

UGANDA



Land Tenure Insecurity in Uganda

Securing land tenure continues to be a major challenge throughout Uganda. With an estimated 84 percent of the land in Uganda held under customary tenure, the majority of Uganda's land claims rely on traditional arrangements rather than legal documents. While this may provide a traditional sense of security, recent events—including the influx of refugees, increased presence of extractive industries, and pressures of development and land acquisitions—have resulted in increased land vulnerability.

To document and secure the customary land claims, the Government of Uganda (GoU) has put in place a unique system of land recognition: Customary Certificates of Ownership (CCOs). This program is among the world's first to fully recognize customary land tenure on the same level with other forms of tenure. However, less than 10,000 CCOs have been issued across Uganda to date.

A Customary Certificate of Ownership (CCO) is a secure, cost-effective, and legally recognized instrument to show proof of ownership.

Cadasta's Work in Uganda

We aim to build the capacity of sub-county, district, and central government actors to issue CCOs and locally manage data, while sharing key data attributes directly with the National Land Information System (NLIS). We provide local government agencies with the tools they need to collect and manage data locally and cost effectively. This ensures local access and ownership of data, while at the same time allowing for the ability to achieve complete cadastral coverage nationally. It also empowers members of the community and area land committees to demarcate, inspect, and validate land use using a mobile application that captures land boundaries, ownership, and use in a digital format.

Target Districts

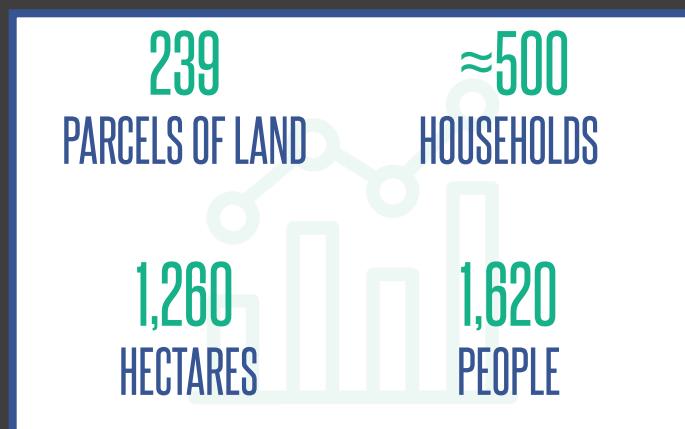
Cadasta has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the GoU Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) and district-level government representatives to systematically demarcate community lands in an effort to secure the land tenure rights of rural communities in Buliisa, Adjumani, Hoima, and Moyo. The Ministry has also requested that Cadasta expand the scope to include Amudat, Budaka, Paliisa, Butebo, Namutumba, and Karamoja.

Project Partners

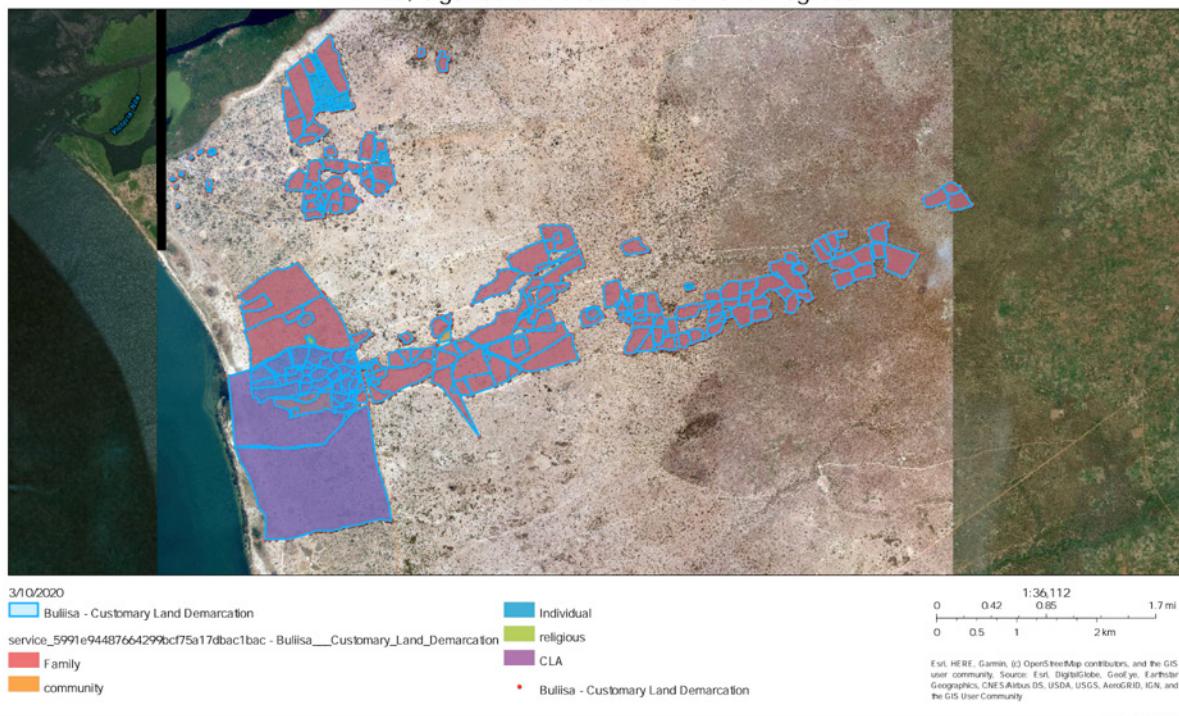
Cadasta works through the GoU and local partners, contributing technical expertise to stakeholders and empowering an innovative local IT company, Ujamaa Tribe, to provide technical support. Cadasta is also working in close cooperation with a local non-governmental organization, Civic Response on Environment and Development (CRED), to manage community mobilization and sensitization. Cadasta provided training to relevant representatives of the Ministry of Land, Housing, and Urban Development (MLHUD), the Buliisa District Land Officer and District Land Board (DLB), Area Land Committee (ALC), and the sub-county government representatives.

Initial Progress

Cadasta's fit-for-purpose approach, tools, and training are being used to collect data concerning the ownership of customary land to include Communal Land Associations (CLAs), families, and individuals. A promising initial data collection effort has begun in Buliisa District, where Cadasta has worked with community members to map and collect data covering 239 parcels of land, 1,260 hectares, and approximately 500 households and 1,620 people, to date.



Buliisa, Uganda demarcation - Current Progress



Future Plans

Cadasta has a unique opportunity to transform and improve the lives of those who farm, use, and occupy customary land in Uganda. Cadasta's engagement in Buliisa fosters the creation of an ecosystem of actors to demarcate customary land, document its inhabitants, and formalize the occupants' claims through the issuance of a Customary Certificate of Occupancy.

By working with local communities, civil society organizations, and the district and national government authorities, Cadasta's tools have the potential to formalize the land rights of 26,500 households and 120,000 people in Buliisa District alone. Furthermore, Cadasta's approach injects and ensures a level of transparency, community participation, and government accountability into Ugandan land policy practices and the implementation of land services.

Cadasta and its partners intend to expand our mapping initiative in Uganda using the existing MOU with the GoU and our NLIS-compliant Cadasta Platform to facilitate not just data collection but also CCO issuance and administration. **The overarching objective of our proposed project is to formalize land and resource rights for approximately 450,000 rural Ugandans in Moyo, Adjumani, Hoima, Buliisa, Amudat, Budaka, Pallisa, Butebo, and Namutumba.** This will provide a record of land use and secure tenure documentation that avoids common mapping issues, including plot duplication.

We will provide digital data containing the spatial information to integrate with the NLIS. Our work will significantly strengthen the capacity and resilience of all project stakeholders to effectively deal with pressures on land and enable rights and benefits that lead to more prosperous societies. We will focus on conducting GIS and mapping training, not just with government officials, but with members of local communities, particularly youth, as part of our education around digital literacy, local data ownership, and using data for self-advocacy. It is a powerful demonstration of what can be done when stakeholders work together to mobilize people and deploy appropriate training and technology to deliver benefits to people while driving change into the system.



Testimonies from Project Stakeholders & Beneficiaries



Mr. Obbo Dennis

Principal Information Scientist,
Ministry of Land, Housing, and
Urban Development, Uganda

“[Cadasta] has enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the Area Land Committees. It has reduced the time taken by the Area Land Committee...The work that we have done in Buliisa in one month, in other places has taken like five months. So that alone is a very big difference. We should be able to issue the documentation faster using these technologies other than those of the hard paper which take so long. It actually has immediately cut down on the paperwork, the papers that we have to keep in the offices of the Area Land Committees, the District Land Board. This saves on space and storage.”

“I can say the tools have been of great importance because really it has sped up the exercise. To measure almost 20 to 68 using a meter, it would have taken a very long time. But in the case of the software and the tools, just put your data point, move the data point. Some things you would have taken the whole day can just be done in just an instant.

Of course I would like people after the data collection to get their title, because as for now, the one who is taking his data is like, ‘Wow, this is improved. Wow, we can see the feedback.’ So people are just eager. They are eager to see their titles in their hands. So they are waiting seriously. They are like, ‘Wow, these people are working and day after you can see the progress.’”



Gerald Tumwesige
Community Data Collector,
Buliisa, Uganda



Asaaba Beatrice

Community Elder, Beneficiary, and
Data Collector, Buliisa, Uganda

“When people receive their titles, they will understand the value of their land, if they want to sell it.

The titles will improve peoples' lives very, very, very much.”



Mulebeki Lydea

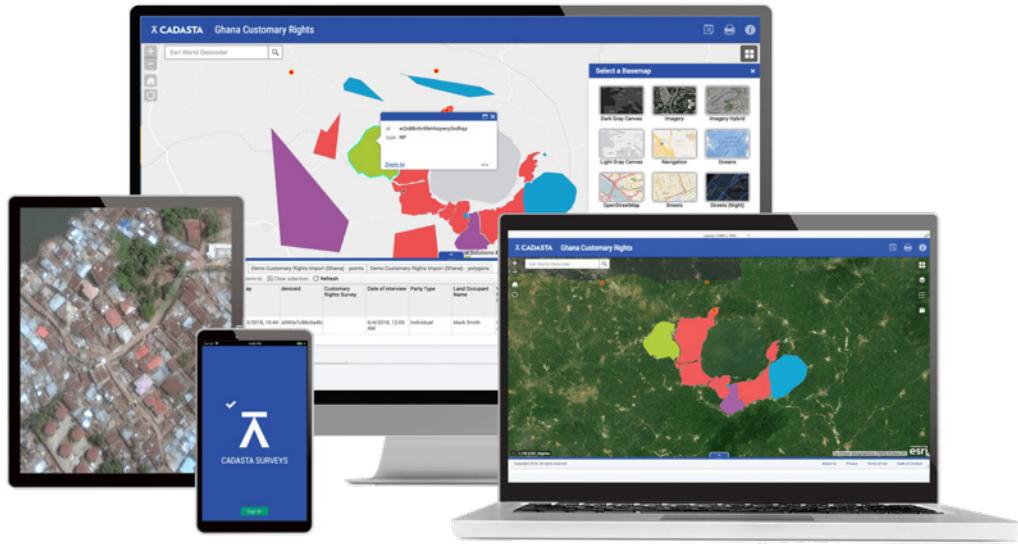
Project Beneficiary,
Buliisa, Uganda



Tumusiiime Rogers

Environmental Officer,
District of Buliisa, Uganda

“It is good technology, it manages to bring good awareness to the people. When the certificates come out, it will bring confidence and people will be aware of their rights. Working in this department, we can also use the data for guidance. It will allow us to map and manage our wetlands and forests. In three years time, we will be able to assess sites and conditions to determine if there has been regeneration or restoration.”



The Cadasta Platform & Approach

The Cadasta Platform and data collection tools utilize available mobile telecommunications technologies and a field approach focusing on the capture of general boundaries through direct community participation, including a gender-sensitive approach, that requires women's names on land documentation to address the issue of inequitable distribution of land to women. Cadasta's Esri-powered software can also be used offline.

Cadasta's software is compliant with Uganda's National Land Information System (NLIS) data standards and is the first and only software being used in Uganda for customary land formalization that allows full data migration and integration into the government system. This is critical to long-term plans for scaling and land management. Our mobile application uses the Land Administration Domain Model (LADM) structure and guarantees the integrity of the information captured.



Cadasta's vision is to build a world where even the most marginalized individuals and communities can benefit from the opportunities afforded by secure land and resource rights.



About Cadasta

Cadasta Foundation, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit, was created in 2015 by a group of land rights and development experts, technologists, and donors to positively disrupt the land sector, and with it, the development sector. Cadasta does this by catalyzing communities to collect data and map their own land and people; empowering the use of these data to advance land rights and secure tenure; and providing an innovative platform and services for communities, governments, the private sector, and others to drive systems change from the bottom up.

Working with local groups, government agencies, non-governmental and civil society organizations, foundations, and the private sector, Cadasta is finding a way to break through the bottleneck of failed land systems to change the futures of millions of people who depend on land for their development.

Frank Pichel, Chief Programs Officer

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In order to fulfill this vision, we have worked with:

45+
PARTNERS

1,423
COMMUNITIES

17
COUNTRIES

+1.2 MILLION
HECTARES

2 MILLION
PEOPLE