A quick overview of the Land Rights Ecosystem and the importance of Data and Evidence

Team Europe Democracy (TED) Rule of Law Clinic

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Tenure Insecurity Is Rising Worldwide

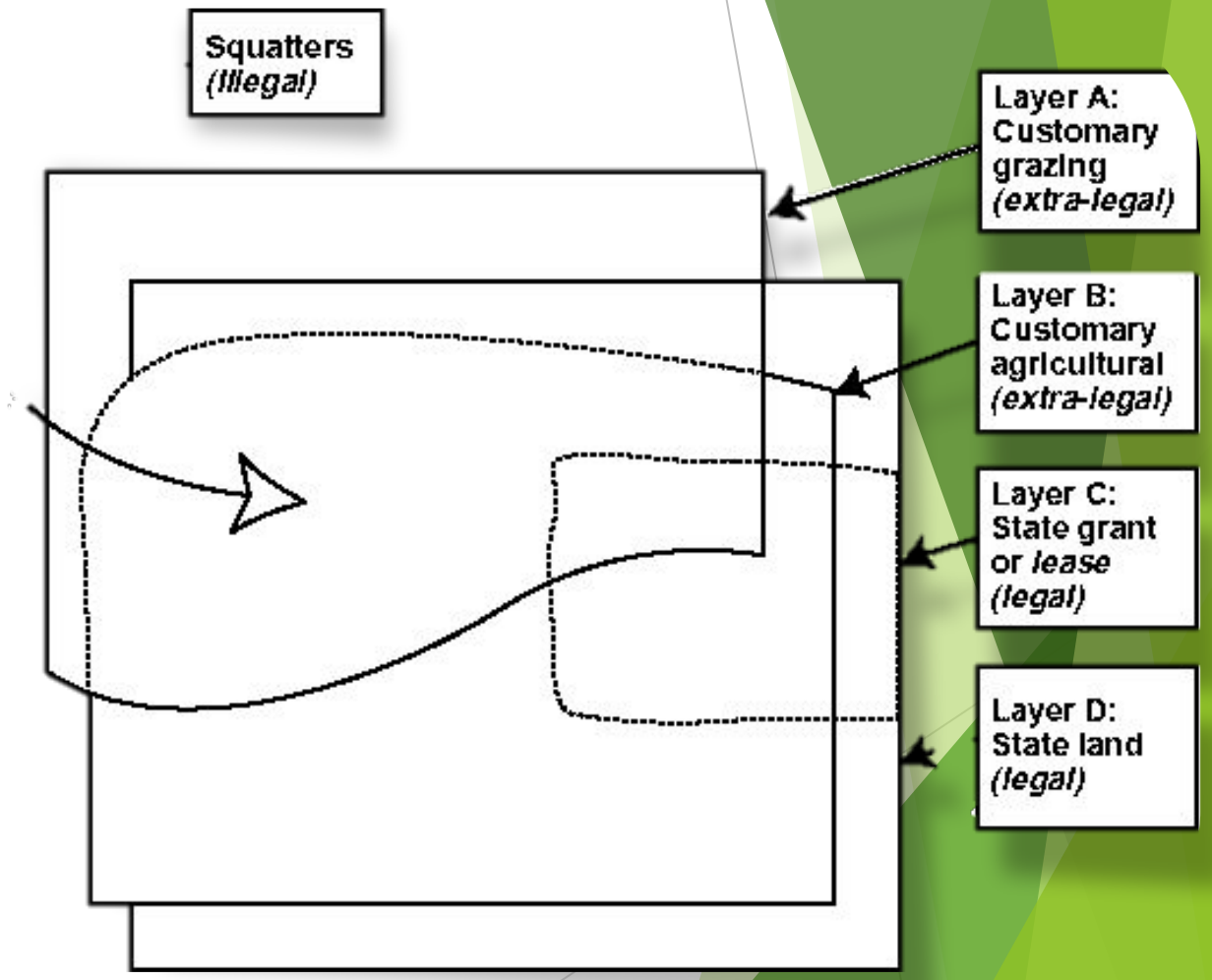
- **1.1 billion adults—23% of the population** across 108 countries—**feel insecure** about their land or property rights. (PrIndex 2024)

- **Sharp rise** over the past four years, with the steepest increases seen in **East Asia, the Pacific, and North America**

- **Rural communities**, **women**, and **Indigenous Peoples** face **greater risks** of displacement, eviction, and exclusion from land-related benefits and development programs.

What is Land Tenure and Why it Matters

- refers to the rules—formal or customary that govern access, use, control, and transfer of land. Often we have complex bundle of rights.
- Security of tenure critical for food security, economic opportunities and sustainable livelihoods.
- Formal land titling alone is insufficient to guarantee tenure security.



Main Issues Affecting Tenure Security

- **Rapid changes in land use -** Economic development, climate change, urbanization intensify competition over limited land
- **Inadequate recognition of diverse land tenure systems** and ineffective dispute resolution mechanisms foster conflict
- **Regulatory barriers** - Complicated and costly land regulations keep many people—especially the poor and young—out of the formal land market, driving inequality
- **Corruption** - When land administration procedures are slow, costly, and unclear, people turn to informal deals—fueling corruption

Who are the Main Stakeholders and What it Takes to Protect Land Rights

- **National or Local Governments** are responsible for setting strong legal frameworks – implementing policies and ensuring land institutions are transparent, inclusive, and free of corruption.
- **Communities and land users**, including Indigenous Peoples and women, must have their rights legally recognized and be actively involved in land use planning and decisions.
- **Investors and companies** should conduct due diligence, respect community rights, and follow responsible land investment practices that prevent harm.
- **Civil society and development partners** support by monitoring land governance , advocating for fair policies, and providing data, technical assistance, and funding.

Land Rights and Sustainable investments

- **Infrastructure investments can intensify land conflicts and deepen inequalities**, especially in fragile legal contexts—fueling forced evictions, corruption, and threats to vulnerable communities.

- **Need for accessible, reliable land data system and digital infrastructures to drive transparency and accountability**, identify risks, protect rights, and guide responsible investment decisions.

WE ARE THE

INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION

Values-Driven Infrastructure

TRANSPARENCY

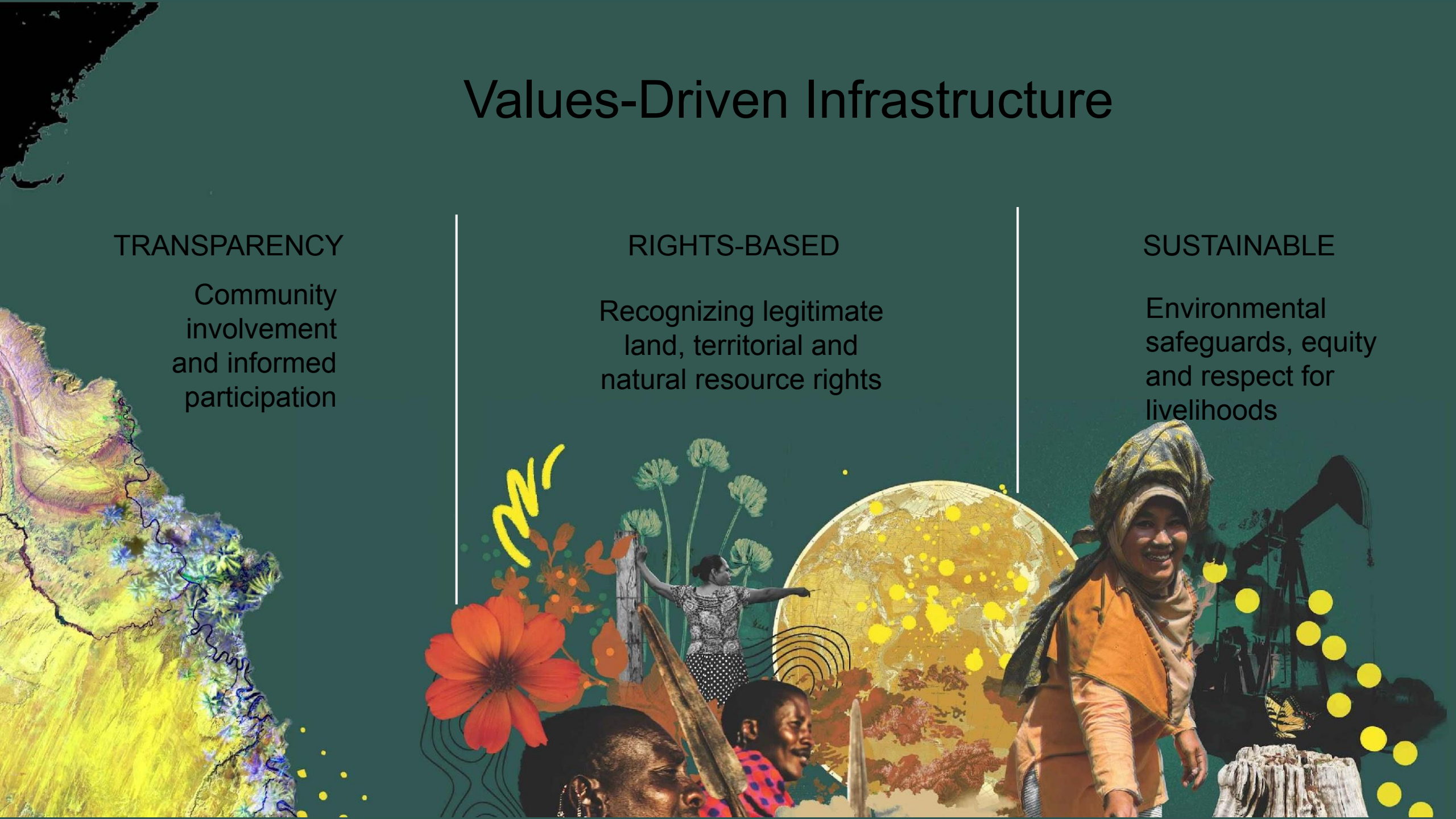
Community involvement and informed participation

RIGHTS-BASED

Recognizing legitimate land, territorial and natural resource rights

SUSTAINABLE

Environmental safeguards, equity and respect for livelihoods



LAND AND INFRASTRUCTURE

A PEOPLE-BASED FRAMING

LAND GOVERNANCE

Clear rules and processes ensure the land rights of communities, especially those of Indigenous Peoples, women, rural youth and small-scale farmers are respected.

PARTICIPATION

Those most impacted by decisions about land use and management are involvement in the decisions.

FPIC

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) gives communities the power to accept or reject proposals on their land.

DEFENDERS

Respecting the rights of those on the front lines of land conflict, protecting their livelihoods and traditional knowledge

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

PEOPLE'S DATA IS PRODUCED AND USED TO HOLD GOVERNMENTS AND CORPORATIONS ACCOUNTABLE

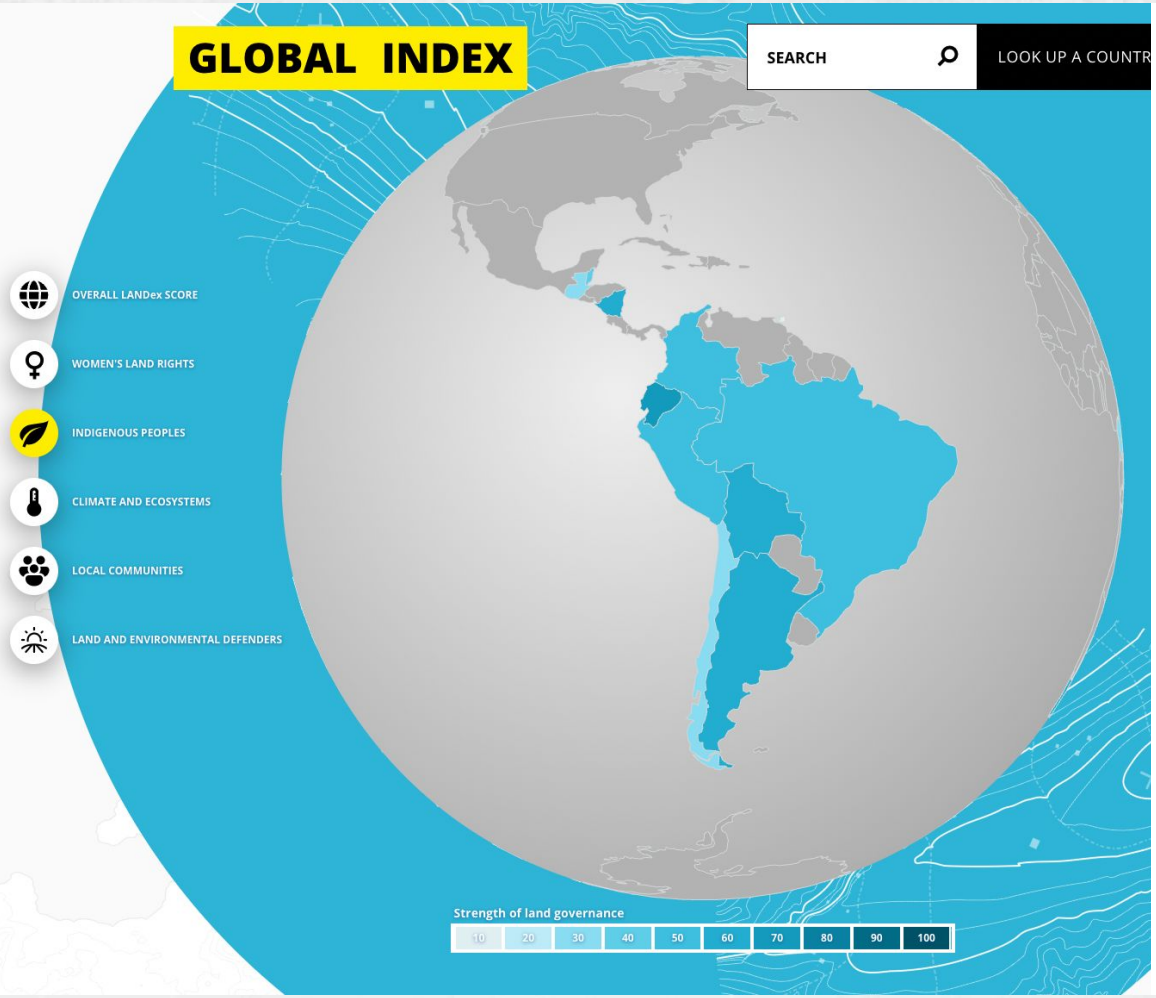
LAND DATA FOR

RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

THE NEED FOR DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

- LANDex: the Global Land Governance Index
- Land Matrix Initiative (LMI): database of large-scale land acquisitions
- Prindex
- State of Land Information Index (SOLIndex)
- Alliance for Indigenous, Land and Environmental Defenders (ALLIED) dataset
- LandMark: a global platform for Indigenous Peoples and local community rights
- Global Corruption Barometer

LANDex: An Overview of People-Centred Land Governance



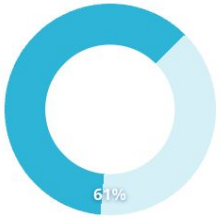
TANZANIA

SCORE **48**

56 | 45 | 43 | 44 | 32 | 61 | 63 | -- | 64 | 42

Area Total 885800 **Population** Estimated 66617606 **GDP** $1224.49 per capita

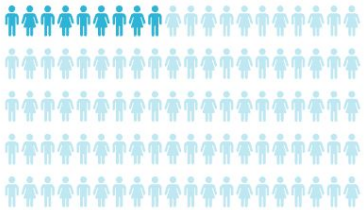
Killer Facts



61%

61% of the country is at risk of desertification

Tanzania faces significant land degradation challenges, with an estimated 61% of the country at risk of desertification



9%

of women have sole wnership over their land

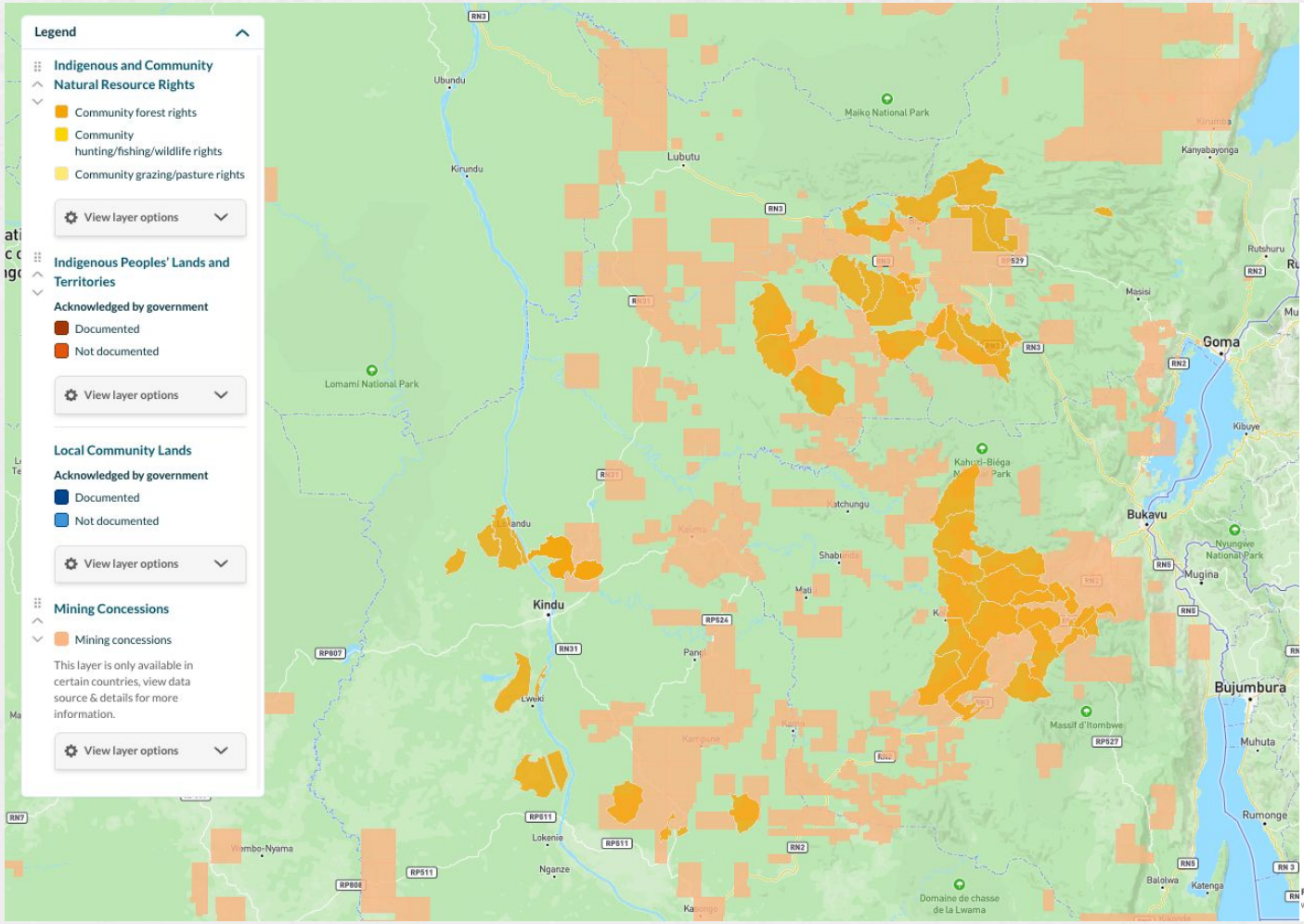
Additional 25% have joint ownership.

23%

of the total annual budget dedicated to agriculture is assigned to small holders in Tanzania

65% of smallholders in Tanzania have received financial support, with women accounting for 65% of the recipients and men for 35%. However, technical assistance was provided to only 5% of smallholders, reflecting a significant gap in support services. In this area as well, women made up 65% of the recipients, while men comprised 35%. Despite these efforts, young smallholders remain largely excluded, receiving only 0.47% of the total annual budget allocated to agriculture.

LandMark: Making Land Rights Visible



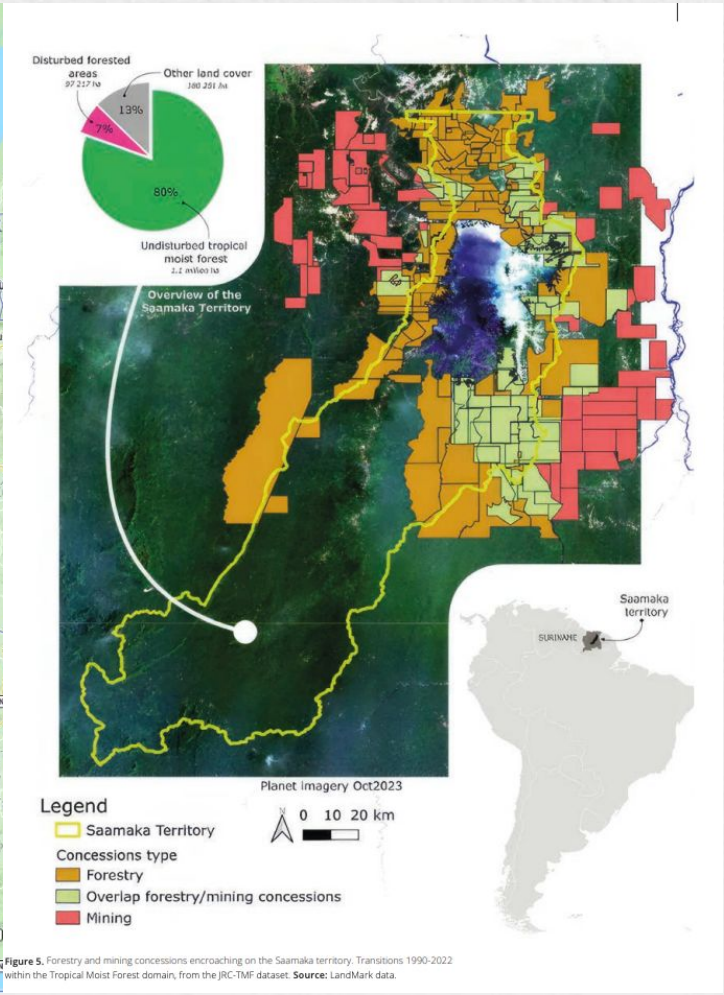
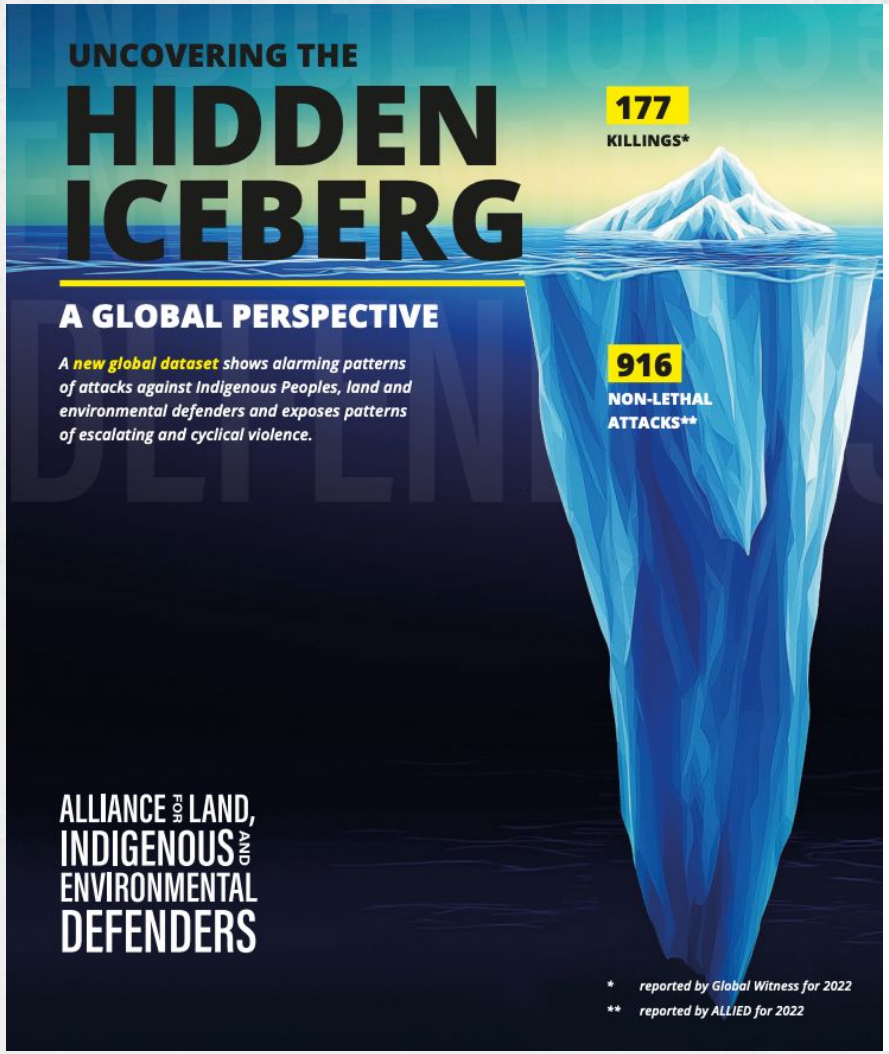


Figure 5. Forestry and mining concessions encroaching on the Saamaka territory. Transitions 1990-2022 within the Tropical Moist Forest domain, from the JRC-TMF dataset. **Source:** LandMark data.

ALLIED: Violations in Contexts of Development



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ritory	Not applica	Not applica	Not applica	infrastructure	tourism	N
ritory	Not applica	Not applica	Not applica	infrastructure	tourism	N
ritory	water	Not applica	Not applica	infrastructure	Not applica	N
ritory	water	Not applica	Not applica	infrastructure	Not applica	N
d	Not applica	Not applica	Not applica	infrastructure	Not applica	N
vironme	livelihood	health	Not applica	infrastructure	water	w

STRATEGIC PARTERS AND CORE DONORS

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

IFAD
Investing in rural people

Government of the Netherlands

Sverige

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

FORDFOUNDATION

Wellspring
Philanthropic Fund
Upholding human dignity | Unlocking human potential

DONORS

HiiL

Dedicated to people-centred justice

People-centred data

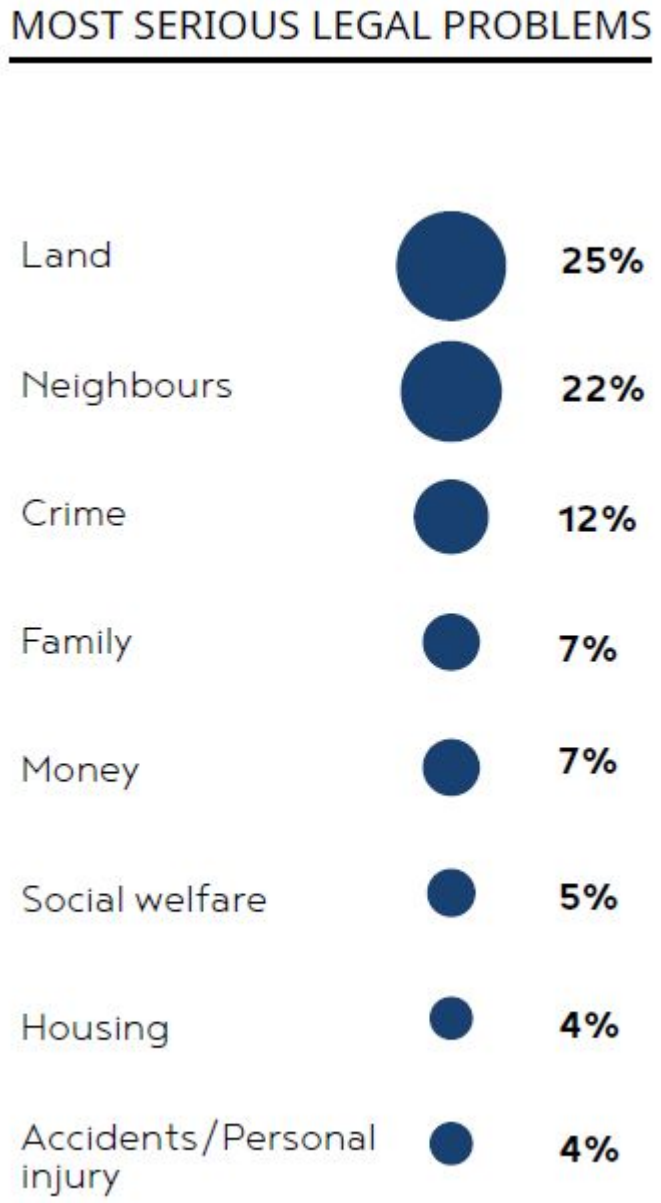
Understanding land problems through people's experiences

Why people-centred data?

- Insight into people's justice problems and needs
- Pathways people are taking to achieve resolution
- Whether resolution is reached
- Impacts of justice problems on people's lives

A people-centred look at land problems: Bangladesh

- 8 million people affected per year by land problems
- 29% land problems



HiiL 2018 JNS Study

Land problems are not isolated

Root cause of other problems

Loss of income and livelihood

“They divided the land and took their respective parts. But I got nothing. They did not give any land that I deserve from my husband…I can't manage my living.”

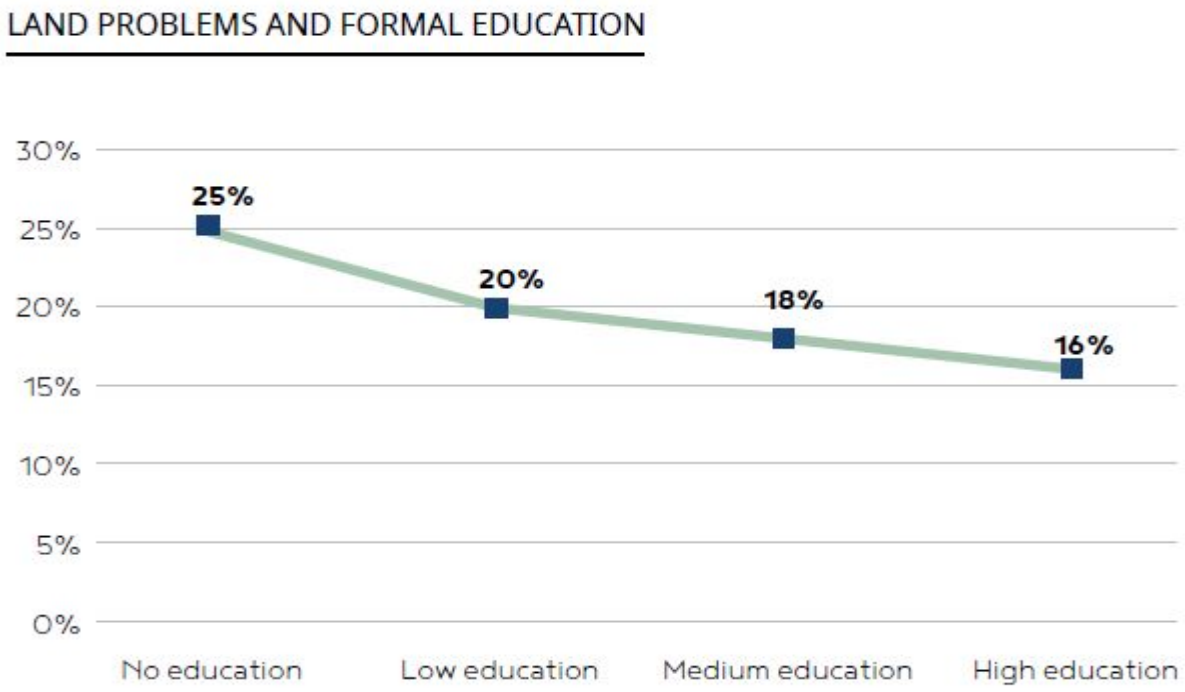
Consequence of other problems

Family problems

“As I was not willing to get married, my father made me leave my house”

“If everything is fair, I will be able to get 99 decimal of land from him.”

Vulnerable groups are more likely to face land problems in Bangladesh



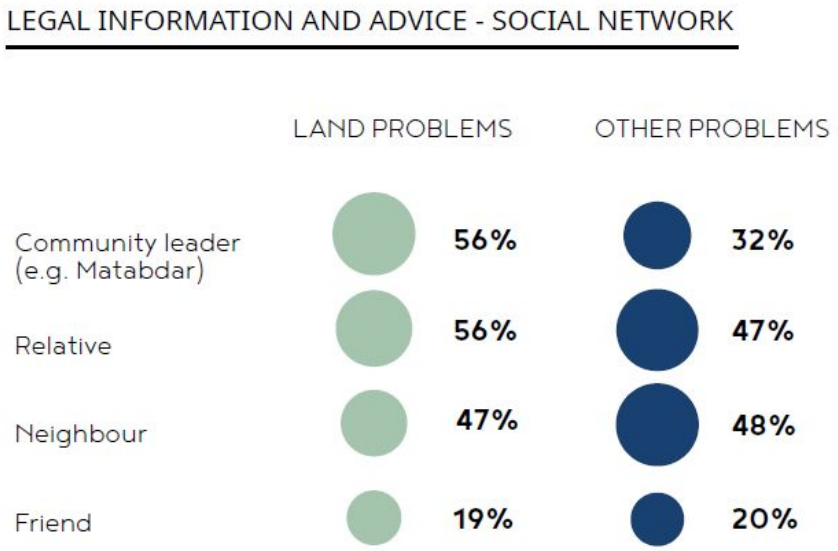
- Lower education
- Rural populations
- Widowed respondents
- Men
- Lower internet usage

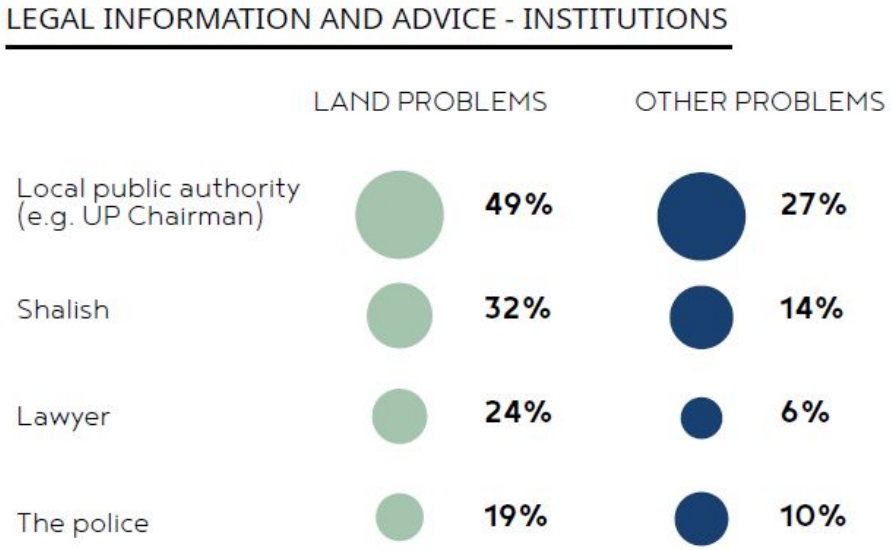
Fair resolutions are critical

- Low ratings of the fairness of processes for resolving land disputes.
- Particularly among lower income groups
- Land problems impact family and community relationships: fair resolution is essential for broader social cohesion.

Informal sources of information and dispute resolution

- 91% seek advice from their social network
- 76% consult an institution





LAND MATRIX

The Land Matrix Initiative

Partners

UNIVERSITÄT BERN
CDE CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

cirad AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION

Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development AFA

екодія ecoaction.org.ua

50 Aniversario FUNDAPAZ FUNDACIÓN PARA EL DESARROLLO EN JUSTICIA Y PAZ

Fisheries Forestry Land Agriculture Pastoralism RECONCILE

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European Commission

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

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Confédération suisse
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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

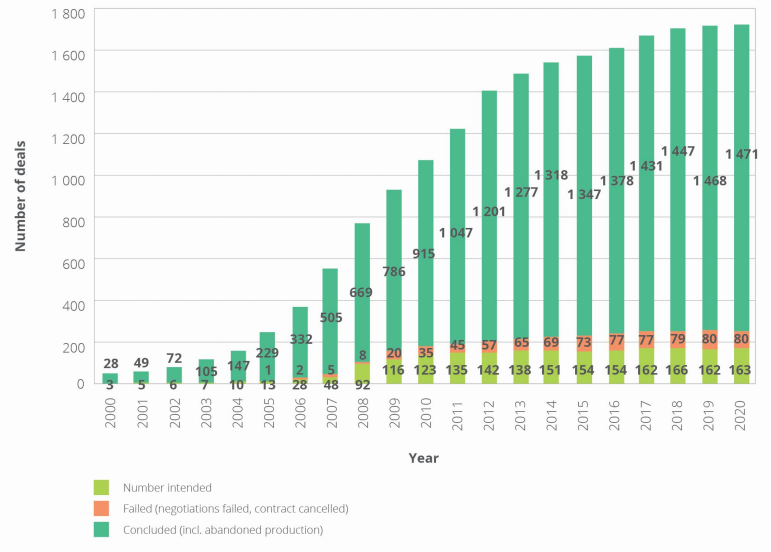
What's the big deal?

- In the past two decades, we have documented **large-scale land acquisitions** (LSLAs) in the Global South driven by various sectors profoundly affecting local livelihoods

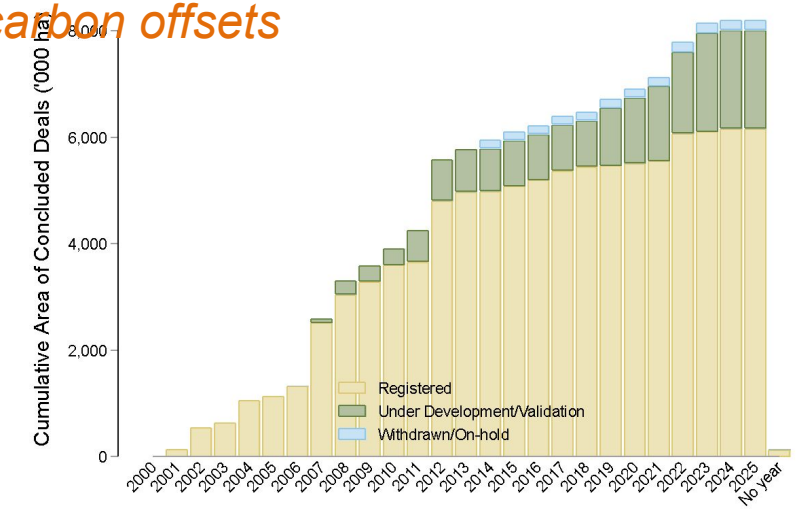
- This includes, for example, **30 million hectares** of transnational land-based investment in the agricultural sector or **8 million hectares** of climate mitigation projects financed through the voluntary carbon market

- These investments have created **jobs** and improved local **infrastructure** in certain areas. However, some have also **failed to comply with FPIC, displaced smallholder farmers**, or lead to **infringements of the lands of IPs & LCs**

Land acquisitions for agriculture



Land acquisitions for land-based carbon offsets



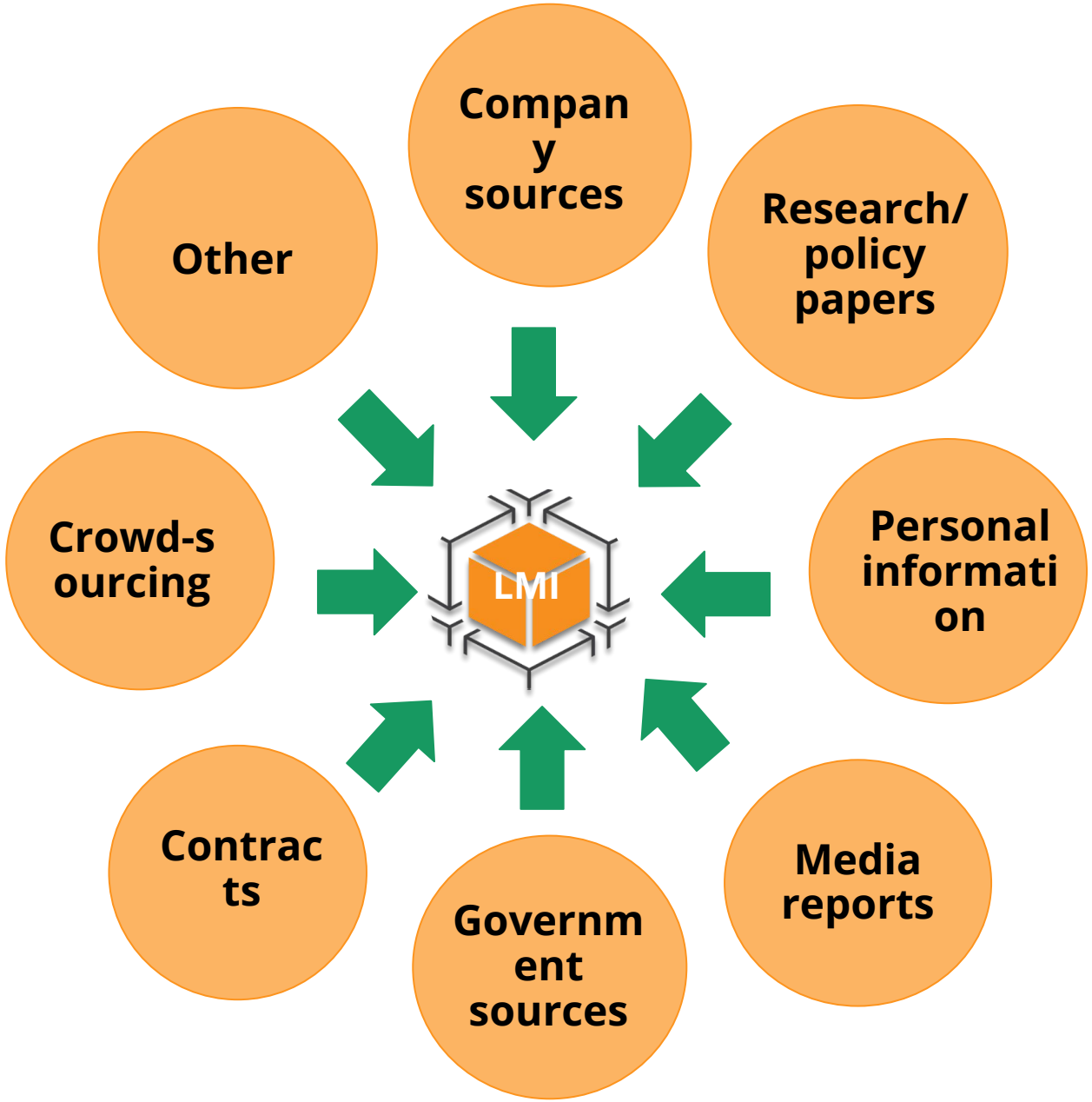
What land acquisitions does the LMI record?

The Land Matrix records land acquisitions defined as…

Any intended, concluded, or failed attempt to **acquire land**

- through purchase, lease, or concession of more than 200 ha in low- and middle-income countries
- for agricultural production, forestry, carbon markets, renewable energies, mining, (conservation, and tourism)
- with **7367 land-based investments** by May 2025 out of which agriculture is the best documented sector with 4198 deals. The forestry sector includes 1261 deals, mining totals to 816, and renewable energy power plants to 552.

Where does the Land Matrix source data from?



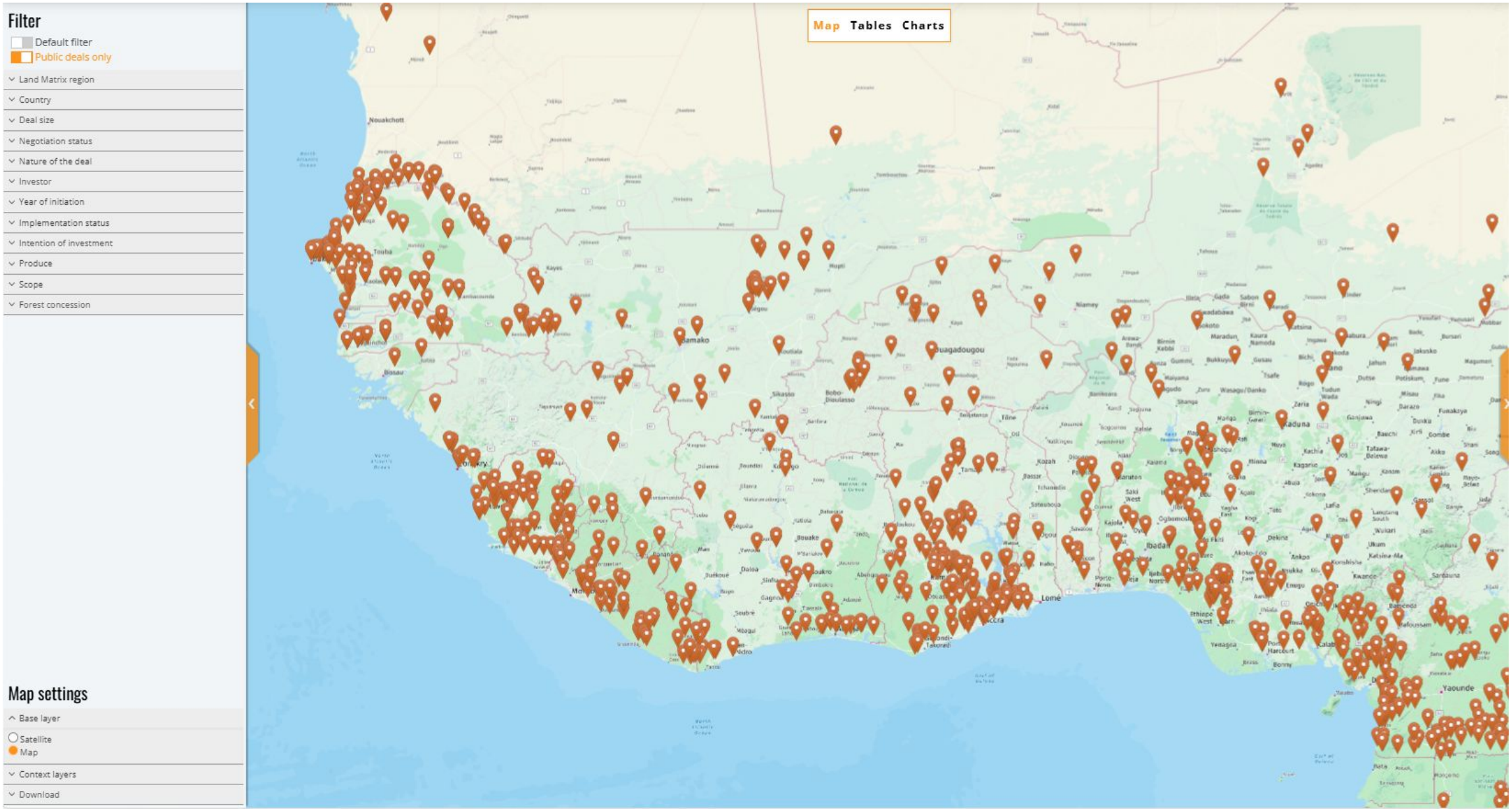
The data creation, review, and activation workflow follows a three-step sequence:

Step 1: Data creation or modification by reporters, scientists etc.

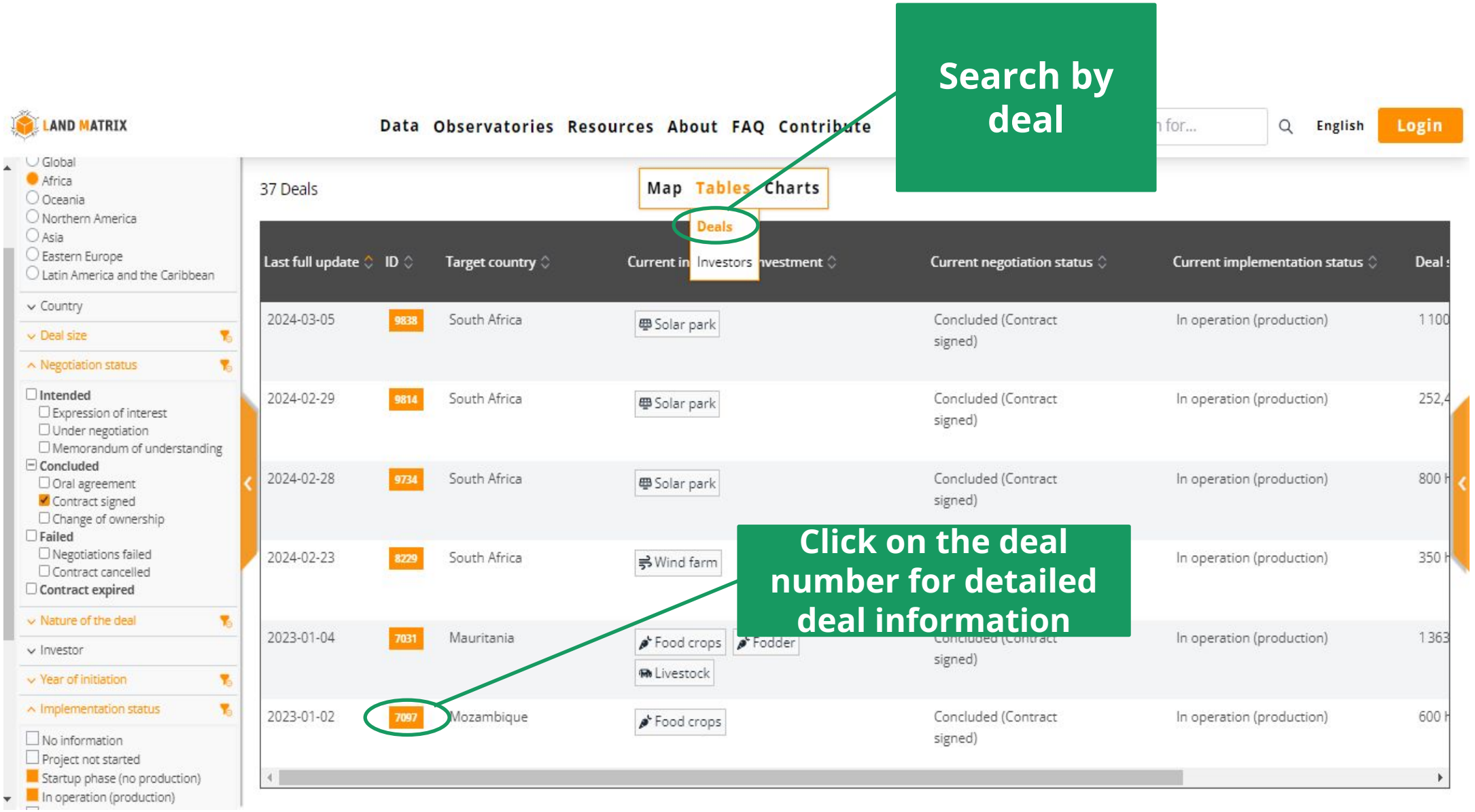
Step 2: Data review by Land Matrix editors or administrators

Step 3: Data activation (final confirmation, approval, and publication of the data) by Land Matrix administrators

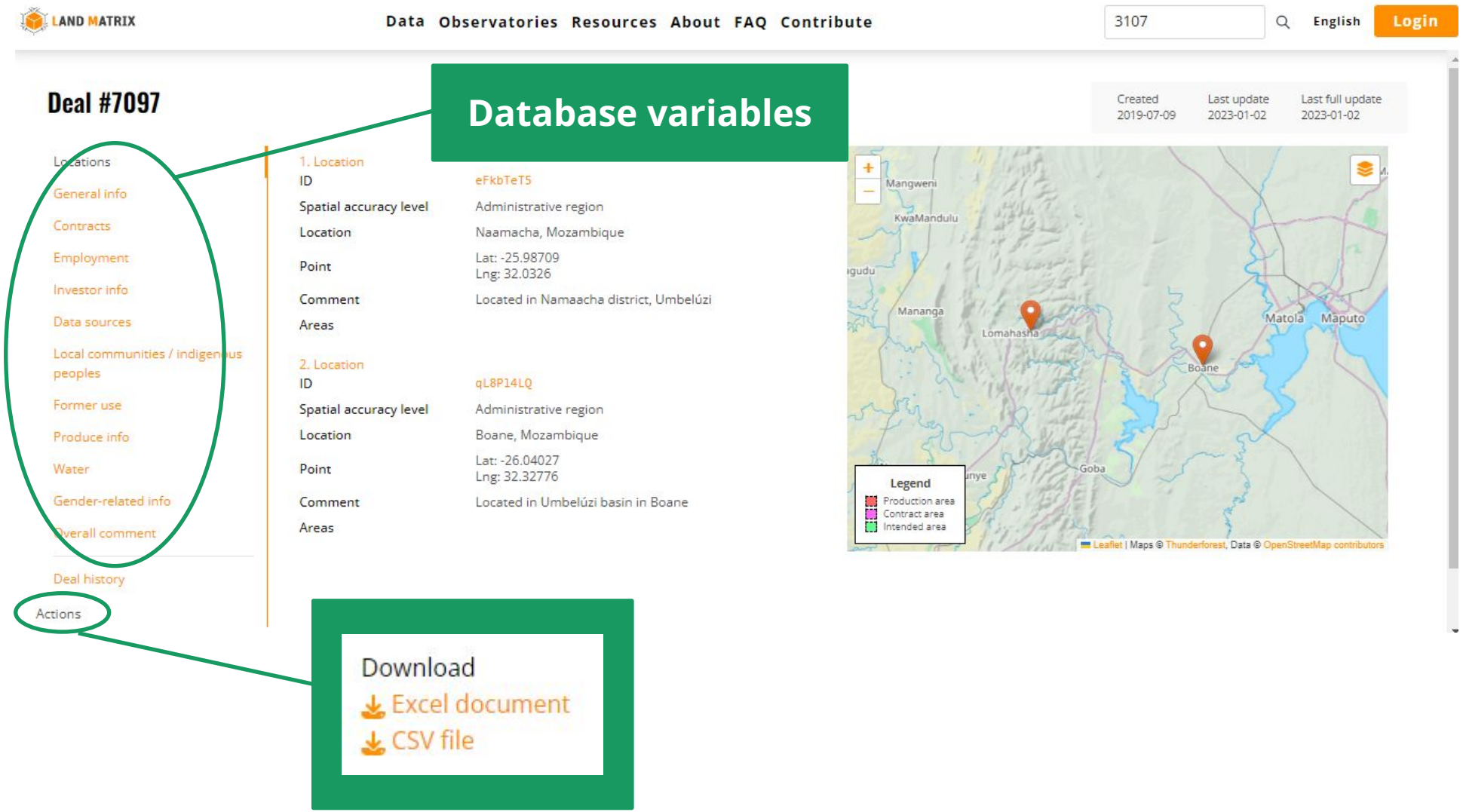
Search and download data through: MAPS



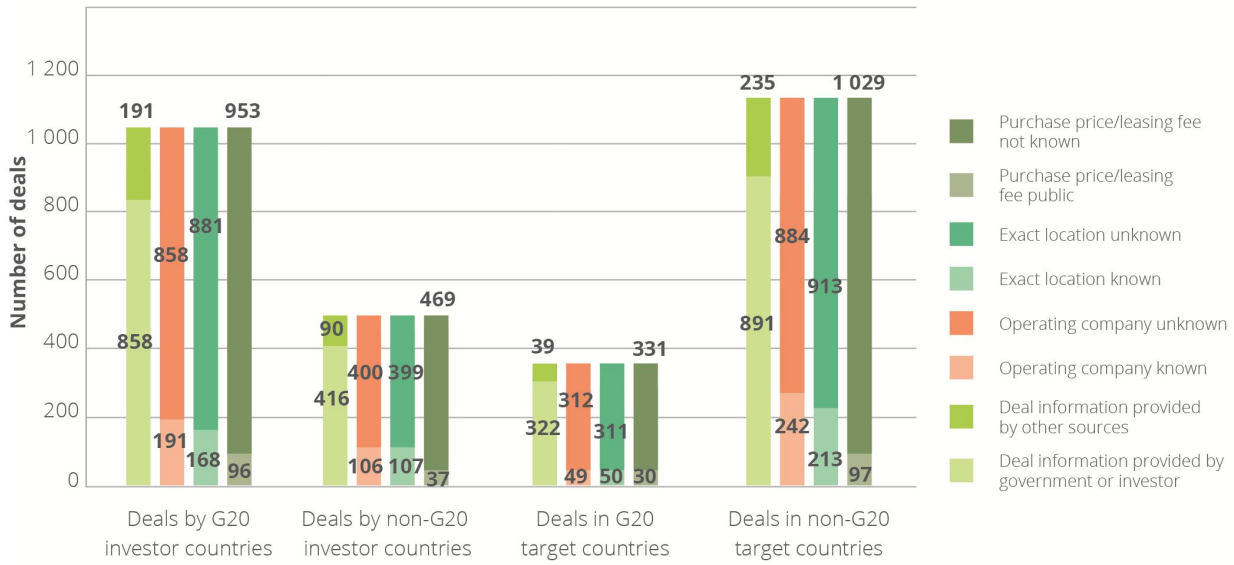
Search and download data through: TABLES

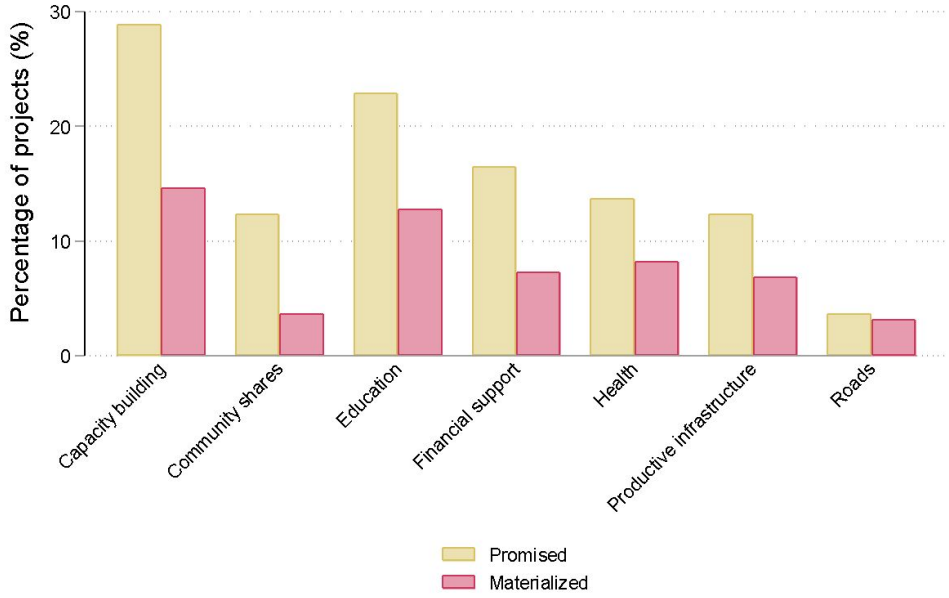


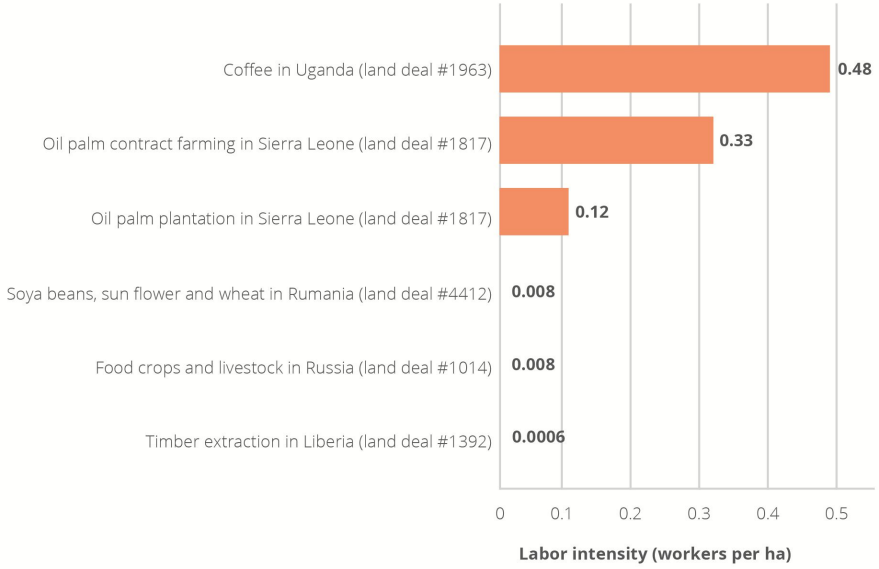
Detailed deal information



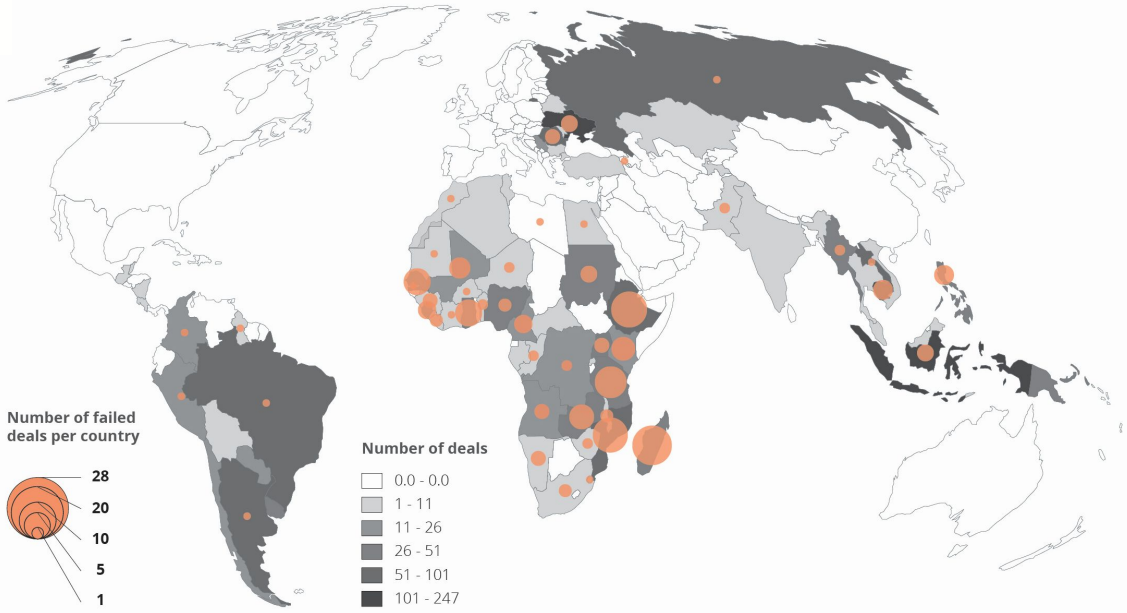
Various entry points for analysis







Notes: Calculations based on Land Matrix data.



Notes: Calculations based on Land Matrix data. Countries are shaded in grey tones according to the number of projects they host: the darker the country is shaded the more projects are found in this country. Failed projects are displayed using red circles with the circle size being proportional to the number of failed projects in a given country.

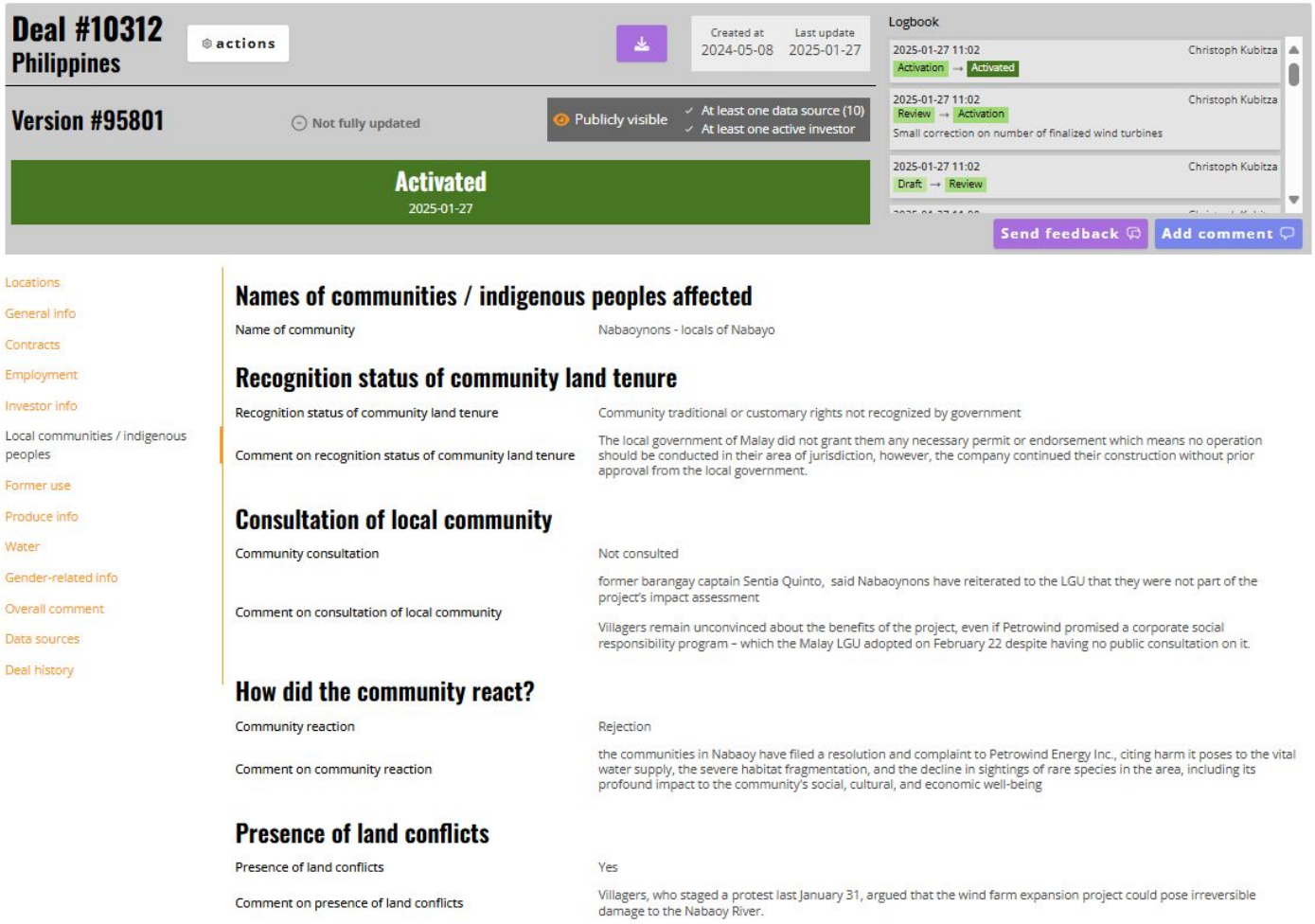
An example: Nabas Wind Power Project (#10312)

- By prioritizing energy transition without having adequate safeguards in place, communities could be sidelined in the development process.
- In the Nabas Wind Power Project, NGOs reported inadequate consultation. This violated international Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) standards.
- And consultation and grievance redress mechanisms are of major importance, since the contamination of the water resources is a major concern for the entire local population, which draws its drinking water from the local rivers
- Following heavy lobbying by NGOs, the subsequent construction of wind turbines was carried out more responsibly

ROAD NETWORK BETWEEN WTG 11 & 20

STATUS OF NAPAAN RIVER ON AUGUST 03, 2023

Detailed documentation



- **We document these cases in our database and research outputs to increase transparency and accountability**

For more information about how we capture, analyze, and use data, explore our FAQs:

www.landmatrix.org/faq/

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