



Land Governance Strategy

2023 to 2032

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Addis Ababa, December, 2022.



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Land Governance Strategy

2023 to 2032

One Africa, One Voice, One Message

FOREWORD

The African Union Commission (AUC) views land governance as an indispensable pillar for attaining the AU Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. For Africa to have the ‘Prosperous Africa We Want’, as articulated in Agenda 2063, we need to ensure that the continent has robust land policies that guide land administration and guarantees secure land rights for all citizens in our Member States.



The Declaration on land issues and challenges in Africa, adopted by the African Heads of State and Government in 2009, affirms commitments towards strengthening land governance on the continent through developing and implementing national land policies. Since 2009, governments have undertaken land policy reforms. Despite several strides for a prosperous Africa through land reforms and their implementation, land legislative frameworks are not implemented, nor are many Member States fully committed to allocating sufficient funding to the land sector. The Land Governance Strategy (LGS) provides a renewed focus on Member States, and a reminder of the importance land plays in our lives and development processes as Africans.

The LGS addresses the issues around equitable access to and management of land in meeting the development of soft and hard infrastructures for an integrated and prosperous Africa. In the face of food insecurity, climate change and natural disasters that continue to cause havoc on our continent, we need to think of innovative ways of administering and managing land, as it is a finite resource. Besides, we need to ensure that land delivery services are affordable and accessible in the most rural parts of our continent.

Under the leadership of the African Union, leading researchers, government stakeholders and land practitioners have identified and jointly developed a land governance blueprint for the greater public good of the continent. The Land Governance Strategy provides principles and objectives to guide development, implementation and tracking strategies when developing actions and strategies for improving land governance, as well as providing support to the sector. The Strategy further provides diverse priority measures for AUC’s consideration and the consideration of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), AU Member States, and other African continent stakeholders. The LGS reinforces land governance in Africa and places emphasis on having the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC), which was established through the collaborative efforts of the AUC, UNECA and AfDB, as a Centre of Excellence to support Member States and RECs in their quest to put in place good land policies and administration systems.

H.E. Amb. Josefa Leonel Sacko
Commissioner for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development,
Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (ARBE)

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The Strategy benefited greatly from the technical inputs the working group members provided, including representatives from the African Development Bank, ALPC, Global Land Tools Network, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the International Land Coalition (ILC).

Special thanks go to Dr. Tsinda Aime, who facilitated and coordinated the different stakeholder engagement activities, reviewed and finalized the Strategy. The Division wishes to acknowledge Ms. Ira Olaleye for the graphic design, layout and editing. Warm thanks are expressed to all GIZ staff in the ALPC Joint programme on Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Land Governance in Africa (SLGA). Our deep appreciation and gratitude go to the German Government through GIZ for providing financial support for developing the Strategy.

TABLE OF CONTENT

FOREWORD	IV
TABLE OF CONTENT	VI
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	viii
ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1 INTRODUCTION	4
Background	6
BACKGROUND	6
1.2 Collaboration on Land Governance in Africa	8
1.2.1 The African Union	8
1.2.2 The African Land Policy Centre (formerly Land Policy Initiative)	9
2 RATIONALE OF THE LAND GOVERNANCE STRATEGY	10
3 CONTEXT	16
3.1 Land Governance and Tenure Issues and Challenges in Africa	18
3.1.1 Insecurity of Land Tenure	18
3.1.2 Rapid Urbanisation	19
3.1.3 Women and Land	20
3.1.4 The youth and Land	21
3.1.5 Pastoralists and Indigenous People	22
3.1.6 Challenges in Land Administration and Service Delivery	24
3.1.7 Environment and Climate Change	26
3.1.8 Unsustainable Farming Practices	28
3.1.9 Land and Pandemics	28
3.1.10 Large-Scale Land-Based Investments	29
3.2 Opportunities Associated with Land Governance in Africa	30
3.3 Stakeholders Operating in the Land Governance Sector	31
3.4 Continental and Global Efforts to Improve Land Governance	33
3.4.1 The African Union Agenda 2063	33
3.4.2 Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa (F&G)	35
3.4.3 The Malabo Declaration	35
3.4.4 Land Restoration Initiatives	36
3.4.5 Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa (LSLBI)	36
3.4.6 The Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)	37
3.4.7 African Development Bank's Feed Africa Strategy	38
3.4.8 African Continental Free Trade Area	38

4	STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE LAND GOVERNANCE STRATEGY	40
4.1	Vision	42
4.2	Goal of the Land Governance Strategy	42
4.3	Guiding Principles	42
4.4	Theory of Change	43
4.5	Strategic Objectives and Priorities of Land Governance Strategy	45
4.5.1	Strategic objective 1 » Strengthening the capacity of AU-Commission, ALPC, AUDA, Regional Economic Communities and AU Member States to implement the AU agenda on land	45
4.5.2	Strategic objective 2 » Promoting the advancement of land policies, laws, administration systems and responsible land governance in the AU Member States	48
4.5.3	Strategic Objective 3 » Promoting responsible and fair land-based investments in Africa that are environmentally sound, scalable, inclusive and equitable contributing to the sustainable development of the country and meeting community needs	50
4.5.4	Strategic Objective 4 » Enhancing the security of land tenure and access to land and other productive resources for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups in Africa	52
4.5.5	Strategic Objective 5 » Facilitating and supporting the operationalisation of the AU Monitoring and Evaluation of Land in Africa (MELA) as a tool for measuring and reporting on progress towards achieving the AU agenda on land in Africa	56
5	IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK	58
5.1	Implementation of the Strategy	60
5.2	Financial Resource Requirements	61
5.3	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	61
5.4	Dissemination and Communication Plan	62
5.4.1	Overview	62
5.4.2	Internal Communication	63
5.4.3	External Communication	63
5.4.4	Implementation of Communication Plan	63
	REFERENCES	66
	ANNEX	68
	Detailed implementation plan	68

List of Tables

Table 1 Linking African Union's Work with Land Issues	13
Table 2 Stakeholder Analysis	31

List of Figures

Figure 1 African Union Agenda 2063 Aspirations	34
Figure 2 Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments	37
Figure 3 Theory of Change	44
Figure 4 Roles and Responsibilities of Institutions in Implementation of LGS	60
Figure 5 Communication pathways	62

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area	IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ADF	African Development Fund	KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
AfDB	African Development Bank	LSLBIs	Large-Scale Land-Based Investments
ALPC	African Land Policy Centre	LGS	Land Governance Strategy
AFR100	African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative	LPI	Land Policy Initiative
AU	African Union	MELA	Monitoring and Evaluation of Land Governance in Africa
AUBP	African Union Border Programme	MS	Member States
AUC	African Union Commission	NELGA	Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa
AUDA	African Union Development Agency	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme	OAU	Organization of African Unity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
CLPA	Conference on Land Policy in Africa	RAI	Responsible Agriculture Investors
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations	RECs	Regional Economic Communities
CSP	Civil Society Platform	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
DARBE	Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment	SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	STISA	Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa
EADB	East African Development Bank	SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
EU	European Union	UNDROP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas
FATA	Forum for African Traditional Leaders	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	VGGTs	Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent		
GGW	Great Green Wall		
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GmbH)		
HRST	Human Resources, Science and Technology		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2009, African Heads of States and Governments endorsed the adoption of the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, which affirmed African Union (AU) Member States' (MS) commitment to ensure that land is properly governed on the African continent. The Declaration further stresses the importance of protecting and securing land rights for all land users with a particular focus on women and other vulnerable groups.

Land governance issues in Africa are broad and affect all citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and ability in different ways. Land governance issues have been at the centre of many conflicts that have led to instability in several regions of the continent. The strategic framework for the Land Governance Strategy is premised on a number of continental and global policy commitments and instruments. The principal ones being: the Agenda 2063, the Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa (F&G), the Malabo Declaration, Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa (LSLBI), land restoration initiatives, Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The vision of the Land Governance Strategy (LGS) is a continent where land is responsibly governed, equitably distributed and sustainably used for the benefits of the citizens of the Member States to ensure inclusive development while reducing the adverse impacts of land use on humans and the environment. Its goal is to ensure that land is equitably governed with secured land rights and tenure for all in order to have sustainable livelihoods, human settlements, ecosystems and socio-economic development in Africa.

The LGS has 5 strategic objectives, 14 strategic outcomes and 67 strategic actions.

An implementation framework with clear institutional arrangements and a dissemination and communication plan is provided to avoid ambiguity in the implementation process. An effective implementation of the strategy will require the availability of financial resources. The strategy also makes a provision for periodic review to ensure that it remains relevant.

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outcomes	Strategic Actions
1 » Strengthening the capacity of AU- Commission, ALPC, AUDA, Regional Economic Communities and AU Member States to implement the AU agenda on land	1. Enhanced awareness and understanding among AUC and other stakeholders of the AU agenda on land and its importance in the economic transformation of African states	3
	2. Strengthened technical capacities and skills of AUC, ALPC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs and MS staff to support the implementation and monitoring of the African Union Agenda on land	3
	3. Land issues are mainstreamed in the AUC, AUDA- NEPAD and REC programmes and projects and collaboration among AU institutions and Member States is ensured	3
	4. Improved collaboration and learning among AU institutions on land governance	4
2 » Promoting the advancement of land policies, laws, administration systems and responsible land governance in the AU Member States	5. AU Member States domesticate the Framework and Guidelines on land policy, VGGTs and other international frameworks and conventions within their policies and legal frameworks	5
	6. AU Member States have non-discriminatory land management regulations that enhance access to land and security of tenure for all categories of landowners and users	2
	7. AU Member States have land administration systems that are decentralised, cost-effective, transparent, responsive to the needs of citizens and promote participatory approaches of land management	7
3 » Promoting responsible and fair land-based investments in Africa that are environmentally sound, scalable and inclusive, contributing to the sustainable development of the country and meeting community needs	8. Large Scale-Based Investments in Africa are adopting responsible land acquisition approaches and inclusive business practices that support countries to increase agricultural production, environmental conservation and overall sustainable development	9
	9. Strengthened capacity of AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, Member States and affiliated entities to negotiate and advocate for sustainable and responsible land-based investments within their regions, countries and work	4
4 » Enhancing the security of land tenure and access to land and other productive resources for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups in Africa	10. Reduced risks of land conflicts and increased access to land for women, youths, pastoralists, indigenous people, poor and vulnerable community members	10
	11. Slum and informal settlements are upgraded and recognised among the formal residential neighbourhoods as part of inclusive and sustainable urban development	6
	12. Improved shocks management (climate change, disaster risk, pandemics) and resettlement of displaced communities	3
	13. Land governance issues are incorporated in reconstruction and reconciliation policies and processes of post-conflict states	4
5 » Facilitating and supporting the operationalisation of the AU Monitoring and Evaluation of Land in Africa (MELA) as a tool for measuring and reporting on progress towards achieving the AU agenda on land in Africa	14. Production of a high quality report depicting the progress made towards achieving the AU Declaration on land and the overall agenda on land in Africa	4

1



Introduction

The African Union (AU) is a Pan-African body mandated by its Member States (MS) to lead in the continent's path to achieving regional integration and sustainable development. The vision of the African Union is 'An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena'.



BACKGROUND

The African Union (AU) is a Pan-African body mandated by its Member States (MS) to lead in the continent's path to achieving regional integration and sustainable development. The vision of the African Union is

'An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena'.

The AU recognises the need for its Member States (MS) to address various land-related challenges on the African continent. In July 2009, African Heads of States and Governments endorsed the adoption of the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, which affirmed AU Member States' commitment to ensure that land was properly governed on the African continent.

The AU Framework outlines the principles for protecting the rights to the land for Africans, and ensures that land is put to good use for sustainable development.



The Land Governance Strategy (LGS) will guide AUC's coordination and collaboration with other institutions, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States (MS) to achieve the aspirations stated in the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa. The AU Framework guides the Strategy and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa and other relevant global instruments, outlines the principles for protecting the rights to the land for Africans, and ensures that land is put to good use for sustainable development. It also informs the internalisation and coalition of efforts of the AUC departments, African Land Policy Centre (ALPC), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States (MS) in the context of land with other stakeholders on the continent. It also ensures that there are effective synergies in addressing land governance challenges in Africa. Furthermore, the AUC will be guided by this LGS to ensure that the MS implement commitments on land in the AU agenda and reporting mechanisms are put in place to monitor MS' compliance with the Agenda on Land.

The AU, through the African Union Commission (AUC), has continued to advocate for secure land tenure and improved land governance systems as prerequisites for poverty reduction, sustainable development and peace and stability on the continent. Land governance issues in Africa are broad and multi-dimensional and variously affect all citizens regardless of their ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and ability. The allocation of land for competing land uses, including agriculture, forestry, mining, tourism, human settlements, industries and conservation, makes land governance important in Africa's developmental discourse. Land provides a safety net because it is the ultimate source of income, food, shelter and energy for most of Africa's citizens.

Over the past few decades, Africa's land tenure systems have experienced stresses due to the increasing population that requires more food and energy, exacerbating environmental degradation and natural resource depletion. Competing land uses, especially where land tenure insecurity already exists, perpetuates land-related conflicts. Indeed, land tenure and governance issues have been at the centre of many conflicts that have led to instability in several regions of the continent.

In addition to ensuring that there is high-level political commitment to the AU agenda on land, the AUC has a fundamental role in driving change towards responsible land governance and administration. Improving land governance has received prominence, not only in Africa but also globally, especially with the continued intercontinental trade and investments that have been on the rise over the past few decades.



Antsirabe_Madagascar.
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1.2 Collaboration on Land Governance in Africa

1.2.1 The African Union

The AU adopted the Agenda 2063 as its collective roadmap towards achieving development through sustained growth, competitiveness and economic transformation. The AUC is responsible for the daily management and coordination of the AU as a secretariat. Among other several functions, the AUC guides MS in the development of common positions, develops strategic plans, undertakes research on key thematic issues for consideration by its policy organs and coordinates the development and implementation of regional policies and programs, including harmonisation and collaboration between the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

The AUC has been mandated to coordinate the implementation of the AU Declaration of Land Issues and Challenges.



The AUC works to ensure political buy-in for policy development and implementation at national, regional and continental levels. The Heads of States and Governments have mandated the AUC to coordinate the implementation of the AU Declaration of Land Issues and Challenges. The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (DARBE) has been the focal department for the AUC in this regard. DARBE has made efforts to mainstream land governance in Agriculture, Rural Economy, Environment and Climate Change. In 2006, the AU joined efforts with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to improve land governance in Africa by establishing the Land Policy Initiative (LPI).

A land management specialist, deployed to the Warrap state, supports the surveying and demarcation of plots for returnees in South Sudan. Photo: © UNDP South Sudan/Brian Sokol, www.flickr.com/photos/unitednationsdevelopment-programme/7480444496, is licensed under CC BY 2.0



1.2.2 The African Land Policy Centre (formerly Land Policy Initiative)

The Land Policy Initiative (LPI) was established to generate Africa-led policies and strategies based on contextual needs and aspirations to ensure equitable access to land and efficient and sustainable utilisation of land in Africa. In 2017, the second AU Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment transformed LPI into the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC). The ALPC works as the secretariat of the tripartite efforts of the African Union, the AfDB and ECA to improve land governance in Africa. The ALPC plays a key role in setting the agenda on land governance in Africa, influences the improvement of land administration systems in Africa, responds to, supports, and works with other stakeholders in the land sector in Africa.

During the initial phase of its establishment (2006–2009), the LPI played a leading role in developing the African Union Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa and the Framework and Guidelines on the Land Policy in Africa (F&G). African Union Heads of States and Governments endorsed the African Union Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges, acknowledging the significance of land to Africa's sustainable socio-economic growth and development. The Declaration also recognises the importance of protecting and securing land tenure and ensuring equitable access to land for all land users, particularly the most vulnerable ones such as women, youth, pastoralists, and indigenous people.

The Declaration further urges MS to domesticate the F&G to review their land sectors in order to improve land governance and management. The Declaration also reiterates the need for MS to prioritise and allocate enough financial resources to land policy development and implementation and, to this effect, build enough human, financial and technical capacities. Following the endorsement of these important instruments, several African governments have been undertaking land reforms to improve their land administration systems and promote land tenure security.

The ALPC has been providing support to African Union Member States in developing policies meant to address land tenure challenges faced by countries in implementing the AU Declaration on Land and developing policies and strategies in accordance with the F&G. The ALPC, therefore, plays a critical role in sustaining the political and public will to ensure that land remains a priority on the continental development agenda. It facilitates knowledge generation to inform evidence-based policymaking, programming and implementation and supports capacity-building in land related issues at country, regional and continental levels.

The African Union Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa recognises the importance of ensuring equitable access to land, particularly the most vulnerable such as women, youth, pastoralists and indigenous people.



2



Rationale of the Land Governance Strategy

The AU Agenda 2063 provides a long-term strategy for a prosperous Africa. For this to be achieved, AU MS will need to invest in the productive and sustainable use of their land to spur the much-desired economic growth and transformation. Therefore, the LGS will ensure that land governance supports the realisation of Agenda 2063 and provides a coordinated framework to guide the AUC, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), continental partners (e.g. AfDB, ECA), ALPC, RECs, MS and non-state actors in working together to achieve land governance related targets in Agenda 2063.



The AUC has been advocating initiatives that will affect people's land rights



The AUC has been championing some initiatives that will, directly and indirectly, affect people's land rights and has its standard due diligence processes that are fulfilled before physical initiatives are implemented. However, it is essential that these initiatives uphold principles and tenets advocated for by the AU on land, such as the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, the Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments (LSLBI) and other international frameworks.

The LGS aims to ensure that the AUC has a focused and well-defined approach to supporting AU MS in their quest to address the various land-related challenges within their countries. Furthermore, the strategy will provide a framework through which the AUC, in collaboration with other stakeholders, can promote land reforms that are aligned with the needs of MS and their citizens. The strategy will guarantee that MS are supported to enhance their capacity to secure land tenure for their citizens, improve their land administration systems and report on implementation progress on Africa's Land Declaration.

The goal under Aspiration 1 of AU Agenda 2063 related to ensuring environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities has a target that focuses on land. The target emphasises the implementation of the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa and the Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa by ensuring that these are fully integrated into regional and continental strategies, programmes, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks. In addition, some of the cooperating partners in some programmes' and initiatives' implementation require adherence to international frameworks for the projects and programmes that they support.

The mandate of the AUC is to oversee the operations of the ALPC and support the delivery of its mandate together with the other partner institutions. The strategy will be a basis for ensuring that the AU provides the necessary leadership in its role as a lead convener of the ALPC. Furthermore, it is expected that the document will be used to mobilise resources for the land sector, particularly the ALPC. In addition, it will provide mechanisms to ensure the coordination of efforts among stakeholders involved in land governance, thereby avoiding a duplication of mandates and functions.

Within the AUC, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Environment Sustainability (DARBE) has been at the core of the work on land issues. However, it has been observed that other departments within the AUC and institutions also implement programmes and projects that are closely related to land (see Table 1). Thus, the LGS provides guidance on how AUC will continue to support, coordinate and link with RECs and MS as they execute their mandates on land governance.

Table 1 Linking African Union's Work with Land Issues

Department	Linkage of AUC Department focus to land
Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment	The majority of Africans living in rural areas are involved in agriculture, which is dependent on the availability of land. Therefore, land governance issues are critical to the achievement of goals under the Malabo Declaration and the achievement of the departments' objectives. The Environment Climate Change, Water and Land Management Division in the department deals with issues affecting the environment and natural resources, including wildlife, forestry and climate change, all of which have a close linkage to land rights and use. Efforts to reverse the adverse impacts of climate change will require significant change or improvement and investment in property' regimes and land use planning, practices and controls.
Infrastructure and Energy	The Department of Infrastructure and Energy is pioneering the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). This is a multi-sector initiative covering transport, energy, trans-boundary water and telecommunications/ICT that is dedicated to facilitating continental integration in Africa through improved regional infrastructure. Infrastructure development is essential in Africa, as it is one of the strategic initiatives needed to boost economic growth, especially in rural areas. The department is leading in implementing initiatives such as the Grand Inga Dam Project under the Hydropower Development in Africa Initiative. Infrastructure development initiatives such as hydroelectric projects require large pieces of land to create or use dams and other necessary supporting infrastructure. Infrastructure development, therefore, affects land rights and land-use patterns, especially in areas where human settlements already exist.
Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining	The Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining Department is working on establishing Economic Zones in the AU Member States and establishing hubs for industrialisation/manufacturing that have similar demands on land and can have similar impacts.
Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development	The Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development Department oversees health, humanitarian and social affairs, specifically dealing with vulnerable people such as persons living with disabilities, migrants, and elderly persons. Joint efforts need to be made to advocate for secured access to and ownership of land by the most vulnerable members of society.
Political Affairs, Peace and Security	The Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security is responsible for coordination and cooperation with Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for the Prevention of Conflicts and Crises in Africa in promoting sustainable peace and stability in Africa. It is also responsible for driving the promotion of good governance and democracy, facilitating political integration and establishment of national- and continental-level governance institutions to enhance democratic practices as well as respect for human rights and the rule of law. Some of the human rights frameworks have provisions related to land rights. Furthermore, the department coordinates activities related to the management and resolution of conflicts and peace-building reconstruction and development in post-conflict societies. Land issues have contributed to the emergence of conflicts in Africa and, therefore, Early Warning Systems, conflict-resolution processes as well as post-conflict reconstruction efforts must include land tenure assessments to ensure that land rights are restored, and land administration systems are functioning effectively. More so, the department is implementing the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), which is a land administration focused initiative.
Education, Science, Technology and Innovation	The Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation is responsible for driving the implementation of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation policies, programs and strategies in line with the aspirations of Agenda 2063, the associated medium-term plans and other key continental legal and policy frameworks. This department is at the epicentre of Africa's socio-economic development and growth, affecting critical sectors such as land, agriculture, environment and mining, among others.

The information in Table 1 above indicates that land is a critical element for most of AUC departments that are engaged in land issues directly or indirectly. Therefore, DARBE must establish synergy and reposition itself within the AUC and network with other departments. As a result, DARBE needs to establish better working mechanisms to ensure that it delivers its mandate on land in a more structured manner. The LGS will also be used as a tool meant to complement the Land Governance Mainstreaming Tool [1] and mainstream land governance within the AUC departments and directorates. This mainstreaming of land is a critical move towards increased knowledge and capacities in the Commission to facilitate its assistance to MS. The strategy, therefore, provides mechanisms to build internal expertise and capacities within the Commission.

The LGS also reaffirms the importance of sustaining the existing initiatives and programmes. For example, AUDA-NEPAD has been implementing a land governance programme that aims at making data available and producing evidence that can raise understanding of the importance of land governance for Africa's sustainable development, structural transformation, and climate change adaptation at country- and continental-levels. The programme aims at developing instruments for comprehensive land policy assessments, analysis and dialogue (particularly at the national level) and integrating land issues in AUDA-NEPAD supported investment plans.

Land is more than a factor of production for so many Africans, it is a gift from God and the ancestors.



Over the past few decades, the land question in Africa has received considerable attention because the continent is still dependent on land as a key factor of production for most economic activities; as Africa is, indeed, an agro-based economy. In addition, land is more than a factor of production for so many Africans; it is a gift from God and the ancestors. As a common good, land belongs to members of a very large family, including those who are dead, those who are alive, and those who are not yet born.

In Africa, land determines people's identity as human beings, their dignity and a sense of belonging, which are reflected in cultural rituals that symbolise their unbreakable connection with the earth. Thus, in addition to being multi-dimensional in terms of use (nourishing, environmental, social, spiritual and economic); land is intrinsically linked to peoples' cultures, to communities and to the historical construction of societies. Historically, societies were organised around the possession and management of land and natural resources, which were then common goods (not private property) and not tradeable commodities.

Several African countries have experienced the need to readdress some of the colonial imbalances related to land ownership and use. Nevertheless, while Africa is heavily dependent on land for socio-economic growth and development, the continent has not yet fully developed and governed the available land to significantly reduce poverty and boost growth, jobs and shared prosperity.

Land governance should be understood as political and administrative structures and processes through which decisions concerning access to, and use of, land resources are made and implemented, including how the conflicts over land are resolved [2]. Land governance relates to how land rights are allocated, used and valued. Moreover, Africa possesses pristine ecosystems and biodiversity that should be conserved while striving to achieve economic growth and reduced poverty levels on the continent. African governments should put in place relevant land administration systems, including structures and institutions to govern land rights delivery and governance. Therefore, land governance is essential in Africa's structural transformation and sustainable development agenda.

Land governance in Africa tends to be complex due to the multifaceted land tenure systems that prescribe different interests and rights over land that individuals, groups or communities can enjoy. The standard land tenure systems in Africa include customary (traditional), religious and statutory (which can be leasehold or freehold systems). Traditional leaders or authorities administer customary land tenure following customary norms and practices of a particular location. Customary lands in Africa constitute a significant proportion that ranges from forests, woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and land used and occupied by communities and individual families.

The land debate in Africa is complex. It stretches from the lack of clarity and documentation of land rights, high costs associated with land acquisitions, gender disparities in land access and ownership, conflict- or development-induced displacements, and the lack of transparency and accountability within land administration systems.



Rising gap between rich and poor, Cape Town, South Africa. Photo: ©Flickr/DFID - UK Department for International Development. www.flickr.com/photos/dfid/8516510961/, is licensed under CC BY 2.0

3



Context

The African Union (AU) is a Pan-African body mandated by its Member States (MS) to lead in the continent's path to achieving regional integration and sustainable development. The Vision of the African Union is 'An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena'.



3.1 Land Governance and Tenure Issues and Challenges in Africa

3.1.1 Insecurity of Land Tenure

Land tenure security is achieved through a clear definition and enforcement of individuals, communities' and states' land rights. The lack of landownership documentation and/or unclear laws that define and protect those rights result in land tenure insecurity. In different African regions, such as the Francophone West Africa, ill-regulated multiple land tenure systems end up overriding each other, leading to forum shopping and tenure insecurity. This is especially the case for the land held under customary land tenure systems. The inequalities in land ownership and related land conflicts that affect women, youth and indigenous people constitute other sources of tenure insecurity. Land conflicts and tenure insecurity also break out in the regions and communities whose land holds mineral and oil deposits (e.g., some IGAD countries) or where land is unlawfully earmarked for socio-economic infrastructure development.

Dwellers of slums and informal settlements live under insecure land tenure due to increasing risks of eviction.



In most of the African cities, dwellers of slums and informal settlements live under insecure land tenure due to increasing risks of eviction. In rural areas, land tenure insecurity is mainly derived from the increasing pressure on land and natural resources from both human (including those linked to the rural-urban land linkages) and animal populations as well as demarcation and reservation of land for national parks and game reserves [3]. The situation is exacerbated by armed conflicts and political instability such as those that have prevailed in Somalia, South Sudan, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) over the last two decades and resulted in internal and external migrations.

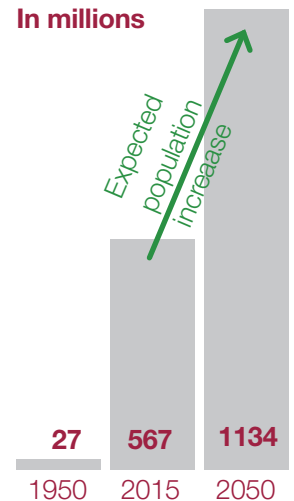
Tenure insecurity is worse in post-conflict states where returnees claim their original lands but cannot regain it, as multiple claims exist over the same pieces of land. The lack of clarity in land rights and boundaries in Africa within and between countries results in political conflicts. While they have ratified frameworks, treaties, conventions addressing the problems of refugees and migrants at the continental level, many African countries have neither adopted nor implemented the policies and laws that promote access to land and its use by refugees and migrants [4]. This creates land conflicts and compromises the livelihoods of these people, especially those who rely on farming activities to survive. Other threats to land tenure security include poor enforcement of existing land tenure laws and protections and the over-zealous use of eminent domain/public purpose expropriation by governments seeking to facilitate large-scale investment (such as socio-economic infrastructure or other land or resource investments) over community lands.

3.1.2 Rapid Urbanisation

The urban population in Africa increased from 27 million in 1950 to 567 million in 2015 and is expected to double by 2050, when two-thirds of the African population will be integrated into urban spaces [5]. The expansion of urban areas towards the peri-urban areas involves the conversion of agricultural land into residential, commercial and industrial areas, or for infrastructure and service provision. Often, peri-urban areas are not regulated and controlled because they are managed according to customary land tenure systems. The increasing urbanisation and peri-urban spatial growth have resulted in environmental change, natural resource degradation and other socio-economic impacts. In Western and Northern Africa, the urban expansion has resulted in an increasing loss of productive and scarce fertile land. This becomes a barrier to the provision of agricultural commodities for the cities. In other regions, the peri-urbanisation process has resulted in the displacement of the existing poor and low-income landowners/users, through a speculative land market that opens a room for property accumulation by political elites and middle- and high-income classes. Another impact is the proliferation of unplanned settlements (including slums), accelerated by rural-urban migrants who develop their houses in the urban fringes. The lack of employment and other opportunities are the major factors leading the rural population to migrate to cities. The number of unplanned settlement dwellers in Sub-Saharan Africa was estimated at 60 million in 2019 and is expected to reach 210 million in 2050 [6].

In Eastern Africa, slums have mushroomed and grown faster than in other parts of Africa, resulting in negative impacts on the social and biophysical environment. The coastal cities developed on island states or along the shores of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans are facing a big problem with waste management; waste is often thrown in water bodies, which causes a dramatic loss in biological diversity. The growth of unplanned settlements is not only associated with urban dwellers' poverty; it is also linked to the failure of urban planners to devise master plans in a timely manner and to the complexity of the legal process of housing development. The inappropriate urban planning is also attributed to the lack of reliable and updated spatial data (including land records), which is required for the establishment of master and land use plans.

If no concrete measures are taken to ensure sustainable urban development, this population growth in informal settlements will aggravate the burden of socio-economic infrastructure provision in residential areas. The processes of clearing informal settlements in some countries involve forced eviction without (or with unfair) compensation due to the non-transparent valuation processes, lack of updated reference prices for the calculation of compen-



Africa's population is expected to double by 2050



Estimation of unplanned settlements' dwellers in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2019 and expected number in 2050

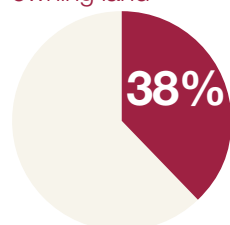
Women

make up approx.

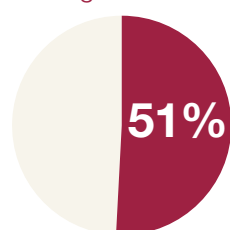
50% of
agricultural
labour force



Share of women
owning land



Share of men
owning land



sation value and lack of proof of landownership for land rights claimants. The resettlement projects, which are sometimes coupled with urban renewal processes, are implemented without due diligence regarding land governance principles and special treatment to vulnerable groups. This results in livelihoods deterioration for the affected people.

3.1.3 Women and Land

Women play a critical role in the agricultural sector, from the production to the marketing of products. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, women are responsible for approximately 50% of the agricultural labour force and contribute between 60 and 80% of the region's food production [7]. The limited access to land and other productive resources has a negative economic impact because it makes women less productive, while access to, and control over, land would result in an agricultural output increase ranging from 2.5 to 4% [8]. In 2018, the share of women owning land (individually or jointly) was 38%, compared to 51% of men [9]. Although African women are the main users of land for food production and income generation, few female landowners rarely enjoy tenure security and do not have control over their land. This accelerates the trends of tenure insecurity and gender inequalities in land ownership, which have roots in the patriarchal inheritance laws. These social norms inhibit effective implementation of land reforms and land administration processes that do not consider gender-related challenges in most Sub-Saharan African countries [10].

For example, in most West African countries, women are allocated low-quality lands by their husbands through patriarchal inheritance laws [11]. In Southern Africa, national regulations recognise women's land rights, but there are no mechanisms for implementation and enforcement of those regulations. In North Africa, most females — who are half the population — are landless; in Egypt, which is one of the world's longest established agricultural countries, females constitute only about 5 percent of all agricultural landholders [12]. In Morocco and Tunisia, females are only 4.4 and 6.4 percent of total landholders, respectively [12]. With no access to, and ownership of, land, millions of African women are much less able to secure their livelihoods independently. Consequently, many women may fall into poverty and insecurity. In Islamic regions, women's access to land depends on their social status and dynamics within the households and families.

From 2003 to 2015, after the adoption of the Maputo Protocol, some African countries developed land policies and laws that aim at facilitating women's empowerment in accessing and using land. Some countries like Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda enacted laws that explicitly promote gender equality in land ownership, joint-ownership and registration of land and grant land property rights for widows and children [13]. In Rwanda, women are highly represented in land management committees and land conflict mediation

committees, which enhances the advocacy for the recognition and respect of their land rights by men.

In many African countries, however, women's voices are yet to be heard. Under both statutory and customary land tenure systems, women still suffer from the lack of property rights recognition within the families or clans. In countries that passed out policies and formal regulations that promote joint land ownership registration, there is no clarity on the rights that are associated with joint titling. This makes their spouses skeptical about their interests in jointly-owned land in the case of separation through divorce or death.

While women's land rights are enshrined in the constitutions and/or land laws in some African countries, this does not bring tangible outcomes with respect to equitable access to, and control over, land due to poor implementation and enforcement of the laws. In Tanzania, for example, the current legislation guarantees equal rights for both women and men to buy, own, use and transact in land. However, customary norms in rural areas are still biased against women, which limit their ownership of, and control over, land. In South Sudan, the Constitution, the Land Act and the Land Policy assert that women can own land, while the customary law does not recognise women's property ownership. Generally, the limited participation of women in the formulation and implementation of various policies and laws about land ownership and use has serious inter-play on gender inequalities in access to land, and land ownership and use. Effective land administration requires women's participation in local land management and administration committees including land dispute resolution/management committees so that they can be empowered and enabled to take part in all decisions related to land management.

In many African countries, **women's voices are yet to be heard.**

A group of women meets to discuss issues of common concern. Photo: ©Flickr/USAID Ethiopia, creative commons/A. Davey. www.flickr.com/photos/usaidthiopia/9502333198/, is licensed under CC BY 2.0



3.1.4 The Youth and Land



Africa has the youngest population in the world. In 2019, the youth aged between 15 and 29 represented more than 40% of the adult population on the continent. In terms of employment, the rural youth are primarily engaged in agriculture, while the urban youth are engaged in the informal sector. The share of the youth labour force engaged in farming will remain high, if they are provided with the opportunities to access land and other investments which are meant to promote the agricultural sector and to make it more attractive to the youth [14].

After the adoption of the African Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa in 2009, some countries have implemented a number of programmes that promote equitable access to land for the youth and other landless groups. For example, in North Africa, land reclamation strategies have been applied to dry wetland or desert, in combination with irrigation programmes to reclaim land for the youth engaged in the agriculture sectors. In Uganda, some policy options supported by the government and local authorities allowed the adoption of lease options that helped small youth farmers to get access to land [15]. However, many land policies and laws in African countries are still silent about land rights, which the youth is entitled to. In Malawi, for example, the recently enacted land-related laws (including land acts) do not include any provision about the access to land by the youth [16].

Some barriers faced by youth »

- inheritance practices
- over-reliance on inheritance
- small land plots
- population pressure
- increases life expectancy
- land degradation
- not included in decision processes

The youth face various barriers related to access, use and ownership of land. The customary land tenure systems provide the youth with few options to own and control land when their parents are still alive. Under both statutory and customary land tenure systems, the ascending partitioning and inheritance processes sometimes result in small and low-quality land plots being allocated to the youth, especially girls. The high population pressure in Africa, increased life expectancy and land degradation associated with the inheritance or land subdivision practices have restricted land availability to the youth. Other factors hindering the access to land by the youth are the over reliance on inheritance, small sizes and poor quality of the inherited land, and the lack of representation of young people (especially girls) in decision making processes [17].

In most cases, the youth do not have opportunities to access and use land at a time when the need arises. Even when those processes seem to operate in favor of the youth, they do not constitute suitable options for land access by the youth engaged in agriculture, which employs an average of 54% of the working population in Africa [18], and off-farm activities that require access to land. Other land-related constraints include inability to access undeveloped land rental and sale markets, lack of legal frameworks that protect land rights for the youth, and the absence of the youth in state-sponsored land redistribution programmes [19]. For the youth, access to land through an open land market is not a viable option due to the lack of financial resources. Each year,

more than 10 million young Africans join the labour force, while only 3.7 million jobs are created annually; the lack of income by the youth triggers their exclusion from the land market.

Annually

10 million

young African join the labour force and

3.7 million

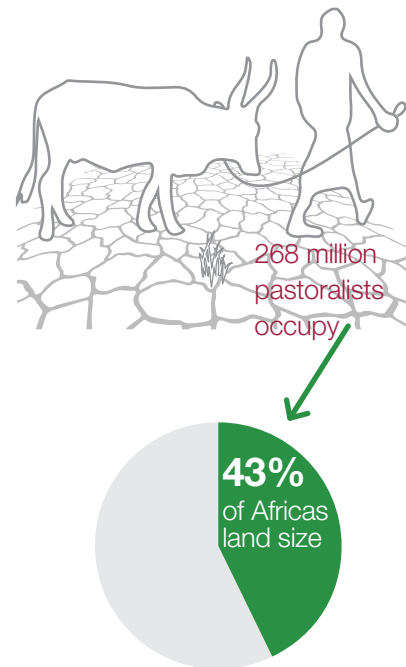
jobs are created.

3.1.5 Pastoralists and Indigenous People

In 2011, the number of pastoralists in all African regions was estimated at 268 million, occupying about 43 per cent of the continental land size. Their livestock activities contribute about 50 per cent of marketed and subsistence production consumed by pastoralist households [20]. However, climate change effects such as drought lead pastoralists into perpetual displacements searching for grazing land and water. This becomes a source of land related conflicts among farmers, livestock herders and other land users in the destination areas. Every year, pastoralists are at risk of losing their lives due to increasing cross-border resource-based armed conflicts. In the countries with pastoralist and semi-pastoralist tenure systems, there are no policies and laws that mainstream pastoralism in the land management systems, including the clarification of the multiple rights that may exist over the same piece of land.

Some West African countries like Mali, Guinea, Mauritania and Burkina Faso adopted pastoral codes, which help pastoralists secure access to land and ensure effective management of pastoral activities. Though some governments in Northern, Western and Central Africa passed out a series of policies and laws that recognise pastoralists' land rights, the intention has been to confer land rights based on individual or group claims about specific portions of land.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, there are no specific policies and/or laws that explicitly address pastoral land tenure issues. In Tanzania, for example, the 1999 Land Act recognises the rights of pastoral people but foreign and private investments have continued to deprive pastoralists of the land they have used for many years through compulsory land acquisition. The national land policy and Land Act allow for the registration of the grazing lands, which are used by pastoralists who are organised under a village, as a form of community settlements. However, the land, which is registered as village land, can be converted into community land and leased to foreign investors, which results in the loss of the land by the originally registered users. Those practices are common in many African countries and result in the loss of grazing land by pastoralists due to their weak position in society. The situation is worsened by existing policies that support the conversion of pastoral lands into other types of uses, such as farming, mining and agro-industry. In some cases, the existing regulations favor farmers at the expense of pastoralists in spite of the latter's claims for land rights. This leads to conflicting interests between pastoralists and sedentary farmers, with the latter tending to expand farming areas to increase cash crops production.



The indigenous people, especially the hunter–gatherers, who live in countries such as Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo Republic, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe, face similar problems [21]. While most of those countries have recently adopted land policies and laws that aim at promoting sustainable use of land and other natural resources, specific needs and livelihood options of the indigenous communities were not taken into account in both development and implementation of those legal instruments. For example, the new national land policy in Kenya provides for collective land rights and decentralised land governance structures, without an explicit recognition of the existence of indigenous people and their land rights. The Constitution of Burundi provides for special representation of the indigenous people in the National Assembly and the Senate, but their rights to natural resources are not recognised. Similarly, in Cameroon, a law on marginal populations neither specifically recognises indigenous people nor addresses their needs in relation to their livelihoods.

Government commitment to protect wetlands, national parks and other natural reserves has deprived indigenous people of the use of those resources through hunting, gathering and extracting clay for pottery making.

In many countries, the strong government commitment to protect wetlands, national parks and other natural reserves has deprived the indigenous people of the use of those resources through hunting, gathering and extracting clay for pottery making. For example, in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa, where many countries have been receiving large-scale land investments, vast tracts of land have been appropriated in the peripheral indigenous peoples' territories that had been used as common property [22]. In many cases, those communities were forced out of their land without due compensation to give way to cultivation, which results in tenure insecurity and land conflicts. Specific examples include the forceful eviction of indigenous people for national parks conservation in Kenya in 2014, which resulted in conflict between the two categories of land users. In the Central African Republic, in 2016, the indigenous people were forced off the land they had used for many years when the government leased it to a commercial company [21].

Different international guidelines related to the LSLBIs and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples suggest the compliance of the principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments (RAIs) and their regulation towards achieving outcomes from which the investors and local communities can benefit. However, there are no explicit policies that protect the interests of indigenous people in the destination areas of the LSLBIs. There is still a strong need to translate those different guidelines in the currently implemented land management rules.

3.1.6 Challenges in Land Administration and Service Delivery

Land administration systems provide countries with legal and technical instruments such as policies, laws and strategies that support sound management of land resources through

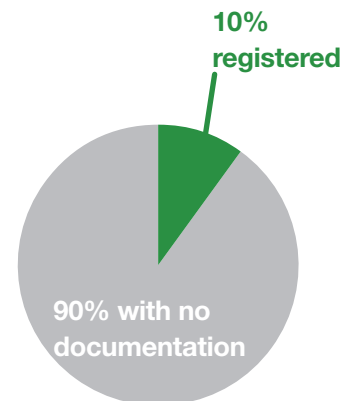
- i. recording and maintenance of land ownership and tenure rights information,
- ii. efficient and effective land transfer at a reasonable fee,
- iii. valuation of land and property for taxation, compensation and other purposes and
- iv. fair and prompt management of predictable land disputes. However, these expectations are not reflected in the reality of most African countries' land administration systems since the rate of land registration is still very low.

In 2015, it was estimated that only 10 per cent of rural land in Africa was registered. This leaves 90 per cent of such land with no documentation, which impedes effective and informed decision-making, economic development and raises land transaction costs. In the urban areas, only 4 per cent of privately-owned land was mapped and titled. The lack of land records or poor documentation has been one of the underlying factors for land conflicts, tenure insecurity and risks for land grabbing in most African rural areas. The only exceptions to this are Mauritius, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa and North Africa (e.g. Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia) that completed the registration of large portions of rural land [13].

The lack of land-related records also leads to various challenges affecting the working of land administration systems. For example, in the Sahel region, there is limited capacity for land administration due to political instability. In countries where customary and traditional land rights are prevalent, land is held as a common property whereby group members have land rights, and the traditional or customary leaders are responsible for their management, with a risk of power abuse regarding the control and distribution of land. The Islamic laws, which operate in combination with the customary structures, have not been responsive to the demands of modern society such as the establishment of well-functioning land administration systems and effective allocation and use of land. In Western, Northern and Central African countries, the customary tenure systems have been affected by conflicting Islamic and Christian influences, which result in land conflicts. In other countries, such as Chad, Islamic laws state that land belongs to all Muslims even though individuals can individually or collectively own land.

Furthermore, some of the land reforms undertaken in many countries are not successfully implemented. In Zimbabwe and South Africa, for example, the recent land redistribution processes have affected little significant benefits for the black and poor peasants, since those processes tended to promote land accumulation by the elites. However, there exist impressive and suc-

Rural land in Africa in 2015



Rwanda and Mauritius have computerised their land administration and information systems. As of 2019, it takes **7 days to transfer land in Rwanda** compared to an average of more than **40 days in many other African countries**



cessful cases. In addition, the recent land reforms have failed to resolve the historical land inequalities in Southern African countries, such as Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia. Through the adoption of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Rwanda and Mauritius have already computerised their land administration and information systems to improve efficiency in land transactions. As of 2019, it takes seven days to transfer land in Rwanda compared to an average of more than 40 days in many other African countries [23], whose land administration systems still rely on manual systems of collecting, processing and managing land-related data. The establishment of the land registration systems in many countries has not worked well: land registration is still expensive, complex and slow and tends to exclude the poor.

There are also good examples of decentralisation of land administration systems, which have been partially and successfully implemented in countries including Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, among others. For example, in some federal states of Ethiopia, land administration responsibilities are vested at the local government level, which facilitates the recording and certification of household landholdings. In Ghana, after the legal recognition of the customary land tenure system that governs over 80 percent of rural land, the customary land secretariats (CLSs) have been created with the aim of building land administration capacity, and ensuring transparent land service delivery that will help in systematic registration of customary and statutory land rights [24, 25]. The bundle of land rights allocated to landowners or users is still limited in countries that recognise individual land ownership and issue land titles, but still exercise restrictions on land rent or sale.

In countries where the community enjoys usufruct rights, farmers feel some insecurity of land tenure due to lack of landownership proof; as a result, they can hardly invest in their land effectively as they do not have opportunities to access the bank loans using the land as collateral. In other countries, land laws and policies admit the customary tenure system that regulates landholding over large parts of countries, but does not support land rights registration held under this system. For instance, there is no legal support for collective land holding in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone while the communal property regimes still exist.

Generally, land administration systems in many African countries suffer from incomplete or non-existent land records, unclear land transaction processes, cumbersome, time-consuming service delivery, and high related transactions costs. This hinders property rights formalisation and exposes vulnerable, poor and low-income landowners or users to land grabbing. Other challenges include lack of financial, technical and human capacities to ensure that land administration services related to land use, planning, valuation, surveying and registration and adjudication are easily accessible at the local level [26]. One other challenge is land-related corruption, which occurs in state administrative institutions and/or in intra-household decision-making process-

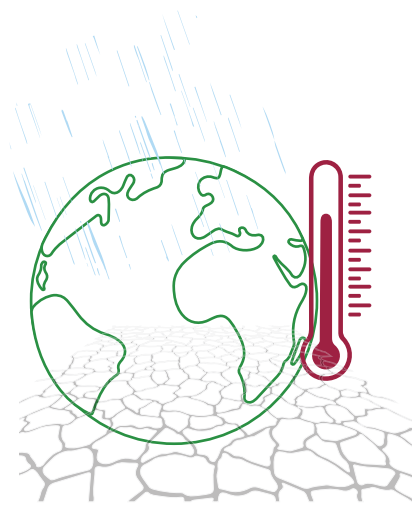
es. Corruption is a multi-faceted problem with many forms such as hidden deals between private investors and local authorities, citizens forced to pay bribes for basic land services, sexual extortion of women to have access to land, unaccountable urban planning, and customary laws that deny women and minorities land rights. Therefore, addressing it requires multi-dimensional anti-corruption approaches.

3.1.7 Environment and Climate Change

Many African countries experience increased incidences of floods and intense droughts induced by climate change. This worsens existing social and economic challenges. This is particularly the case in Southern African countries whose populations depend on severely climate-sensitive resources.

Over time, the cyclonic activities become more intense, with larger peak wind speeds and heavy rains, which exacerbate the insecure land tenure and expose various landowners/users and urban dwellers to vulnerability. This particularly happens in the countries on the western and eastern shores and various island states. Apart from the loss of life, drastic natural disasters can engender disruption of land tenure systems and property loss: they may totally or partially destroy physical evidence of property boundaries and leave different people unable to access their land either for production or for housing purposes. This can open up room for conflicts over land rights and the breakout of tenure insecurity.

The diversity in the agro-ecological conditions among Western, Northern, Eastern and Southern African countries has had negative implications on land management. Increasing population pressure, the loss of fallowing as a way to restore soil fertility and reduced tree densities on cropland have contributed to widespread land degradation, soil and water erosion, and reduced crop yields.



South Africa Poor Mans Housing. Photo: ©Flickr/ Franklin Pi, creative commons/A.Davey. www.flickr.com/photos/franklinzen/16246209266, is licensed under CC BY 2.0

The increased demand for land has resulted in **land fragmentation** in many countries with **farms between 1 and 2.2 hectares.**



The effects of desertification, insufficient rainfall and poor land quality contribute to the localised concentration of the majority of the population in some regions. This results in high pressure on land (based on the needs of various users of land) and a big challenge for land governance and sustainable land use at the country level.

At the continental level, severe droughts and floods increase land degradation and soil erosion, which reduces agricultural land. Subsistence farming, which employs more than 60 per cent of the active population, is the most vulnerable sector [27]. Rural women are among the most affected people with respect to their engagement in land-related activities such as agriculture [13]. The vulnerability of the agriculture sector is aggravated by the increased demand from other competing sectors (mainly residential) and has resulted in land fragmentation in many countries. For example, 60% of farm plots in Ghana are less than 1.2 hectares, and 85% are less than 2 hectares. In Uganda, 58% of farms are smaller than 1 hectare, and in Zambia, half the farms are smaller than 2 hectares, while in Tanzania, farms are below 2.2 hectares. In Rwanda, more than 60 percent of farming households own less than 0.5 hectares per household, Kenyan smallholder farmers own 0.47 hectares while the average small farm size in Ethiopia is 0.9 hectares [28].

The climate-induced land migrations also perpetuate the encroachment onto fragile ecosystems on hillsides and wetlands, which triggers environmental degradation. For many African countries, instruments and measures geared towards climate change resilience, mitigation and adaptations are not reflected in the ongoing practices on the ground where indigenous knowledge for proper climate change adaptation is limited. In other cases, the investment cost of implementing the instruments and measures necessary to advance resilience, mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change are not sufficiently met, leading to inadequate implementation.

3.1.8 Unsustainable Farming Practices

Africa imports expensive chemical farming inputs and staple foods such as processed rice while exporting non-food crops such as raw commodities for value addition in the global north. This extractive form of land use, along with the policies that support it, is not sustainable. Monocrop commodity farming using synthetic fertilisers and highly hazardous chemical pesticides destroys the fertility of African soils, pollutes waterways, and degrades the land while threatening the health of farmers, farm workers and consumers.

Agro-ecological approaches have a proven record of success in sustainable land use, healthy soils, improved production and incomes, contributing to healthy diets, more resilient farming communities, cooling the planet, and protecting the environment while showing a huge potential to create jobs for the youth. The High Level Panel of Experts of the UN Committee on World

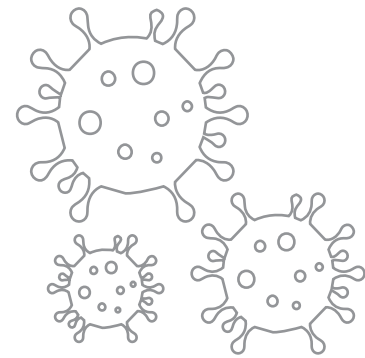
Food Security has shown that agro-ecological approaches are superior to others in terms of food and nutrition security and sustainable land management.¹ In June 2021, the Member States of the UN Committee on World Food Security endorsed a set of recommendations on agro-ecological and other innovative approaches² that call on member states to “lay or strengthen, as appropriate, the policy foundations for agro-ecological and other innovative approaches to contribute to sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition.”

3.1.9 Land and Pandemics

Experience has shown that ownership and use of land and other natural resources that are not recognised through formal legal tools face various forms of threats. It is well known that pandemics involve an unexpected short-term shock, causing economic and social impacts in the long term [29]. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe disruptions in food supply chains, undermining the ability of small food producers to access their land and the natural resources they need, thereby rendering them more vulnerable to encroachment on their land tenure rights [30, 31]. Women are often facing more economic losses than men due to such crises, including COVID-19, due to their greater vulnerabilities and lack of tenure security [32]. Indeed, there are reports about women who have been forced to cede their land after losing their husbands due to COVID-19 [33].

COVID-19 is also expected to put pressure on forest ecosystems and forest-dependent communities, as the loss of livelihoods will most likely lead to increased over-exploitation of already scarce natural resources as well as increased food insecurity and poverty [34]. At the same time, illegal mining, timber extraction and poaching are expected to increase due to reduced enforcement of laws related to natural resources management capacities as political attention is currently focused on COVID-19 and economic recovery.

While there is not much evidence for the environmental impact of COVID-19, the health crisis caused by the pandemic may have created an environment where it is easier to violate the tenure rights of vulnerable populations [33], such as squatters and slum dwellers. The loss of income sources for poor and low-income categories depending on informal activities resulting from the various measures against the spread of COVID-19 has accelerated the pace of poverty and food insecurity. For instance, people who lost their jobs in both public and private sectors may have been forced to sell their land (and related property) to meet immediate survival needs. This forced land sale accelerates the process of material resource deprivation and constitutes a key



The COVID-19 pandemic has caused **severe disruptions in food supply chains** and is expected to put pressure on forest ecosystems.

¹ www.fao.org/3/ca5602en/ca5602en.pdf.

² www.fao.org/3/nf777en/nf777en.pdf.

factor for impoverishment [35]. This underscores the importance of ensuring that the most vulnerable people receive enhanced protection and assistance during the COVID-19 period and beyond.

3.1.10 Large-Scale Land-Based Investments

Large-scale Land-Based Investments (LSLBIs) can have diverse economic, social, and environmental impacts in host African countries. The massive influx of foreign investments attracted by mineral and forest resources, agro-fuels expansion and agricultural development have resulted in dramatic land conflicts and impacts on food security. The lack of clarity in national boundaries ignites political conflicts, especially in mineral-rich regions or high potential agri-business areas.

Every year, **investors claim millions of hectares of land.** Due to poor land governance, the processes of land acquisition lead to the violations of principles of responsible agro-investment.

The post-independence African land reforms have been characterised by an increasing investor interest in large-scale agriculture that leads to land grabs. Every year, investors claim millions of hectares of land. Due to poor land governance, the processes of land acquisition lead to the violations of principles of responsible agro-investment [24]. In mineral-rich countries such as Angola, DRC, Southern Sudan, Sierra Leone and Liberia, land-related conflicts have been intense since the 2000s. Between 2000 and 2015, 498 land deals were concluded by 504 investors (including the domestic actors) interested in producing 81 different crops on a contracted area of around 8.8 million hectares in 38 African countries. A large share of these hectares is in Sub-Saharan Africa [36]. These land deals have negatively affected the human right to access food (by prioritising cash export crops over domestic food crops) and incomes.

Moreover, investment in agro-business involves the development of irrigation schemes, which deprives the existing communities of the access to, and use of, existing water and thus becomes another source of land conflicts. The adopted, externally-oriented agri-business policies promote large-scale commercial farming systems dominated by elites and foreign landowners to the detriment of the smallholder farmers. In Eastern and Western Africa, where there is a lack of institutional systems that protect the rights to lands, the communities in the areas designed for foreign investments face land deprivation issues such as unfair compensation and forced evictions. This has orchestrated disputes between the government authorities and the affected populations.

The LSBIBs go hand in hand with the erosion of customary tenure systems and the formation of individualised forms of tenure, which displace indigenous people. The risks associated with the LSBIBs are widely caused by gaps in policies and legal frameworks that govern various investments in land, the limited understanding of the risks associated with them, and limited public consultation before the commencement of the projects. The AUC, in

collaboration with the ALPC, has developed the Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa in an attempt to address the challenges related to LSLBIs in the agricultural sector.

3.2 Opportunities Associated with Land Governance in Africa

Despite the issues and challenges identified above, there are several opportunities, which this land governance strategy should fully exploit. These are explained below:

- There are a series of global, continental, regional and national land governance initiatives supported by various development partners such as the ALPC/Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa-NELGA, Slum and Informal Settlement Upgrading programmes, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security – VGGT, RAI of the Committee on World Food Security – CFS, and others. These represent an opportunity for effective partnership and cooperation for mutual benefits. Such partnership also represents an opportunity for AU, RECs and AU MS for experience sharing and access to financial resources.
- Land is increasingly recognised as a critical good governance issue. In Africa, land is central to the continent’s agenda for sustainable development. There are many strategies and plans to promote land governance at regional and national levels, and the AU should take advantage of these initiatives to improve land governance across the continent.
- Science, technology and innovation are recognised in the Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) as critical tools to address natural and environmental resource challenges. Furthermore, the Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030) promotes digital solutions to improve land administration and management (such as efficient and cost effective methods of surveying, better access to land and property rights) and enhance the quality and productivity of land, which requires land rights registration for all people, including those with informal land tenure. The AU, RECs and AU MS should take advantage of existing and future technologies to improve land governance.
- The continent’s demographics provide an opportunity for a future demographic dividend because more than 60 percent of Africa’s population is currently below 35 years of age. Given relatively high fertility rates compared to other regions, the younger segment of the population is expected to keep rising for the coming decades.

3.3 Stakeholders Operating in the Land Governance Sector

As land is a productive asset with several competing interests, the development of the Land Governance Strategy will be of interest for several stakeholders. Table 2 below provides information about some of the key stakeholders involved in the delivery of this strategy.

Table 2 Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Interest and Influence	Value Proposition and Strategy for Action
AUC Departments	The AUC Departments are committed to the achievement of Agenda 2063. The AUC can influence MS to ensure that they improve their land governance systems and protect the rights to land for all in line with the provisions of the AU agenda on land and, more broadly, Agenda 2063.	The strategy will create a platform to discuss and explore solutions to land-related challenges that the AU MS may encounter in their work.
African Union Development Agency (AUDA)	AUDA (previously known as the New Partnership for Africa's Development Planning and Coordinating Agency – NEPAD), implements the AU's developmental strategy. AUDA's mandate is to transform Africa through enhanced knowledge-sharing, partnerships, and resource-mobilisation, along with promoting high-impact projects that align with the AU's overall continental development frameworks.	The strategy will guide how best AUDA (NEPAD) can engage the AU MS on land governance issues and initiatives that it oversees such as the Great Green Wall (GGW) and the African Forest Landscape Restoration (AFR100).
Continental Partners (AfDB, ECA)	The continental partners have a strong interest in land issues, as attested by their commitment to establishing the ALPC. The AfDB is also supporting national programmes that are land-based.	The strategy will highlight possible areas of collaboration that need to be strengthened. The process will provide an opportunity for the AUC to have a common platform for shared values and planning that ALPC will strengthen.
Regional Economic Communities (RECs)	The RECs have regular interactions with the AU MS and provide a mechanism through which the AU agenda on land can be implemented effectively. The RECs work to oversee economic growth and integration within a particular region in Africa. The AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges provides for RECs to: (i) convene periodic regional platforms to facilitate experience- and lesson-sharing and dissemination of best practices in land policy formulation, implementation and monitoring based on members states' experiences; (ii) capture and address issues of land policies within their respective common agricultural policy frameworks.	The strategy will provide clearer lines of communication regarding the implementation of the AU agenda on land. The RECs will have their capacity built so that they are more able to support states to ensure that communities' interests in land are protected during the implementation of developmental projects.
ALPC	The African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) is a tripartite initiative by the UNECA, the AfDB and the AUC. The ALPC aims to better support AU Member States as well as improving collaboration among the tripartite.	The strategy will provide a better understanding for ALPC on the strategic needs and priorities related to land within various AUC departments. The information will help the ALPC to understand how best they can support the AUC.

Stakeholder	Interest and Influence	Value Proposition and Strategy for Action
AU Member States	The AU Member States form the governments that are responsible and accountable to their citizenry. The AU Member States would like to improve their land administration systems to ensure that land is accessible to citizens and investors.	Member States will be able to understand and track the AU agenda on land and understand how land needs to be integrated within various thematic sectors.
Traditional Leaders	Traditional leaders are custodians of traditional lands in Africa. They would want to be involved in the land-related policy-making space at national and continental levels. In addition, they are also involved in land administration.	Traditional leaders will understand how best communication and learning can be achieved at national, regional and continental levels and appreciate the value of land administration.
Community Members	The community members (other than formal leaders) are human rights holders and also hold customary land tenure rights.	The strategy will find ways to ensure that representatives of women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people, and people with disabilities meaningfully participate in decision-making.
CSOs	CSOs want to see principles of good land governance exhibited by AU Member States and the protection of land rights of all African citizens ensured.	CSOs will understand the role of the AUC in the land agenda and their advocacy roles and entry points for intervention and policy implementation.
Cooperating Partners	Cooperating partners (development partners) mostly represent governments who would like to see transparency and accountability in the land sector, and land tenure and rights security.	Cooperating partners (development partners) will be guided on the AUC's priorities regarding land governance in Africa.
Private Sector	Private sector members such as multi-national investment companies, corporations and banks investing in different sectors including mining, agriculture, real estate, tourism and manufacturing are interested in seeing that their investments on land are secure.	The private sector will be able to understand the work being undertaken at the continental level to understand the AUC agenda on land and the importance of protecting community land rights in the investment process.
Research Institutions and Academia	Research institutions and academia play a critical role in providing credible information that policy makers can use to undertake evidence-based decisions concerning land governance on the continent. Furthermore, these institutions play a central role in providing education, which builds capacity and skills in land administration and governance on the continent.	Research institutions and academia will provide information to various stakeholders on the importance of improving land governance on the continent. They will also build more capacity that is aligned to the aspirations of the AU agenda on land.

3.4 Continental and Global Efforts to Improve Land Governance

3.4.1 The African Union Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063 is Africa's strategic framework for transformation to attain inclusive and sustainable development. This master plan encapsulates how Africa intends to achieve its vision of

'an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena'

between 2013 and 2063.

Good land governance is considered as a critical condition for achieving Agenda 2063, particularly the goals related to quality of life and well-being (AU Goal 1), agriculture (AU Goal 5), environment (AU Goal 7), peace and security (AU Goal 13), and gender equality (AU Goal 17). Similarly, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is underpinned by good land governance, especially the goals related to eliminating poverty (SDG1), ending hunger and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG2), gender equality and women empowerment (SDG5), inclusive economic growth (SDG8), productive employment (SDG11), human settlements (SDG11), and peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG16).

Agenda 2063 is actioned by a ten-year implementation plan. The fifty-year development trajectory focuses on optimising Africa's resources for the common benefit of the continent's people and is built around seven (7) aspirations that form the pillars through which the AUC operates. The seven aspirations are presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 African Union Agenda 2063 Aspirations



Aspiration-1

A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development



Aspiration-5

An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics



Aspiration-2

An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance



Aspiration-6

An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children



Aspiration-3

An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law



Aspiration-7

Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner



Aspiration-4

A peaceful and secure Africa

One of the indicative strategies under Aspiration 1 of Agenda 2063 advocates for the domestication of the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa and the Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments on the continent. Domesticating the frameworks aims to ensure sustainable land management practices, sound property rights and security of tenure, and enforcement of corporate social and environmental protection by both local and foreign investors. With regards to promoting gender balance in all spheres of life, Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 aims at ensuring that 90 percent of rural women have access to productive assets, including land, credit, inputs and financial services by 2025 (Target 3.1vi)³.

³ Technical Guidelines: Document for preparing country Biennial Review report on progress made for achieving the Malabo Declaration Goals and Targets, AUC, 2017.

3.4.2 Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa (F&G)



In 2008, through the Land Policy Initiative, the African Union developed the Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa (F&G). The F&G advocates for shared principles in securing access to land for all users, enhanced agricultural productivity and sustained livelihoods. Furthermore, the Framework and Guidelines provide a basis for the commitment by MS' to formulate and operationalise comprehensive, coordinated and sound land policies. These policies form the basis for sustainable human development, including social stability, economic growth, poverty alleviation, and the protection of natural resources and ecosystems against degradation and pollution. The Framework and Guidelines also urge African governments to do the following, among other things:

- Improve land delivery and administration systems;
- Ensure that there is an adequate budgetary provision to develop and implement land policy;
- Ensure popular participation in land policy formulation and implementation by all stakeholders;
- Ensure that land is properly administered to preserve peace and security;
- Acknowledge the legitimacy of indigenous land rights;
- Strengthen the land rights of women;
- Ensure that land governance is integrated or mainstreamed in development and poverty-reduction programmes as well as decision-making processes.

3.4.3 The Malabo Declaration

The 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods recognises land tenure as one of the commitment areas in agriculture. The Malabo Declaration also highlights good land policies and management as key to achieving agricultural transformation with equitable access to land. The Declaration further underscores secure land rights as being critical to investment and sustainable land management. The key performance targets and indicators for monitoring and reporting on the Malabo Declaration for Agriculture include land governance-related targets and indicators whereby 100% of farm households will have ownership or secure land rights by 2025.

3.4.4 Land Restoration Initiatives

The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) is a country-led effort to bring 100 million hectares of forestland in Africa into restoration by 2030. It aims to accelerate land restoration to restore productivity to deforested and degraded pasture and cropland to enhance food security, increase climate change resilience and mitigation, and improve livelihoods. AFR100 contributes to the African Resilient Landscapes Initiative (ARLI), and the African Union Agenda 2063. The African Union Development Agency (AU-DA-NEPAD) acts as the AFR100 Secretariat.

The Great Green Wall (GGW) is an African-led movement to bring back life to Africa's degraded landscapes at an unprecedented scale, providing food security, jobs and a reason to stay for the millions who live along its path. The Wall is a compelling solution to the many urgent threats facing the African continent, notably climate change, drought, famine, conflict and migration. Through the African Union, more than 20 African countries are involved in the Great Green Wall.



3.4.5 Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa (LSLBI)

The Guiding Principles on LSLBI form the basis for commitment, solidarity and collective responsibility by governments, investors and other stakeholders to improve the governance of large-scale land-based agricultural investments in Africa. These principles are expected to guide decision-making in recognition of the fact that LSLBI may not always be the most appropriate form of investment. They also assert that the communities, which are affected by large-scale land-based investment, should be provided with sufficient information, consulted on their views prior to finalising large-scale land-based investment agreements and have their views taken into consideration.

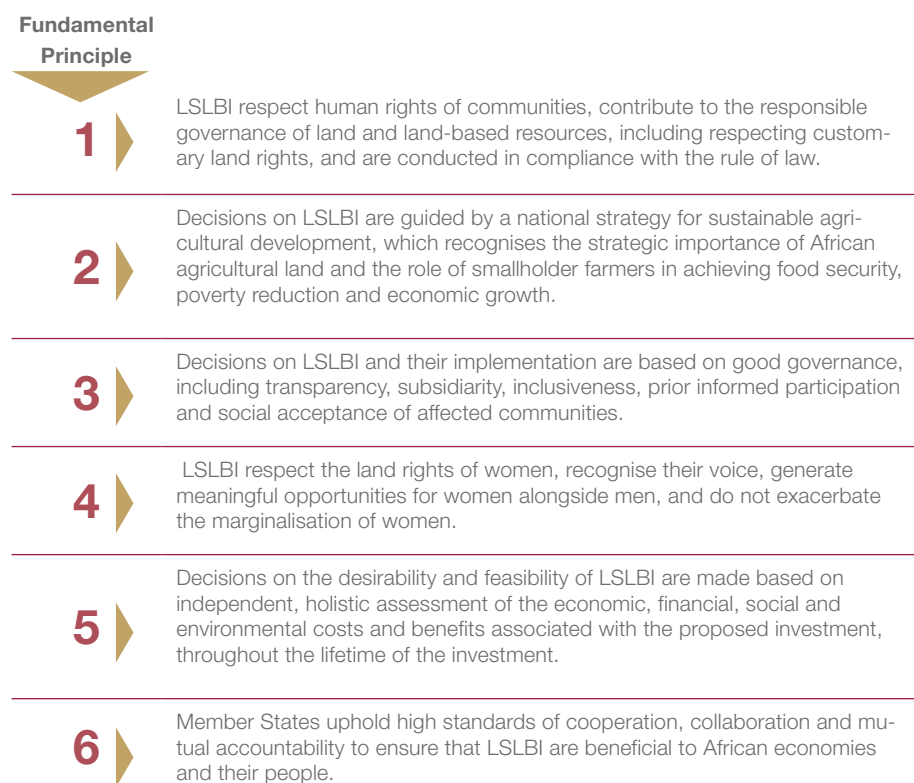
The principles provide the AU MS and other stakeholders with direction on making land investments that are sustainable and beneficial to African economies and people. In addition, the principles create a basis for effective coordination, cooperation and collective responsibility amongst the AU MS and other stakeholders to ensure improved land governance in the context of LSLBI. While providing guidance to AU MS, the principles provide investors with a tool to inform their engagement with African governments, bodies responsible for decentralised decision-making on land governance (such as municipalities), traditional leaders and other actors to ensure responsible land investments. Furthermore, the principles provide a basis for developing a monitoring and evaluation framework to track LSLBI in Africa and reviewing existing LSLBI contracts. They also facilitate learning and review of LSLBI. These fundamental principles are presented in Figure 2 below.

'The Great Green Wall is an **African-led movement** with an epic ambition to grow an 8,000km natural wonder of the world across the entire width of Africa.'

Once complete, the Great Green Wall will be the largest living structure on the planet, 3 times the size of the Great Barrier Reef.'

Source:
www.greatgreenwall.org/about-great-green-wall

Figure 2 Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments



3.4.6 The Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security (VGGTs) during its 38th session in May 2012. The VGGT provides guidelines and principles on how countries should address tenure issues when dealing with land tenure and natural resources governance.

The VGGTs aim to foster sustainable development and food security through secured land access and improved governance of tenure of land, forests, and fisheries. The VGGTs state that governments should recognise and protect all ‘legitimate tenure rights,’ including undocumented communally held customary land rights (Art. 3.1). The VGGTs also note that all forms of transactions in tenure rights because of investments in land, fisheries and forests should be done transparently and contracting parties should provide comprehensive information to ensure that all relevant persons who are engaged in

the negotiations are well informed. In addition, VGGTs seek to ensure that the agreements are documented and understood by all those who are affected (Arts 12.3, 12.11). The VGGT were endorsed by AU MS through their membership to the UN Committee on World Food Security.

3.4.7 African Development Bank's Feed Africa Strategy

The 'Feed Africa' component of the African Development Bank's High-5 priorities represents its contribution to the overall Agricultural Transformation Agenda, which is a pan-continental and multi-actor strategy to transform agriculture across Africa. The Feed Africa Strategy recognises the security of land tenure as a major challenge across the continent. In dealing with the challenge, the strategy targets a 25% increase in tenure security in Africa by 2025.

3.4.8 African Continental Free Trade Area

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement is a free trade area founded during the historic summit of the African Union (AU) held in Kigali in March 2018. In addition to being a free trade area, it is also a flagship project of the African Union (AU) in terms of Agenda 2063 as it offers a member-driven blueprint for attaining inclusive and sustainable development across the continent.

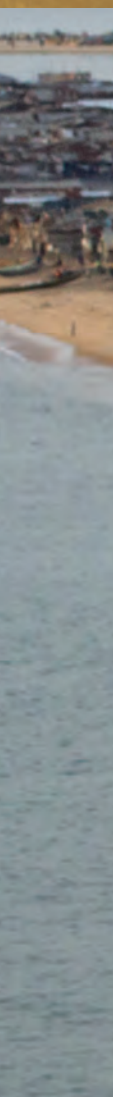
AfCFTA is expected to enhance the exchange of goods and services, the Intellectual Property Law, the Competition Policy, and the Investment Flow. Most of these services require the availability of land and other natural resources. In this regard, Africa hosts 30% of the world's mineral reserves and accounts for more than 20 percent of the global annual production of five key minerals as follows: 80 percent of platinum, 77 percent of cobalt, 51 percent of manganese, 46 percent of diamonds, 39 percent of chromium and 22 percent of gold. Africa also possesses 60 percent of world's arable land [37].

One of the key priorities of the AfCFTA is to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and protect the planet through sustainable agriculture and means of production. Climate change consequences negatively affect African countries, with the constant rise of temperatures, increased droughts, flooding, and erosion, which constitute a threat to land and water resources. With effective implementation of the agreement, south-south trade will improve, trade distance will be reduced and the impact on climate change will be lessened.



Creating One African Market

4



Strategic Framework for the Land Governance Strategy



4.1 Vision

The vision of the AU is a continent where land is responsibly governed, equitably distributed and sustainably used for the benefit of citizens of the Member States to ensure inclusive development while reducing the adverse impacts of land use on humans and the environment.

4.2 Goal of the Land Governance Strategy

The goal of the Land Governance Strategy is to ensure that land is equitably governed with secured land rights and tenure for all to have sustainable livelihoods, human settlements, ecosystems and socio-economic development in Africa.

4.3 Guiding Principles

The AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, MS and affiliated entities will comply with the following principles in the delivery of the land-related services and execution of land-related work:

- The **sustainability** of land-related developments on the continent by ensuring that all initiatives are environmentally, financially, economically and socially balanced and meet the needs of present and future generations;
- **Compliance and adherence to regional and international policies, guidelines and standards;**
- **The integration of the human rights established in the normative international policies, guidelines and standards** such as the following: the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2018, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights;
- **Competency, efficiency and effectiveness in the land sector** by ensuring that land-related processes are simplified, timely, readily accessible and cost-effective for all stakeholders involved in, or affected by, land administration;

- **Responsiveness to local needs** by delivering services that empower citizens of AU Member States to meet their needs and are of bespoke benefit to their wellbeing;
- **Transparency and openness** by institutions in land administration and in dealing with different stakeholders who may have an interest in land or may be affected by land transactions and development;
- **Equality, impartiality and fairness** in land-related dealings by ensuring that citizens equally benefit from land investments and can access land-based services without discrimination, be it physical ability, political affiliation, tribe, gender, age, and religion. Systems will be in place to ensure that land acquisitions, transfers, consolidation and uses protect the rights and interests of women, the youth and other vulnerable groups;
- **Participation, engagement, involvement and consultation** of all stakeholders in land processes and transactions;
- **Accountability and integrity** in the stewardship of resources and ensuring that initiatives on land are objective and diligent as well as ensuring uniform service standards for all and dedication to public interests as opposed to personal gain;
- **Uphold the rule of law** in land acquisition and dealings and ensure the legal security of land and property rights; and,
- **Respect diverse land and property rights** by recognising that different land tenure systems and rights exist and ensuring that these are respected, protected and secured at all times.

4.4 Theory of Change

The underpinning assertion on land is that Africa is still an agrarian economy, which largely depends on the extraction of land-based resources. However, laws and regulations governing land and natural resource rights vary significantly across the African continent. Therefore, proper administration of different land rights held under different tenure regimes and under different uses is essential for Africa's development. Poor development and administration of land rights can fuel conflict and create economic, societal and inter-generational inequalities.

There is a need to ensure that Africans in need of land can access it by securing the land rights individually or collectively through clarity of land boundaries and documentation of rights and interests in the particular land. Moreover, ensuring that the legal framework protects these rights increases people's

ability to invest in the land, thereby increasing land productivity, leading to integration and sustainable development at local, national, regional, and continental levels. Furthermore, the increased access to land and security of tenure by marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women and youths creates an enabling environment to propel their physical, political and social agency, thereby enhancing their economic autonomy.

Figure 3 below is a visual representation of the Theory of Change (TOC) of the land governance strategy articulated as the ‘**change AU wants to see in improving land governance**’ in terms of the intermediate and long-term outcomes and impact.

Figure 3 Theory of Change

Context	Interventions	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequalities in land access, use and ownership • Inadequate land policies and laws that do not cater for land rights of all categories including women, youth, pastoralists, and indigenous people • Lack of decentralised, well-functioning and transparent land administration systems • Land deprivation and tenure insecurity of pastoralists and indigenous people/ Land conflicts and forced displacements • Poor and non-participatory land use planning • Gender and youth inequality in landownership • Unfair land resource allocation among all users and limited involvement of communities in land transactions • Shocks (climate change, pandemics) • Problems of large-scale land acquisitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequalities in land access, use and ownership • Inadequate land policies and laws that do not cater for land rights of all categories including women, youth, pastoralists, and indigenous people • Lack of decentralised, well-functioning and transparent land administration systems • Land deprivation and tenure insecurity of pastoralists and indigenous people/ Land conflicts and forced displacements • Poor and non-participatory land use planning • Gender and youth inequality in landownership • Unfair land resource allocation among all users and limited involvement of communities in land transactions • Shocks (climate change, pandemics) • Problems of large-scale land acquisitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various categories of landowners and users in MS will have opportunities to access, hold, and use land resources • Women, youth, pastoralists, and indigenous people and vulnerable groups will be empowered in defending or claiming their land rights • Increased staff capacity to ensure that their activities or initiatives improve lives and livelihoods of the African citizenry • Clear regulations on sustainable use and management of land, including those governing large-scale land investments are in place and enforced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced tenure security for all and reduced land conflicts • Prevention of environmental damage and effective management of shocks (climate change, disaster risk, pandemics) • Increased land investments, improved productivity and livelihoods of communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured land rights enhanced, sustainable use of land and improved communities’ livelihoods through improved land governance systems at all levels (local/ sub-national, national, regional and continental)

4.5 Strategic Objectives and Priorities of Land Governance Strategy

The following five strategic objectives will guide the LGS:

- 1 Strengthening the capacity of the AU-Commission, ALPC, AUDA and Regional Economic Communities and AU Member States to implement the AU agenda on land;
- 2 Promoting the advancement of land policies, laws, administration systems and responsible land governance in the AU Member States;
- 3 Promoting responsible land-based investments in Africa that are environmentally sound, scalable and inclusive, contributing to the sustainable development of the country and meeting community needs;
- 4 Enhancing the security of land tenure and access to land and other productive resources for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups including persons with disability in Africa;
- 5 Facilitating and supporting the operationalisation of Monitoring and Evaluation of Land in Africa (MELA) as a tool for measuring progress towards achieving the AU agenda on land in Africa.

The required strategic priorities or interventions for achieving the above objectives are outlined in the following sections.



Tunis. Photo: ©Flickr/USAID Ethiopia, creative commons/TristanPict. www.flickr.com/photos/59938079@N07/14402538198, is licensed under CC BY 2.0

4.5.1 **Strategic objective 1** » Strengthening the capacity of AU-Commission, ALPC, AUDA, Regional Economic Communities and AU Member States to implement the AU agenda on land

The main expected outcomes under this first strategic objective are:

- 1 Enhanced awareness and understanding among AUC and other stakeholders on the AU agenda on land and its importance in the economic transformation of African states
- 2 Strengthened technical capacities and skills of AUC, ALPC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs and MS staff to support the implementation and monitoring of the African Union Agenda on land
- 3 Land issues are mainstreamed in the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and REC programmes and projects and ensure collaboration among AU institutions and Member States
- 4 Improved collaboration and learning among AU institutions on land governance

Outcome 1. Enhanced awareness and understanding among AUC and other stakeholders on the AU agenda on land and its importance in the economic transformation of African states

This outcome will be achieved through implementing the following strategic actions:

- 1 Organise frequent and regular meetings or workshops for their staff for a common understanding of the AU agenda on land and its implementation strategies.
- 2 Establish and facilitate communication about the African Union Agenda among MS and its importance in national socio-economic development processes through ALPC, RECs, regional NGOs and CSOs, private sector federations, research institutions and academia platforms.
- 3 Continue organising the Conference on Land Policy in Africa (CLPA) biennially to deepen the capacity for land policy in Africa through improved access to knowledge and information on land policy-making and implementation.

Outcome 2. Strengthened technical capacities and skills of AUC, ALPC, AUDA- NEPAD, RECs and MS staff to support the implementation and monitoring of the African Union Agenda on land

This outcome will be achieved through the implementation of the following three strategic actions:

- 4 Facilitate learning for their staff through regional dialogues on practical land governance approaches to advance the implementation of African Union Agenda on land.
- 5 Organise interactive meetings for land administration and management personnel in each Member State on strategies to implement the African Union Agenda on land in each country.
- 6 Upscale and popularise the use of MELA as a monitoring and reporting tool.

Outcome 3. Land issues are mainstreamed in the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and REC programmes and projects and ensure collaboration among AU institutions and Member States

This outcome will be achieved through three strategic actions:

- 7 Mainstream land governance issues in AUC departments and affiliated specialised agencies.
- 8 Align financial and technical assistance and cooperation plans with the priorities of the African Union Agenda on land.
- 9 Use existing continental, regional (e.g. Regional-REC level platforms – IGAD Regional Platform on LG, African Land Commissioners Platform, Land Investment Negotiators’ Platform, Forum for African Traditional Leaders - FATA, the CSP-CSO Platform on Land) and relevant AU Member States’ platforms for partnership on the implementation of the land governance strategy and assessment of implementation progress.

Outcome 4. Improved collaboration and learning among AU institutions on land governance

The key strategic actions proposed to achieve this outcome are the following:

- 10 Strengthen continental and regional platforms that are functional (e.g. the African Land Commissioners Platform, the Land Investment Negotiators' Platform, the Forum for African Traditional Leaders – FATA, ILC members, ALPC/Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa – NELGA, the IGAD Regional Platform on LG, the Eastern African Land Administration Network – EALAN) for collaboration, information sharing and dissemination of best practices for land governance advancement in the Member States.
- 11 Support research and knowledge generation on land governance issues within MS for learning, policy and practical solutions concerning good management of land resources.
- 12 Support the review of existing academic curricula on land administration and management by incorporating subjects related to pastoralists, indigenous people, customary and traditional land tenure systems (within the countries where those tenure systems exist) through popularisation of the AU Curricula Guidelines on Land Governance.
- 13 Facilitate research and evaluation reports that inform the AU institutions on national status of land governance.

4.5.2 **Strategic objective 2** » Promoting the advancement of land policies, laws, administration systems and responsible land governance in the AU Member States

The main expected outcomes under this second strategic objective are:

- 1 AU Member States domesticate the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy, VGGTs and other international frameworks and conventions within their policies and legal frameworks
- 2 AU Member States have non-discriminatory land management regulations that enhance access to land and security of tenure for all categories of landowners and users
- 3 AU Member States have land administration systems that are decentralised, cost-effective, transparent, responsive to the needs of citizens and promote participatory approaches of land management

Outcome 5. AU Member States domesticate the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy, VGGTs and other international frameworks and conventions within their policies and legal frameworks

This outcome will be achieved through five interrelated strategic actions:

- 1 Develop and implement land use plans that integrate various forms of land tenure (that exist in the respective AU MS countries) within the spatial development processes.
- 2 Secure land rights of all to build sustainable food systems through adopting the practices of land use consolidation that promote sustainable use of land resources.
- 3 Implement transparent compulsory land acquisition processes, based on fair valuation standards and negotiation between investors and landowners, to reduce the risks of unfair compensation.
- 4 Enforce various measures against corruption in the land sector through partnerships with traditional leaders, civil society, media and local communities to advance good service delivery.
- 5 Mainstream and implement a Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) Approach for policy dialogue and land reform processes in AU MS.

Outcome 6. AU Member States have non-discriminatory land management regulations that enhance access to land and security of tenure for all categories of landowners and users.

This outcome will be achieved through the following strategic actions:

- 6 Facilitate the development of, and support, land reforms and establish inclusive land policies and laws in AU MS.
- 7 Facilitate the institutionalisation of legal frameworks for land access and holding for all categories of people, including indigenous groups, pastoralists, women and youth (for countries whose customary land tenure systems are still discriminatory).

Outcome 7. AU Member States have land administration systems that are decentralised, cost-effective, transparent, responsive to the needs of citizens and promote participatory approaches of land management

Under this outcome, the following strategic actions will be implemented:

- 8 Support the establishment and operationalisation of decentralised land administration and management systems (where they do not exist) that are operated by well-skilled personnel (both female and male) to set-up land registration systems and well-functioning cadastres.
- 9 Assist MS in establishing responsible and accountable governance structures for customary/indigenous lands that ensure security of tenure for all land users.
- 10 Assist AU MS in mobilising financial and technical resources for the establishment and operationalisation of land administration and management systems, including the training of the traditional leaders and officials in the land sector.
- 11 Develop and strengthen a GIS that facilitates efficient management of land records and supports land use planning and decision-making processes related to spatial management at local level.

- 12 Support the development and dissemination of innovative context-specific and low-cost options for land rights recordation based on fit-for-purpose land administration to facilitate good land service delivery and promote security for all landowners and users at the local level.
- 13 Adopt free service delivery and land tax exemption options for specific categories of people, such as the poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups.
- 14 Facilitate the adoption of a participatory approach to land use planning, and devise land use, master plans and zoning regulations that incorporate the inputs from traditional leaders and local communities and cater to their basic needs.

4.5.3 **Strategic Objective 3 » Promoting responsible and fair land-based investments in Africa that are environmentally sound, scalable, inclusive and equitable contributing to the sustainable development of the country and meeting community needs**

The main expected outcomes under this third strategic objective are:

- 1 Large scale land-based investments in Africa are adopting responsible land acquisition approaches and inclusive business practices that help countries to increase agricultural production, environmental conservation and overall sustainable development.
- 2 Strengthened capacity of AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, Member States and affiliated entities to negotiate and advocate for sustainable and responsible land-based investments within their regions, countries and work.

Outcome 8. Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa are adopting responsible land acquisition approaches and inclusive business practices that support countries to increase agricultural production, environmental conservation and overall sustainable development

The following actions will be implemented to achieve this outcome:

- 1 Develop and implement regulations on large-scale land acquisition, which incorporate the AU Guiding Principles on LSLBI, the VGGTs and other international conventions on property acquisition and fair compensation.

- 2 Support the development of policies that situate approaches to large-scale land acquisition within MS that contribute to national and local development programmes, improve local communities' livelihoods and respect all legitimate tenure rights.
- 3 Support the adoption of large-scale land policies that promote investment in food-crop production, sustainable use of land and protection of other natural resources in the project areas, using AU GPs on LSLBIs.
- 4 Support local legitimate tenure rights holders in the development of small and medium farming enterprises to reduce the speculative land market induced by foreign LSLBIs.
- 5 Ensure that LSLBIs are implemented only after an identification of available land and an assessment of social, economic and environmental impact have been conducted with direct participation of local communities and after obtaining their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for land acquisition.
- 6 Ensure that large-scale land acquisition is carried out through negotiation between the affected landowners and investors and mediation by public and civil society organisations to minimise the risks for land conflicts and/or injustices.
- 7 Ensure that actors in large-scale land acquisition recognise indigenous peoples' rights to own, use and control the lands, territories and natural resources that they hold by reason of traditional occupation, and ensure free, prior and informed consent of the concerned indigenous peoples.
- 8 Involve community members in the mapping of their legitimate tenure rights, the negotiation of land acquisitions, and the monitoring of investor legal compliance.

Outcome 9. Strengthened capacity of AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, Member States and affiliated entities to negotiate and advocate for sustainable and responsible land-based investments within their regions, countries and work

To achieve this outcome, the following strategic actions will be implemented:

- 9 Strengthen AU MS staff's negotiation skills for large-scale land-based investment projects through training and workshops to ensure that they promote sustainable development of AU Member States.

- 10 Support the training of land administration and management personnel in the AU MS on the assessment of the responsiveness of land-based investments to land governance principles and sustainable use of land resources.
- 11 Set up task forces that negotiate and evaluate large-scale land-based investment projects and monitor whether their implementation complies with land governance principles and promotes local development.
- 12 Work to end the practice of resource grabbing affecting farming, fisheries, forests, and pastoral communities, and move towards an equitable management of these resources (natural, material and financial) by strengthening community rights, benefit sharing policies, and enacting strong and binding legislation.

4.5.4 **Strategic Objective 4** » Enhancing the security of land tenure and access to land and other productive resources for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups in Africa

The expected outcomes under this fourth strategic objective are:

- 1 Reduced risks of land conflicts and increased access to land for women, youths, pastoralists, indigenous people, and poor and vulnerable community members.
- 2 Slum and informal settlements are upgraded and recognised among formal residential neighbourhoods as part of inclusive and sustainable urban development.
- 3 Improved shocks management (climate change, disaster risk, pandemics) and resettlement of displaced communities.
- 4 Land governance issues are incorporated in reconstruction and reconciliation policies and processes of post-conflict states.

Outcome 10. Reduced risks of land conflicts and increased access to land for women

This outcome will be achieved through the implementation of the following strategic actions:

- 1 Support the institutionalisation of new policies and laws that promote access to land, land ownership, control and its use for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people, poor and other vulnerable groups including people with disabilities.
- 2 Set challenging national targets to increase the share of land owned by women.
- 3 Integrate the pastoralists’ domains within land-use plans or local development plans of AU MS, guided by the AU Policy Framework on Pastoralism.
- 4 Organise annual land campaigns for community awareness (with more attention to women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous, persons with disabilities) on AU MS’ land rights and mechanisms to claim and/or defend them.
- 5 Facilitate the establishment and operationalisation of land committees (with equitable representation of men, women and youth) at different levels of government that oversee the implementation of land policies and laws and handle land-related conflicts in a timely manner at low-cost or free of charge.
- 6 Carry out assessments on how customary land tenure systems can be improved and strengthened to promote access to land for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups and adopt ad-hoc reforms.
- 7 Advocate for, and promote, gender equality in land boards or committees dealing with land management in both customary and statutory systems.
- 8 Promote the participation of women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups in land reforms processes.
- 9 Create a land fund that can facilitate access to land for the youth engaged in agricultural activities.
- 10 Pioneer new initiatives to enhance community’s access to legal and technical support⁴.

⁴ This is needed for both formalising community land rights and protecting those rights during land acquisition for large projects. For example, the Sierra Leone’s land policy includes provisions for a private sector-funded fund to pay for legal support to communities. This is the sort of innovation that is needed across the continent.

Outcome 11. Slum and informal settlements are upgraded and recognised among the formal residential neighbourhoods as part of inclusive and sustainable urban development

The following strategic actions will be undertaken to achieve this outcome:

- 11 Support the development and implementation of urban development policies that provide equal opportunities, various options for housing development and access to basic infrastructure and services for all categories of urban dwellers.
- 12 Promote good urban governance through partnerships between government officials, local leaders (including traditional leaders in countries with customary land tenure systems) and local communities.
- 13 Prevent the proliferation of informal settlements through the provision of basic infrastructure and services, and creation of off-farm activities to attenuate the pace of rural-urban migration.
- 14 Help AU MS to secure funds and large-scale public investments to implement affordable and adequate housing and slum upgrading projects to ensure that marginalised groups have access to adequate shelter and improved livelihood options.
- 15 Support the design and implementation of inclusive master plans and zoning regulations that cater for the basic needs of all urban dwellers and preserve suitable agricultural land.
- 16 Support the development of urban master plans that integrate slums and informal settlements in the urban fabric and include road-maps for upgrading those settlements.

Outcome 12. Improved shocks management (climate change, disaster risk and pandemics) and resettlement of displaced communities

This outcome will be achieved through the following strategic actions:

- 17 Collaborate in establishing and implementing land use planning policies for shocks management (climate change, disaster risk, pandemics such as COVID-19) at continental, regional and national levels.

- 18 Collaborate with the private sector, NGOs, and local communities in the design and implementation of national regulations for integrated and sustainable management of water, forest, fragile and coastal land to minimise the risks of environment disasters.
- 19 Promote the inclusion of land rights protection and access to land for all categories of landowners and users in climate change and environmental degradation mitigation regulations and strategies.

Outcome 13. Land governance issues are incorporated in reconstruction and reconciliation policies and processes of post-conflict states

To achieve this outcome, the following strategic actions will be implemented:

- 20 Collaborate in establishing policies or declarations on preventing political, border and land conflicts within and between countries or local communities.
- 21 Establish or operationalise functional regional platforms for regional integration, political mediation, peacebuilding, security enhancement and economic development.
- 22 Facilitate the incorporation of land rights issues (such as land redistribution and/or sharing) in policies and programmes related to post-conflict development.
- 23 Adopt policies and laws that permit migrants and refugees who are displaced during political conflicts to access land in the destination areas/countries or regions of origin when they return home.

4.5.5 **Strategic Objective 5** » Facilitating and supporting the operationalisation of the AU Monitoring and Evaluation of Land in Africa (MELA) as a tool for measuring and reporting on progress towards achieving the AU agenda on land in Africa

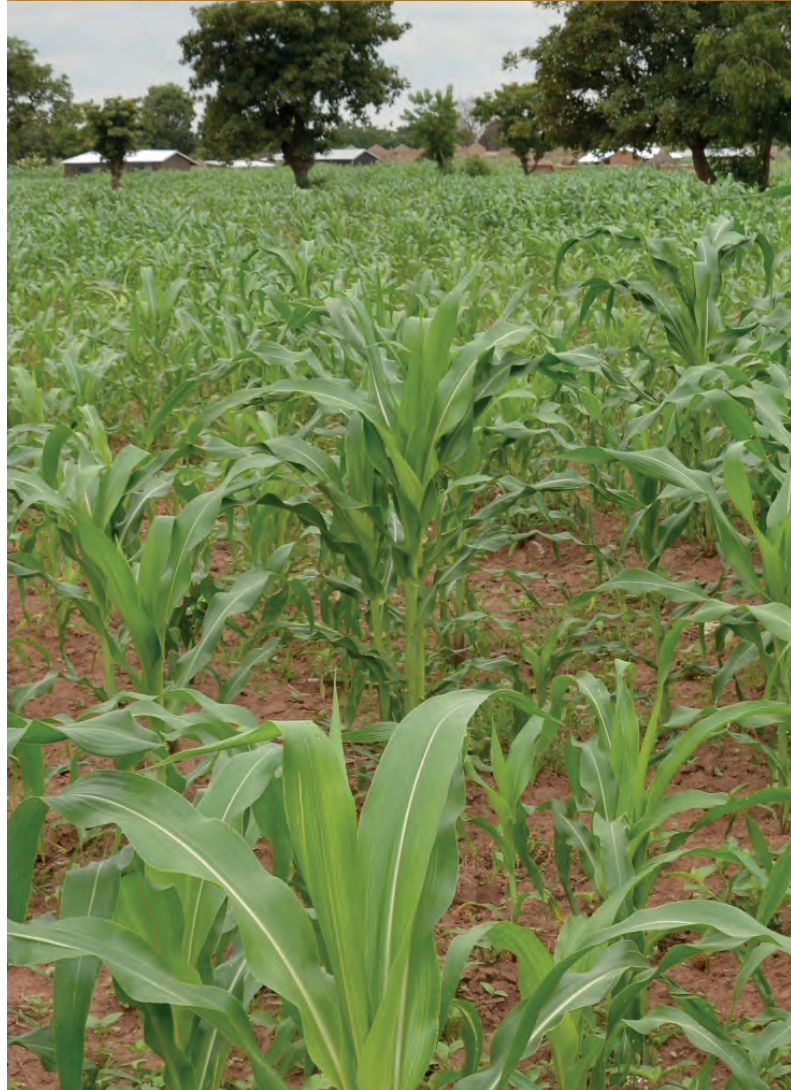
The expected outcome under this strategic objective is:

Outcome 14. Production of a high quality report depicting the progress made towards achieving the AU Declaration on Land and overall the agenda on land in Africa

This outcome will be achieved through the following strategic actions:

- 1 Establish platforms for data collection, reporting and information sharing on the implementation of the AU agenda on land in each AU MS, in collaboration with national statistical agencies.
- 2 Organise annual reviews at national, regional and continental levels on the implementation of the overall agenda on land in Africa.
- 3 Carry out assessments on the effectiveness of land policies and laws in promoting equitable access to land by men, women, youth, pastoralists, vulnerable and indigenous people within all country jurisdictions.
- 4 Promote research that disseminates innovative options and evidence-informed solutions that promote good land governance in Africa.

5



Standing in her own field. Photo: ©Flickr, creative commons/USAID U.S. Agency for International Development. www.flickr.com/photos/usaid_images/14981925245, is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Implementation Framework



5.1 Implementation of the Strategy

In order to fully implement the above strategic objectives and interventions, the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in coordination, monitoring, and evaluation need to be clearly defined. This Land Governance Strategy is implemented through the collaboration between various stakeholders due to the multifaceted nature of the land. Figure 4 illustrates how the strategy will be implemented and outlines the roles of different institutions in implementing the LGS.

Figure 4 Roles and Responsibilities of Institutions in Implementation of LGS

Stakeholder	Role in implementing the AU Agenda on land
AUC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for improved land governance among Heads of States of the African Union; and, • Engage the STC on ARDWE on various land-related issues.
AUDA-NEPAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with AU Member States to conceptualise and implement land governance focused programmes and projects; • Mobilise resources for implementing initiatives to actualise the AU agenda on land; and; • Ensure that institutional capacities needed to actualise the AU agenda on land are built.
ALPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate and popularise the AU agenda on land; • Undertake research on key land issues in Africa and disseminate the findings to various stakeholders; • Provide a knowledge generation and management hub on land governance in Africa; • Identify and promote good practices in land management and administration in Africa; • Provide technical assistance and strengthen capacities in developing land-related policies; • Create a continental partnership platform to coordinate actions in support of the AU agenda on land; • Build capacity on the monitoring and evaluation system developed through the MELA to track and report progress on the AU agenda on land; • Track progress on land reform and operationalisation of the AU agenda on land among Member States; and • Provide a link to interface, land policy, law, practice and science (e.g. projections of land uses and use of planning tools, e.g. GIS in addressing social issues).
AfDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the AU institutions, ALPC, RECs and MS particularly through resource mobilisation, in playing their roles effectively in land governance; and, • Facilitate capacity-building (in collaboration with the African Capacity Building Foundation ACBF and ALPC) on the AU agenda.
RECs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify challenges related to land that affect several countries in the region and take measures to address them; • Engage the AUC on any help or support that may be needed to improve land governance in the particular region; • Spearhead the collection of data or information needed to track and report progress in achieving the AU agenda on land through the MELA; and • Coordinate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 at the MS' level.
AU MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the implementation of the AU agenda on land in Africa; and, • Monitor and report on progress in developing and implementing land reforms to the Commission.
Non-State Actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the domestication and implementation of the AU agenda on land; • Monitor the implementation progress of the AU agenda on land; and, • Facilitate capacity-building, awareness raising, advocacy and knowledge generation.

5.2 Financial Resource Requirements

The effective achievement of various strategic actions under the strategy will require financial resources. A number of avenues are available through which AU, RECs and MS will mobilise resources to finance several strategic actions enriched in the strategic objectives. Some of these include:

- 1 **Domestic resource mobilisation through leveraging existing initiatives** such as the collection of levy on eligible imports by MS. This will be instrumental in reducing dependence on external resources and promoting self-reliance.
- 2 **Public-private-community partnerships:** The primary role of MS will be to establish conducive environments that trigger and support the private sector's participation in investments for development.
- 3 **Tapping into diversified private sources:** These sources include, but are not limited to, foreign direct investments, capital market development, equity funds, venture capital, private pension funds, unit trusts, investment banking, and lines of credit from IFIs, among others. Financial integration will play a catalytic role in the mobilisation of resources to fund regional projects.
- 4 **Mobilising resources from bi-lateral and multi-lateral agencies:** MS will jointly source funding for programmes such as infrastructure development in partnership with multilateral finance corporations like AfDB, African Development Fund (ADF), regional funds and banks such as the East African Development Bank (EADB), and multilateral agencies such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, World Bank, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), European Union (EU), Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), among others.

5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

MELA will be used as a monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework. The baseline data that may be needed for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) will be collected in 2023 and 2024. RECs will be requested to support the compilation of country results. The information collected from other processes such as the CAADP Biennial Review Process will be used to monitor progress towards the attainment of the AU agenda on land and ensuring accountability by Member States.

5.4 Dissemination and Communication Plan

5.4.1 Overview

A well-designed dissemination and communication plan will support the land governance strategy. This plan performs diverse functions, including exchanging information between diverse stakeholder groups, increasing stakeholder participation and dialogue on essential land matters and enhancing ownership of land-related decisions.

The communication plan should provide detailed and relevant information concerning key elements that need to be considered to implement the land governance strategy. Detailed information is needed on specific and key audiences, suitable communication products and channels, and targeted messages for each of the stakeholders and actors as presented in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Communication pathways

<p>Inform » Providing audiences with reliable and relevant information and data that help in decision-making, awareness raising activities for the AU Guiding Principles on LGS among citizens and affected communities.</p>	<p>Explain » Helping audiences understand complex land-related information provided in a simpler form. It includes tailoring land-related communication products to specific audiences.</p>	<p>Engage » Ensuring multistakeholder participation and sharing lessons learnt and knowledge exchange through various communication channels and tools.</p>	<p>Enhance and influence » Enhancing collaboration with regional and country level bodies and centres of excellence.</p>
<p>Examples of audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectoral ministries of MS • Civil society/ NGOs/CSOs • Youth • Women • Private sector • Academia • Media • RECs 	<p>Examples of communication products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training videos or documentaries • E-learning products • Brochures • Issue briefs & policy briefs • Scientific articles • Press articles, press releases or media briefs • Infographics • Good practice factsheets Radio programs and discussions, visualisations and comics, intercommunity experience sharing 	<p>Examples of communication channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop • Round-table discussions • Expert group platforms, Radio programs and discussions, visualisations and comics, inter-community experience sharing • Blogs • E-mail communication • Social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) 	<p>Examples of centres of excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA) Nodes

The communication plan will operate across two broad levels of communication; these are internal and external levels and their main functions are outlined below:

5.4.2 Internal Communication

The internal communication is essential for the effective implementation of the land governance strategy. Various internal communication activities need to be carried out to ensure that all departments within AUC and affiliated agencies such as ALPC, AUDA-NEPAD, are fully engaged in, and updated on, the implementation of the land governance strategy. Internal communications include updates and messages on progress, challenges, and lessons learnt in the implementation process (e.g. Africa land weekly media review). These are shared among internal stakeholders through practical communication products and channels.

The internal communication products and channels include e-mails, Skype and phone calls, websites, publications, web-based knowledge management platforms and reports. Internal communication also involves disseminating various technical and non-specialist information in different communication products such as online tenure resources, technical guides, country reports and good practices.

5.4.3 External Communication

External communication performs an important function in implementing the land governance strategy (e.g. disseminating results, experience and best practice sharing, capacity-building, among others). External communication is understood as the exchange of technical and nontechnical information and messages (e.g. training videos, documentaries, e-learning products, brochures, issue briefs, infographics, press articles, policy briefs, scientific articles, posters, multimedia web products, among others) within and among AU departments, affiliated agencies, UNECA, AfDB and different external stakeholders and partners at international, continental, regional and national levels (e.g. sectoral ministries of MS, civil society/NGOs/CSOs, youth organisations, women organisations, private sector, academia, media).

5.4.4 Implementation of Communication Plan

In order for the land governance strategy to be effectively implemented, various strategic communication actions need to be carried out as highlighted below:

- 1 Profile land governance audiences in MS for better targeting, e.g. researchers, academia, civil society, policy-makers, etc.;
- 2 Develop a local media network in each AU MS to ensure better awareness of land issues at the grassroots level;
- 3 Share success stories through diverse communication channels to disseminate experiences and best practices on land governance across AU MS;
- 4 Conduct training for science communicators, media specialists and relevant professionals on basic land governance;
- 5 Organise training for scientists on '*good packaging of land governance*' in order for it to be better understood by citizens;
- 6 Sensitise and engage diverse stakeholder groups (such as traditional leaders, farmers, rural communities, civil society organisations, urban forums, faith-based organisations and NGOs) to reporting land governance matters;
- 7 Promote and leverage the use of ICTs in communicating land governance related issues;
- 8 Develop and conduct public education and outreach programs on land governance for citizens (focusing on youths, women, traditional leaders, pastoralists, indigenous people, private sector and the media) using different communication channels and tools such as
 - 8.1 Electronic media – e.g. podcasts, social networks, photo galleries;
 - 8.2 Print media – e.g. newsletters, catalogues, policy briefs, books;
 - 8.3 Multimedia tools – e.g. TV, video and radio, posters;
 - 8.4 Cultural activities – traditional dances and plays loaded with land use management messages;
 - 8.5 Public relations – e.g. seminars, conferences and workshops.

- Promote stakeholder dialogue on land governance, involving different stakeholders in the land area using existing platforms.

The details of the implementation plan (including strategic objectives, outcomes, strategic interventions and actions, responsible institutions and timeline) are provided in Annex 1.



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ANNEX

Detailed implementation plan

Strategic interventions or actions	Responsible institutions	Timeline
Disseminating the strategy to the general public with the focus on key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • MS • NGOs and CSOs • Private sector federations • Research institutes and academia 	2023
Strategic objective 1: Strengthening the capacity of AU institutions (AU-Commission, ALPC, AUDES and Regional Economic Communities) to implement the AU agenda on land		
Outcome 1.1: Enhanced awareness and understanding among AUC and other stakeholders on the AU agenda on land and its importance in the economic transformation of African states		
1. Organise frequent and regular meetings or workshops for their staff for a common understanding of the AU agenda on land and its implementation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • AUDA-NEPAD • RECs 	2023–2024
2. Establish and facilitate communication about the African Union Agenda among the Member States and its importance in national socio-economic development processes through ALPC, RECs, regional NGOs and CSOs, private sector federations, research institutions and academia, platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • Regional and national NGOs and CSOs • AU MS • Private sector federations • Research institutes and academia 	2023–2024
3. Continue organising the Conference on land Policy in Africa (CLPA) biennially to deepen the capacity for land policy in Africa through improved access to knowledge and information on land policy making and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AUC • AfDB • AU MS • Research institutes and academia 	2023– Continuous
Outcome 1.2: Strengthened technical capacities and skills of AUC,ALPC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs and MS staff to support the implementation and monitoring of the African Union Agenda on land		
4. Facilitate learning for their staff through regional dialogues on practical land governance approaches to advance the implementation of African Union Agenda on land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AUDA-NEPAD • RECs • AU MS 	2023–2024
5. Organise interactive meetings for land administration and management personnel at each Member State on strategies to implement the African Union Agenda on land in each country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AU MS 	2023–2024
6. Upscale and popularise the use of MELA as a monitoring and reporting tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • RECs • AU MS 	2023–2024
Outcome 1.3: Land issues are mainstreamed in the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and REC programmes and projects and ensure collaboration among AU institutions and Member States		
7. Mainstream land governance issues in AUC departments and affiliated specialised agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC 	2023–2024
8. Align their financial and technical assistance and cooperation plans with the priorities of the African Union Agenda on land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUDA-NEPAD • Cooperating partners • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous

Strategic interventions or actions	Responsible institutions	Timeline
9. Use existing continental, regional (e.g. Regional-REC level platforms – IGAD regional platform on LG, African Land Commissioners Platform, Land investment negotiators' platform, Forum for African Traditional Leaders-FATA, the CSP-CSO platform on land) and relevant AU Member States' platforms for partnership on the implementation of land governance strategy and assessment of implementation progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023–2024
Outcome 1.4: Improved collaboration and learning among AU institutions on land governance		
10. Strengthen continental and regional platforms that are functional (e.g. the African Land Commissioners Platform, the Land investment negotiators platform, the Forum for African Traditional Leaders-FATA, ILC members, ALPC/Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa-NELGA, the IGAD regional platform on LG, the Eastern African Land Administration Network-EALAN) for collaboration, information sharing and dissemination of best practices for land governance advancement in the Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • AU MS • Regional and national NGOs and CSOs • Private sector federations • Research institutions and academia 	2023–2024
11. Support research and knowledge generation on land governance issues within the Member States for learning, policy and practical solutions concerning good management of land resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUDA-NEPAD • Cooperating partners • AU institutions • RECs 	2023–Continuous
12. Support the review of existing academic curricula on land administration and management by incorporating subjects related to pastoralists, indigenous people, customary and traditional land tenure systems (within the countries where those tenure systems exist) through popularisation of the AU Curricula Guidelines on Land Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • RECs • Academia • NELGA Nodes 	2023–2025
13. Facilitate research and evaluation reports that inform the AU institutions on national status of land governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • AU MS • Research institutions and academia 	2023–Continuous
Strategic objective 2: To advocate the advancement of land policies, laws and administration systems in the AU Member States		
Outcome 2.1: AU Member States domesticate the Framework and Guidelines on land policy, VGGTs and other international frameworks and conventions within their policies and legal frameworks		
1. Develop and implement land use plans that integrate various forms of land tenure (that exist in the respective AU MS countries) within the spatial development processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2024–Continuous
2. Mainstream and implement a Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) Approach for policy dialogue and land reform processes in AU MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AU MS • ILC 	2024–Continuous
Outcome 2.2: AU Member States have non-discriminatory land management regulations that enhance access to land and security of tenure for all categories of landowners and users		
3. Facilitate the development of, and support land reforms and establish inclusive land management policies and laws in AU MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • AU MS 	2024–Continuous
4. Facilitate the institutionalisation of legal frameworks for land access and holding for all categories of people, including indigenous groups, pastoralists, women and youth (for countries whose customary land tenure systems are still discriminatory)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • RECs • AU MS • Regional and national NGOs and CSOs 	2024–Continuous
Outcome 2.3: AU Member States have land administration systems that are decentralised, cost-effective, transparent, responsive to the needs of citizens and promote participatory approaches of land management		
5. Support the establishment and operationalisation of decentralised land administration and management systems (where they do not exist) that are operated by well-skilled personnel (for both female and male) to set-up land registration systems and well-functioning cadastres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • AUC • ALPC 	2023–Continuous

Strategic interventions or actions	Responsible institutions	Timeline
6. Assist MS in establishing responsible and accountable governance structures for customary/indigenous lands that ensure security of tenure for all land users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AU MS • CSOs 	2023– Continuous
7. Assist MS in mobilising financial and technical resources for the establishment and operationalisation of those land administration and management systems, including the training of the traditional leaders and officials in the land sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUDA-NEPAD • AUC • ALPC • RECs 	2023– Continuous
8. Develop and strengthen a GIS that facilitates efficient management of land records and support land use planning and decision-making processes related to spatial management at local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • ALPC • AUDA-NEPAD 	2023– Continuous
9. Support the development and dissemination of innovative context-specific and low-cost options for land rights recordation based on fit-for-purpose land administration to facilitate good land service delivery and promote security for all landowners and users at the local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
10. Adopt free service delivery and land tax exemption options for specific categories of people, such as the poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023–2025
11. Facilitate the adoption of a participatory approach to land use planning, and devise land use, master plans and zoning regulations that incorporate the inputs from the traditional leaders and local communities and cater to their basic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
Strategic objective 3: To promote responsible land-based investments in Africa that are environmentally sound, scalable and inclusive, contributing to the sustainable development of the country and meeting community needs		
Outcome 3.1: Large Scale-Based Investments in Africa are adopting responsible land acquisition approaches and inclusive business practices that help countries to increase agricultural production, environmental conservation and overall sustainable development		
1. Develop and implement regulations on large-scale land acquisition, which incorporate the AU Guiding Principles on LSLBI, the VGGTs and other international conventions on property acquisition and fair compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
2. Support the development of policies that situate approaches to large-scale land acquisition within MS needs to contribute to national and local development programmes, to improve local communities' livelihoods and respect all legitimate tenure rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
3. Support the adoption of large-scale land policies that promote investment in food-crop production, sustainable use of land and protection of other natural resources in the project areas, using AU GPs on LSLBIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
4. Support local legitimate tenure rights holders in the development of small and medium farming enterprises to reduce the speculative land market induced by foreign LSLBIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • ALPC • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
5. Ensure that LSLBIs are implemented only after an identification of available land and an assessment of social, economic and environmental impact have been conducted with direct participation of local communities and after obtaining their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for land acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • ALPC • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
6. Ensure that large-scale land acquisition is carried out through negotiation between the affected landowners and investors, and mediation by public and civil society organisations to minimise the risks for land conflicts and/or injustices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
7. Ensure that actors in large-scale land acquisition recognise indigenous peoples' rights to own, use and control the lands, territories and natural resources that they hold by reason of traditional occupation, and ensure free, prior and informed consent of the concerned indigenous peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
8. Involve community members in the mapping of their legitimate tenure rights, the negotiation of land acquisitions, the monitoring of investor legal compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous

Strategic interventions or actions	Responsible institutions	Timeline
Outcome 3.2: Strengthened capacity of AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, Member States and affiliated entities to negotiate and advocate for sustainable and responsible land-based investments within their regions, countries and work		
9. Strengthen AU MS staff's negotiation skills for large-scale land-based investment projects through training and workshops to ensure that they promote sustainable development of AU Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AUC • AUDA-NEPAD • RECs • AU MS 	2023–2025
10. Support the training of land administration and management personnel in the AU Member States on the assessment of the responsiveness of land-based investments to land governance principles and sustainable use of land resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUDA-NEPAD • Cooperating partners • RECs • Academia • NELGA Nodes 	2023– Continuous
11. Set up task forces that negotiate and evaluate large-scale land-based investment projects and monitor whether their implementation complies with land governance principles and promotes local development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023–2024
12. Work to end the practice of resource grabbing affecting farming, fisheries, forests, and pastoral communities, and move towards an equitable management of these resources (natural, material and financial) by strengthening community rights, benefit sharing policies, and enacting strong and binding legislations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
Strategic objective 4: Enhancing the security of land tenure and access to land and other productive resources for dwellers of slum and informal settlements, women, youth, persons with disabilities, pastoralists, poor and other vulnerable groups in Africa		
Outcome 4.1: Reduced risks of land conflicts and increased access to land for women, youths, pastoralists, indigenous people poor, persons with disabilities and vulnerable community members		
1. Support the institutionalisation of new policies and laws that promote access to land, land ownership, control and its use for women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous people, poor and other vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • AUC • ALPC 	2023– Continuous
2. Set challenging national targets to increase the share of land owned by women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • AUC • ALPC 	2023– Continuous
3. Integrate the pastoralists' domains within land-use plans or local development plans of AU MS, guided by the AU Policy Framework on Pastoralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS with pastoralism 	2023–2029
4. Organise annual land campaigns for community awareness (with more attention to women, youth, pastoralists, indigenous, persons with disabilities) on AU MS' land rights and mechanisms to claim and/or defend them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs • Traditional leaders 	2023– Continuous
5. Facilitate the establishment and operationalisation of land committees (with equitable representation of men, women and youth) at different levels of government that oversee the implementation of land policies and laws and timely handle land-related conflicts at low-cost or free of charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs 	2023–2028
6. Carry out assessments on how customary land tenure systems can be improved and made gender-sensitive, and adopt ad-hoc reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • Academia and research institutes • NGOs and CSOs 	
7. Advocate for, and promote, gender equality in land boards or committees dealing with land management in both customary and statutory systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
8. Promote the participation of women, youth, pastoralists and vulnerable groups in land reforms processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
9. Create a Land Fund that can facilitate access to land for the youth engaged in agricultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • AfDB • AUC • ALPC • AUDA-NEPAD 	2023–2025
10. Pioneer new initiatives to enhance community's access to legal and technical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous

Strategic interventions or actions	Responsible institutions	Timeline
Outcome 4.2: Slum and informal settlements are upgraded and recognised among the formal residential neighborhoods		
11. Support the development and implementation of urban development policies that provide equal opportunities, various options for housing development and access to basic infrastructure and services for all categories of urban dwellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
12. Promote good urban governance through partnerships between government officials, local leaders (including traditional leaders in countries with customary land tenure systems) and local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • Traditional leaders • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
13. Prevent the proliferation of informal settlements through the provision of basic infrastructure and services, and creation of off-farm activities to attenuate the pace of rural-urban migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
14. Help AU MS to secure funds and large-scale public investments to implement affordable and adequate housing and slum upgrading projects to ensure that marginalised groups have access to adequate shelter and improved livelihood options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUDA-NEPAD • AfDB • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
15. Support the design and implementation of inclusive master plans and zoning regulations that cater for the basic needs of all urban dwellers and preserve suitable agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
16. Develop and implement urban master plans that integrate slums and/or informal settlements in the urban fabric and include road-maps for upgrading those settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
Outcome 4.3: Improved natural disasters management and resettlement of displaced communities		
17. Collaborate in establishing and implementing land use planning policies for shocks management (climate change and disaster risks, pandemics such as Covid-19) at continental, regional and national levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
18. Collaborate with the private sector, NGOs, and local communities in design and implementation of national regulations for integrated and sustainable management of water, forest, fragile and coastal land to minimise the risks of environment disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • Private sector federations • NGOs and CSOs • Local entities 	2023– Continuous
19. Promote the inclusion of land rights protection and access to land for all categories of landowners and users in climate change and environmental degradation mitigation regulations and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • Private sector federations • NGOs and CSOs 	2023– Continuous
Outcome 4.4: Land Governance issues are incorporated in reconstruction and reconciliation policies and processes of post-conflict states		
20. Collaborate in establishing policies or declarations on preventing political, border and land conflicts within and between countries or local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
21. Establish or operationalise functional regional platforms for regional integration, political mediation, peace building, security enhancement and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
22. Facilitate the incorporation of land rights issues (such as land redistribution and/ or sharing) in policies and programmes related to post-conflict development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS (post-conflict states) 	2023– Continuous
23. Adopt policies and laws that permit migrants and refugees who are displaced during political conflicts to access land in the destination areas/countries or regions of origin when they return home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS (post-conflict states) 	2023– Continuous
Strategic objective 5: To facilitate and support the operationalisation of the AU Monitoring and Evaluation of Land in Africa (MELA) as a tool for measuring and reporting on progress towards achieving the AU agenda on land in Africa		
Outcome 5.1: Production of a high quality report depicting the progress made towards achieving the AU Declaration on land and overall the agenda on land in Africa		
1. Establish platforms for data collection, reporting and information sharing on the implementation of the AU agenda on land at each AU Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
2. Organise annual reviews at the national, regional and continental levels on the implementation of the overall agenda on land in Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
3. Carry out assessments on the effectiveness of land policies and laws in promoting equitable access to land by men, women, youth, pastoralists vulnerable and indigenous people within all country jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous

Strategic interventions or actions	Responsible institutions	Timeline
4. Promote research that disseminates innovative options and evidence informed solutions that promote good land governance in Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • AUDA-NEPAD • RECs • AU MS • Research institutions and academia 	2023– Continuous
Communication implementation plan		
1. Profile land governance audiences for better targeting, e.g. researchers, academia, civil society, policy makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AUC • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
2. Develop a local media network in each AU MS to ensure better awareness of land issues of at the grassroots level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– 2024
3. Share success stories through diverse communication channels to disseminate experiences and best practices on land governance across AU MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • AU MS • NGOs and CSOs • Research institutions and academia 	2024– Continuous
4. Conduct training for science communicators, media specialists and relevant professionals on basic land governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • AU MS • Research institutions and academia • Media 	2024– Continuous
5. Organise training of scientists on “good packaging of land governance” in order for it to be better understood by citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • RECs • AU MS • Research institutions and academia 	2024– Continuous
6. Sensitise and engage diverse stakeholder groups (such as farmers, rural communities, civil society organisations, urban forums, faith-based organisations and NGOs) to reporting land governance matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • ALPC • RECs • AU MS • NGOs 	2023– Continuous
7. Promote and leverage use of ICTs in communicating land governance related issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPC • AUDA-NEPAD • Cooperating partners • RECs • AU MS 	2023– Continuous
8. Develop and conduct public education and outreach programs on land governance for citizens(focusing on youths, women, traditional leaders, associations, private sector and the media) using different communication channels and tools such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1. Electronic media – e.g. podcasts, social networks, photo galleries, 8.2. Print media – e.g. newsletters, catalogues, policy briefs, books, 8.3. Multimedia tools – e.g. TV, video and radio, 8.4. Cultural activities – traditional dances and plays loaded with land use management messages, 8.5. Public relations – e.g. seminars, conferences and workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS • NGOs • Local entities • Traditional leaders • Media 	2023– Continuous
9. Promote stakeholder dialogue on land governance, involving different stakeholders in the land area using existing platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU MS 	2023– Continuous



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