainable land use and fighting climate change?	It is still a challenge which land actors should pick up
8	Was the environment impact assessment done in the mines?	It was not done
9	What is the level of engagement of the government in getting Communal Land Association (CLA)?	No full involvement due to recentralization of some sectors
10	How are the poor going to be mainstreamed in the information access concerning land?	ESSAF is ensuring the inclusion of all to express themselves in any language, there is a team of interpreters who explain issues, Clan chief are going to be included to the team since they are the custodians on land information.
11	What is the stake of a woman who has been divorced and her children?	At divorce a woman loses her property rights, the children benefit from the rights of the mother after the divorce settlement till they come of age.
12	If a widow who didn't produce children goes back to her husbands' relatives and after gives birth to children, on whose land do the children abide?	The children benefit from the land rights of their mother though according to the Ugandan law, children belong to their father.
13	Has the customary land registry been established?	Not yet. Its establishment is not easy because there is still need to get facts about customary land from the owners.
14	Can customary land tenure acquire same status with other land tenures and if not, what is still missing?	It cannot because it is distinct from all the other land tenures. Other land tenure owners have legal interest while customary land owners have informal interests, much of it is not registered and needs agreements for occupation.

15	Why are we amplifying instruments that are non-binding instead of pushing instruments that are binding?	Focus on legal framework that is particularly on land. The land acquisition act of 1965 it cannot apply to our context right now and since 2017 the ministry has been developing the land acquisition bill, land acquisition resettlement and rehabilitation policy but up to now it hasn't been passed. Yet land acquisition is taking place. There is need to borrow and implement the best practices as we wait.
16	Why are you watering down the customary land registry?	They are not watering it down but are pushing for customary land tenure to be at par with other tenure systems and are against conversion by advocating for a registry.

Recommendations from the Discussions:

- Strengthen the positive aspects of technology and make it available for all. Illiteracy shouldn't be the reason for exclusion.
- Championing the formation of communal land association to promote land documentation and reduce on land grabbing by elite capture.
- Advocate for government to give more powers and mandate to cultural institutions to settle most land disputes without being questioned.
- Streamlining the Legal framework by utilizing opportunities in the ongoing Land Act amendment process.
- Supporting access to land justice in communities using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) through mediation.
- Conducting research into sustainable land uses practices in all the regions in the greater north because each region has a different context.
- Dissemination of the mining acts to the people, to create awareness to the local communities
- NULP should come out and support Female Headed Households to access and own land.

CLOSING REMARKS – Hon Onoria Ambrose RDC Kodito district

He thanked all the CSOs and partners present and noted that there was a lot to learn from the discussions. He argued all NULP partners to work together in order to address land issues within the greater north.

Appendix 2 Pictorials



Ms. Rebecca Apio (left) E.D - Land Justice Network giving welcoming remarks & Hon. Faith Nakut Loru (right) Woman Member of Parliament - Napak District giving the keynote address.



Presenters from different organizations during a panel discussion



Some of the participants asking questions during the meeting