

Project Progress Report

COMMUNITY LAND ADVOCACY AND MANAGEMENT PROJECT (LAMP)

Project partner: Teso Initiative for Peace

Project location: Kamuda and Gweri sub-counties in Soroti district

Project duration: 01.07.2014 - 30.06.2017

Reporting period: **JANUARY - DECEMBER 2016**

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Executive Summary

Soroti district experienced insurgency resulting from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and cattle rustling which led to the displacement of communities. Despite the return of normalcy, the process of people resettling to their ancestral land is being threatened by land related violence. Gweri and Kamuda sub-counties are two of the sub-counties that fell victim and suffered the effect.

The present project “***Community Land Advocacy and Management Project***” is therefore aimed at strengthening the capacities of communities in Kamuda and Gweri sub-counties in Soroti district to claim for their rights especially, right to customary tenure. The project is designed to work in 4 parishes of Kamuda sub-county and 6 parishes of Gweri sub-counties.

Following the signing of the new contract with Caritas Switzerland, a separate logical framework was developed to guide activities for LAMP in Soroti. During this reporting period January-December 2016, TIP implemented a number of activities including 36 community sensitizations, 15 mediation meetings to support land boundary demarcation (bringing the total to 25 since the start of the project). These activities enabled TIP to interact with 1,394 people (247 females and 1,147 males). TIP continued to work with the 10 Early Warning, Response and Referral Systems (EWRS) teams composed of 270 people. To boost information flow, the project held 6 Radio Talk shows and ran 192 educative, awareness and project publicity radio spot messages. The project held two bi-annual intra-regional review session in the month of January and December 2016 at Kamuda and Gweri sub-county level giving a total of 03 from the start of the project to date.

In the year 2016 the 10 early warning and response committees carried out 23 community sensitizations on customary land rights and administration on their own, registered 25 land conflicts and successfully mediated 16 and planted land boundary marks.

During this reporting period, the project undertook 2 midterm reviews. One midterm review and evaluation was jointly done with the Justice and Peace Commission of Gulu Archdiocese on the 30th to 31st March 2016 at the Daniel Comboni Board Room of Lira Catholic Diocese with the support of Mr. Stephen Langole of Gulu University. The other midterm review was done in Gweri sub-county on the 17th December 2016 and Kamuda sub-county on the 19th December 2016. This activity involved the participation of District and Sub-county leaders, LCIII councillors and the direct project beneficiaries. TIP also participated in the International Day of Peace in Serere District at the Kadungulu sub-county headquarters. The celebrations were jointly organized by Peace Actors in Teso to help clan, religious leaders, opinion leaders and local government leaders learn together and share experiences on how to handle land conflicts in their communities. TIP organized an annual land management week locally in Gweri and Kamuda sub-counties in May 2016. The project involved 24 direct beneficiaries from Gweri and Kamuda during the inter-regional experience sharing in Lamwo district in November 2016.

1.0. Introduction

This report covers the period January to December 2016. It highlights the project objectives (overall and specific), activities, intended and unintended results, lessons learnt and challenges faced during implementation and the financial report (as annex).

1.1. Overview of Achievements

1.1.1. Foreseen: planned achievements

- Held 36 sensitization sessions on land rights and land administration of the 30
- Held 1 training/review sessions in Early Warning and Response Systems.
- Held an annual national land week.
- Held two intra-regional review sessions at sub-county level.
- Held 01 inter- regional experience sharing in Lamwo district
- Held 01 International Day of Peace
- Held 02 midterm reviews
- Held 6 radio talk shows and ran 192 educative, awareness and project publicity radio spot messages.

The above engagements resulted into the following achievements:

- 18 mobile land clinics were conducted in the 6 parishes of Gweri sub-county and 4 parishes of Kamuda sub-county. Forty-nine (49) cases of land disputes were registered and assessed by the mobile land advisory team and 15 cases of mediation were concluded successfully.
- Early Warning Response and Referral committees have sought advice from the team of specialists and that helped them register 25 land conflicts and resolve 16 of them; thus a grand total of 74 cases received in 2016 of which 31 were resolved successfully by both the EWRS and the mobile land advisory team.
- In this period, the 10 early warning and response committees carried out 23 community sensitization meetings on their own on customary land rights and administration and the Mobile Land Advisory Team carried out 36 sensitization meetings giving a total of 59 sensitization sessions conducted by the two teams.

1.1.2. Unforeseen but important achievements

- Instead of working with the 90 clan leaders and the 60 religious leaders as planned, the project team embarked on awareness creation on customary land administration and land related conflicts for the entire communities in the 10 targeted parishes. This followed several requests from the Early Warning Committees for more sensitization, legal education and mobile land clinics. Due to the multiplicity of sub-clans among the Iteso and Kumam and their sparse locations within the two Sub-counties, most of the trained clan leaders were not able to reach out to all their kin and so they requested TIP to carry out general community sensitisation. This has increased the number of people reached with awareness messages of customary land rights to over 800 people in the target parishes.

- In this reporting period 6 radio talk shows have been held and 192 spot messages run in Kyoga and Delta radios. The participants in the talk shows include the direct project beneficiaries, specialists and the project staff.
- With permission from CARITAS the project paid for the running of 192 awareness and publicity radio spot messages on two radios (96 on Kyoga Veritas Radio and 96 Delta FM Radio). Each of the two radio stations added a bonus of 24 extra spot messages. Therefore, instead of the planned and paid for 96 Spot messages, each radio run 120 messages, bringing the total to 240. These have not only increased awareness among communities on customary land rights in Teso, but also enhanced the project's visibility and acceptability.

2.0. REPORTING BY OBJECTIVE SYSTEM

Overall Objective: The overall project objective is to make customary land administration work in two sub-counties in Teso sub-region and resolve 60% of land conflicts by 2017.

Specific Objective 1 To establish a mobile land advisory service providing tailor made advice on specific cases of land conflict upon request from clan authorities, religious leaders or any other actor involved in a given land conflict.

Specific objective 2 To sensitize clan authorities, religious leaders and communities on land conflicts, land rights and land administration including their rights, roles and responsibilities.

Specific objective 3 To facilitate intra and inter-regional as well as national synergy building and experience sharing between clan and religious leaders and other actors involved in tackling land matters.

3.0. ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

3.1. Expected Result 1: Mobile land advisory services are in place

Activity 1.1 Recruit staff, train and annually retrain project staff:

The two staff who form part of the mobile land advisory team have been trained on the following: Customary Land Administration; the national land policy provisions; the role of traditional leaders in customary land; the interaction between formal and customary land administration; land & natural resources. With the knowledge acquired the team, has reached 1,394 community members (247 females, 1,147 males) through sensitization sessions in the 10 parishes targeting general communities and 36 sensitisation sessions were carried out between January and December, bringing to 76 sensitization sessions in total since the project started. The mobile land advisory team is continuing with the assessment of cases as they are reported by the community people of Gweri and Kamuda sub-counties. The knowledge has been helpful in carrying out mediation. In the year 2016, the mobile land advisory team was able to mediate in 15 land conflicts leading to peaceful land boundary demarcation.

Activity 1.2 Set up a network of external specialists:

During the last one year (2016) of project implementation, a network of external specialists was formed that included Land and Equity Movement in Uganda (LEMU), Teso Anti-Corruption Coalition (TAC), Teso Legal Aid Project (TLAP), Uganda Law Society Soroti Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (SOCAJAPIC) and Soroti District Lands Office. The team of specialists supports the activities of the land advisory team. For instance, when the Land advisory team conducts sensitization, the team of specialists can run a mobile land clinic at the same event. This has been instrumental in assessing land cases, giving on-spot legal advice and registration of new land cases. This partly explains the almost double the number of cases received from 86 by December 2015 to 160 in December 2016 with most of the cases (111 cases) reported between July and December. The use of external specialists has particularly been noticed to speed up resolution of land conflicts between individuals.

Activity 1.3 Provide means for boundary land demarcation:

Following the resolution of several clan leaders it became clear that there was a need to draw fairly accurate sketch maps after land boundaries were agreed upon. The Early Warning and Response System Committees emphasized the need to improve their services to the communities in that aspect, not only better measurements but also better documentation and storage. After a learning experience from a partner organisation by the Advisory team the idea of more accurate measurements was taken on. The project then procured the following equipment to facilitate the process: 100m tape-measures (ten pieces), 20 box files, 20 clear bags for protecting documents in case of rain, 10 punching machines, 10 stapling machines, 10 rulers, 4 reams of A3 paper for drawing maps, A4 papers for minutes during mediation, 270 note books for individual notes, masking tape, 10 reams of flip charts and marker pens for sensitization. The Mobile Land Advisory Team during this period registered 49 land disputes. Of the 49, 15 land conflicts have been successfully resolved with 5 demarcation planted. On average, 5 days are needed to resolve a case. 01 case is for pro-bono and 33 land disputes are still being followed up by the mobile land advisory team to see possibilities of having mediation so that they can be brought to a peaceful conclusion with agreed boundaries. Important to note is that, having empowered the EWRS committees, TIP is gradually taking an observatory role on the activities of the EWRS committees

Activity 1.4 Set up and facilitate EWRS:

During this reporting period the Early Warning, Response and Referral Systems Committees (27 members per parish) got refresher training and reviewed the early warning signs, referral path ways and procedures.

In the year 2016, the EWRS registered 25 cases of land disputes. Out of the cases received, they resolved 16 through mediation; 7 cases are still being followed up by the committees while 2 cases have been referred to Uganda Law Society for legal action.

Summary of the conflicts recorded and assessed by Mobile Land Advisory team and EWRRS in 2016

Sub-county	Land conflicts reported and resolved ¹							
	Land grabbing	Family land conflict	Boundary	Denial of land to children	Inheritance	Communal land	Total Reported	Total Resolved
Gweri	5 received and 1 resolved	9 received and 2 resolved	7 received and 4 resolved	6 received and 3 resolved	8 received and 4 resolved	4 received and 1 resolved	39	15
Kamuda	5 received and 2 resolved	4 received and 2 resolved	11 received and 6 resolved	4 received and 2 resolved	8 received and 3 resolved	3 received and 1 resolved	35	16
Total by category	10	13	18	10	16	7	74	31

TIP facilitated two pro-bono legal services in the period of January to December 2016. This followed a failure of the parties involved to reach an agreement. One case is still ongoing; a verdict is yet to be passed since TIP cannot influence the scheduling of court sessions. The slow pace at which courts work to dispose of cases remains a challenge to the project. It is for this delay, that the communities seldom want to go to court but use the local mechanisms like ADR. In one case, orphans and their uncle were conflicting over land with the former denying the latter land rights. The uncle requested that the case be withdrawn and it was resolved out of court. In another case, a widow and the family her husband are in conflict over land ownership and this is still pending court resolution.

3.2. Expected result 2: **Clan and religious leaders and communities are sensitized and are aware of land conflicts, rights and administration, their roles and responsibilities**

Activity 2.1 **Carry out and present results of a baseline survey on land conflicts:**
Done in year one of implementation.

Activity 2.2 **Organize 4 days' sensitization meetings annually in each of the targeted parishes:**

TIP organized 36 sensitization meetings in the 10 targeted parishes on land rights and land administration. This brings to 76 sensitization meetings in total from the start of the project. The sensitization sessions focused on Family land rights tree, boundary demarcations and sketch map drawing. The focus was also on the rights of children born outside of marriage, how marriage generates and affects land rights, land rights of a widow, a divorced woman, unmarried girl, will writing and how it generates or affects land rights; and land given as a gift. Participants were as well taken through issues of succession and the role of the customary heir. In this period, the sensitization benefited 699 participants i.e. 529 males and 170 females. The participants included, 120 LC I Chairpersons, 10 LC II Chairpersons, 93 religious leaders, 476 clan authorities. From all the sensitizations, 802 people participated that included 186 females and 616 males. TIP has continued to integrate LCs in the implementation of the project. This has been as a result of over time noticing that the LCs are recognised to have an influence on how people relate and how fast they reconcile.

¹ The common land conflicts identified during the baseline survey

Besides, the LCs term in office and mandate are definite and this is seen to enable stability and continuation of the project activities.

Activity 2.3 Organize 6 radio talk shows per year:

In this reporting period 6 radio talk shows have been held and 192 spot messages run in Kyoga and Delta radios. The participants in the talk shows include the direct project beneficiaries, specialists, partner organizations working on land and the project staff. Two (2) radio hours were converted into spot messages and this was done with permission from Caritas Switzerland.

From the start of the project to December 2016, 15 project radio talk shows have been held; an additional 3 talk shows were contributed by partner organisations, bringing the total to 18 shows. The talk shows involved the early warning team, some of the specialists, partner organizations and the project staff. Topics of discussions included: (1) Understanding the procedures of land acquisition under customary tenure; (2) Mandate of clans to protect land rights of women and Children in customary tenure; (3) legal provisions embedded in the Uganda National Land Policy that protect customary land tenure. As a result of the talk shows, it can be said that the project attracted more support from stakeholders/partners like the District Local government, media houses, and GIZ among others. In recognition of the effect of the talk shows in raising community awareness, 3 more Radio talk shows were held as an external contribution from partners to the project (1 bonus talk show from Kyoga Veritas Radio and 2 from Teso Religious Leaders' Efforts for Peace and Reconciliation (TERELEPAR)). Also, community members have found it easy to report to or seek clarity from TIP office on matters of land. There is a growing number of walk-in clients to TIP, seeking support and intervention in their land matters. From the onset of the project, 9 walk-in clients have been registered and supported through ADR mechanisms.

Expected result 3: **Synergies and linkages built between clan and religious leaders and other actors in land matters**

Activity 3.1 Organize biannual intra-regional review session at sub-county level:

TIP organised 2 intra- regional review sessions at sub-county level. This provided a platform for peer learning for the Committees. The review sessions motivated the weak committees to improve on how they work as a team. The Early Warning and Response System committees came up with a report that was shared with the district and sub-county leaders (LCV Chairperson, CAO, and DCDO, District councillors, Sub-county councillors and Sub-county technical staff.) The report highlighted number of sensitization, cases and the number of vulnerable people supported by the Early Warning Teams on their own. The teams noted that they received minimal collaboration from duty bearers as a result of no allowances being provided; some duty bearers look at the EWRs committees as having taken over their work. Information on the modus operandi of the project was once more provided.

Activity 3.2. Organise two in year II and III inter-regional experience and learning visit.

TIP organized an inter-regional experience sharing and learning visit from 23rd to 25th November 2016. The event took place in Padibe East in Lamwo District (Acholi). Twenty-four (24) direct beneficiaries from Gweri and Kamuda sub counties participated in the event. The clan and religious

leaders from Teso had an opportunity to learn on how the elders in Acholi have managed to handle land conflicts. For instance, they noted that the Acholi have embraced their culture and clan norms more than their Teso counterparts. They also learnt that the Acholi women were as much interested in land issues as men were. Teso women had not exhibited as much interest, to their judgement. The committees pledged to encourage Teso women to get more interested in land matters. The Elders Forum (in Acholi) asks the conflicting parties each to pay 30,000= to facilitate them during mediation of land cases. Acholi still has communal land which does not exist in Teso. People in Acholi do not intrude on government land, so the Iteso learnt that it is important to designate communal land to serve as grazing and water points, forest reserves. The Teso team learnt of the need to respect land earlier on donated to government and religious institutions

Activity 3.3. Organise and facilitate the participation of selected clan and religious leaders in annual national land management week and International day of Peace.

Activity 3.3.1 Land Management Week

TIP organized a localised community based annual land management week in Kamuda and Gweri sub-counties. This change was done with permission from caritas Switzerland. The event involved partners working on access to land justice in the Teso sub-region i.e. TAC, ULS, SOCAJAPIC, LEMU, TLAP and ICU; TERELEPAR, TEWPA, the District Land Office, the Community Liaison Office of Uganda Police, the Chief Magistrates office and representatives of the Central and District local government of Soroti.

Two planning meetings were held by the partners to develop the concept of the week, draw up activities, divide roles and make a workable programme and also prepare messages to relay to the DCC (District Coordination Committee) meeting when it convenes, got from the communities during the community land dialogues.

Two dialogues were held in Aminit parish - Kamuda and Awaliwal Parish - Gweri. The dialogues focused on understanding customary land tenure and the role of EWRS team. The meetings were animated by a drama presented by Eastern Choice Drama Actors (ECHODRA) on incidences of customary land tenure in Teso, customary land rights for the different individuals and Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms. The dialogues also helped the communities to understand how civil land matters end up becoming criminal offenses and how to prevent or avoid criminalising land related disputes. The dialogues brought on board the district leaders including the District land officer, the Resident District Commissioner, the District Internal Security Officer, the Community Liaison Officer of Uganda Police, the Chief Magistrate and the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources of Iteso Cultural Union to listen and respond to some of the land issues raised by the people.

There was a meeting by specialists who provided feedback to the DCC about the state of access to land justice, its management and related conflicts and what the people say about the judicial services. The committee is chaired by the Chief Magistrate. Follow up is ongoing with the office of the chief magistrate to get full support of the judiciary in scheduling and disposing of land cases.

The week also supported different parties in Land conflicts. Two mediations were done during the week, one in Oringai village, Aminit Parish – Kamuda Sub-County and the other was in Amoru village, Awaliwal Parish – Gweri Sub-County. The mediation in Amoru – Awaliwal resulted in the parties involved resolving the land matter and planting land boundary marks. The mediation process in Aminit was not completed and was left pending because the parties to the conflict had the matter already in courts of law. They agreed to discuss modalities of withdrawing the cases from court and settle for mediation.

Activity 3.3.2 Participation in the International Day of Peace Celebrations

TIP facilitated the participation of 46 participants from both Gweri and Kamuda in the International Day of Peace in Kadungulu sub-county Serere District. The decision to hold the celebrations in Kadungulu was joint from the Teso Peace Actors Coalition. They were responding to a request from Serere District Local Government. The fund used in the event was a positive balance from 2015 financing. The event provided an opportunity to the LAMP beneficiaries to share their experience on how they, as clan leaders, religious leaders and LCs who represent local government, work together to settle land conflicts. They had also an opportunity of sharing the achievements, challenges they meet along the way and how they mitigate such challenges. TIP has therefore participated in 2 events of International Day of Peace since the start of the project.

Activity 6.3 Books of Accounts

105 books of accounts (payment vouchers) have been purchased to help in the smooth running of project administrative.

Activity 7.5 Monitoring

Monitoring is one of the activities that was carried out during the last one year. This was done to find out the knowledge level of the target participants regarding customary tenure. During the monitoring, the management of TIP i.e. Director and Programme Coordinator and other seconded staff interacted with the project participants in all eight parish communities. There were equally a number of consultative efforts by TIP's management with the sub-county and district officials on matters pertaining the land question in Soroti district. The findings show a growing appreciation by a majority of people who were talked to who understand that men and women have a right to customary land. However, a few still have lingering thoughts that women don't have a right to land. The communities not only in the two sub-counties still suspect that government is after their land. The monitoring also found out that most of the local leaders make money from attending to land disputes and that political leaders are often dividers on issues of land violence. It is also found that some people still use witchcraft to protect their land and it is a hidden "power force" during mediations. To help few people also have the same understanding with the others, there is need to have a couple of more training for the selected clan and religious leaders

Activity 7.5 Midterm review/Evaluation

During this reporting period, the project undertook 2 midterm reviews in March and December. One midterm review and evaluation was jointly done with the Justice and Peace Commission of Gulu Archdiocese on the 30th to 31st March 2016. The activity was done in Lira with the support of the consultant from Gulu University. In response to the fears and suspicions of the newly elected political leaders, a midterm review was conducted in Gweri sub-county on the 17th December 2016 and Kamuda sub-county on the 19th December 2016. The event involved the participation of District, sub-county leaders, LCIII council and direct project beneficiaries. While holding the activity in Gweri and Kamuda sub-counties, the following were some of the questions raised:

- How can TIP help institutions secure their land from encroachers and get land titles (LCV woman councilor Gweri sub-county and LCI from Aminit parish)
- What did the EWRS team learn during the exchange visit to Lamwo District?
- What will happen to the EWRS after June 2017?
- Does TIP support people with disabilities?

Recommendations

- The CAO recommended that TIP should support the sub county by providing filing cabinets for safety of records
- The LCV councilor warned that the clan and religious leaders should not make TIP waste money for the provision of equipment if it will be sold off shortly.
- The LCV also implored the clan chairpersons not to use death as an opportunity for grabbing land especially from widows and orphans. He concluded with a recommendation to TIP to monitor LCIs in 2017 to see if they have any new pieces of land that is demarcated as a result of their involvement. The recommendation was based on TIP's use of mediation rather than litigation and the LC 1s are considered key players in village administration.
- TIP should get the sub county councilors on board (capacity building on land matters)

4.0. CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOKS

With support from Caritas Switzerland, we have been able to implement a number of activities which is now drawing us towards meeting the planned target. The achievements above have been through the effort of the EWRS, the mobile land advisory team, team of specialists, Soroti District Local Government and the communities of Kamuda and Gweri sub-counties.

5.0. LESSONS LEARNT SO FAR

- Addressing land conflict requires collective approaches with every considered stakeholder
- A community based land management week has a higher leverage than a few project participants participating in the Annual National Land Management organised away from the project target communities.
- Radio spot messages have a double impact on the project i.e. educative and awareness creation messages which enhance project publicity and visibility
- We have learned some family land conflicts originate from the lack of "Wills" in case of death. Our sensitisations will integrate raising awareness on the importance of preparing wills.

6.0. IMPORTANT EVENTS / CHALLENGES TO COME

- ❖ Women voices on customary tenure is still wanting, their representation and participation during the community sensitization is also still low. The project shall bring on board the wives and husbands of the male/female members of the EWRs committee members.
- ❖ Access to the PPRR booklet to the committees is still wanting and yet it has impact on focused redress of customary land conflicts. This has to be planned for perhaps through exchange gain once realized.
- ❖ High expectations of the community on the EWRs committees are yet to be addressed during community outreach sensitisation activities. Some community members expect the EWRs members to pay them allowances for attending meetings and training events, survey their land, provide money to survey land, expect the EWRs members to side with them

From January 2017 to June 2017 the project will undertake the following activities:

- Participate in the International Day for Peace (GANAL)
- Provide means for land boundary demarcations
- Documentation of resolved conflicts
- Hold radio talk shows
- Hold bi-annual intra-regional review sessions at sub-county level
- Inter-regional experience sharing and learning visits
- Hold mobile land clinics through the parish committees (addressing land issues)
- Participate in the Annual National Land management week
- Continue with sensitizations
- Undertake gender awareness to raise the profile of women participation in the project

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Appendix: Picture gallery



International Peace Day Celebration in Kadungulu sub county



Left: the Executive Director-TIP handing over boundary marking equipment; Right: The Community Liaison Officer Soroti District addressing participants in the land management week

Financial report (as annex)