

Capacity enhancement in land conflict mediation

Introduction

This project provides two interventions towards enhancing the capacity of actors in land conflict mediation. The first intervention is geared towards strengthening the capacity of Uganda Community Based Organization for Women and Children Welfare (UCOBAC), and actors such as Area Land Committee members and Community Development Officers, religious leaders, and community leaders on the sub-county mediation committees in Mityana and Mubende (including the newly created Kasanda district) districts. The specific focus of the intervention is on private *mailo* land.

The second intervention is geared towards providing a practical hands-on training guide for actors involved in land conflict mediation with a specific context of Uganda. The guide seeks to provide suitable tools that actors can adopt to guide them in facilitating land conflict mediation trainings. The target groups for utilization of the guide will be government agencies, civil society organizations, and other actors involved in facilitating capacity building trainings in land conflict mediation. It aims at providing the salient guide on the “What and How” of facilitating successful land mediation processes.

Main text

Contextual overview of land conflicts on *mailo* land

Land conflicts are a common occurrence in Uganda. Land is increasingly becoming a major driver of conflicts throughout the country. Factors like climate change, population pressure, high dependence on land, strong social-cultural attachments, weak land governance systems, lack of confidence among parties, among others, are further amplifying land conflicts greatly. Although formal land laws and redress mechanisms exist, they are often not effective in addressing the often-complex land issues. In the context of *mailo* land tenure, the existing laws are weak and contextually inappropriate. The violence on *mailo* land is escalating and yet there is no clear and effective mechanism/structure handling *mailo* land related disputes. As a result, land related tensions between landlords and tenants are increasing rapidly with tendencies of parties resorting to violent attacks as a means of protecting their interests on land.

In responding to the above, the project applies mediation as an essential tool and a better alternative to handling such conflicts. We take note that land conflicts are complex and fragile – characterized by high interests, emotional attachments. With land being a key source of livelihood, it is important that mediation interventions are conducted in the most effective way possible to avoid inadvertent escalation or emergence of new conflicts. It is upon this background that CECORE with support from GIZ is facilitating this project on capacity enhancement of actors involved in land conflict mediation processes.



Participants in a group exercise analyzing land conflicts in Mubende district during a land conflict mediation training

The project has as a result generated a pool of competent trainers/facilitators on land conflict mediation at community level. The trainees have become peace champions inspiring their communities to embrace mediation and alternative dispute resolutions towards addressing land conflicts.



The LC5 vice chairperson - Mubende district (Magezi Sheif), left, handing over a certificate to a UCOBAC staff after the land conflict mediation training in Mubende district



DCDO Mityana district – Muzira David (standing right) receiving a certificate after the land conflict mediation training in Mityana district



Group photo: Participants during a training in land conflict mediation in Mubende district.



Group photo: Participants during a training in land conflict mediation in Mubende district.

Some of the feedback after the training in land conflict mediation in Mubende and Mityana.

“This training has been a golden opportunity to us as people who are involved in resolving land matters in the district. It is so timely”. A comment from one of the participants in the land conflict mediation in Mubende district.

“We have so many cases of land conflicts and tensions in the district – especially between landlords and tenants. Land lords, tenants, surveyors have been killed because of land disputes. The skills CECORE has equipped us with are so useful in guiding us to facilitate mediation in land matters”. A comment from one of the participants in the land conflict mediation in Mityana district.