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## Establishing land rights for growers in Mozambique

“...Illovo Sugar Africa takes the issue of land very seriously...”

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Africa has the highest proportion of agricultural land deals in the world, according to Land Matrix<sup>1</sup>. This means that independent growers face significant pressure on natural resources as well as raising the value of land beyond the reach of many, especially smallholder farmers. However, these challenges are compounded in countries which have historically poor practices in land tenure rights which can lead to lots of grievances resulting from land disputes, often caused by ‘land grabs’. Ultimately this severely impact growers’ livelihoods, especially in poor and vulnerable communities.

As Africa’s largest sugar producer with a supply chain of over 14,700 growers, Illovo Sugar Africa (Illovo) takes the issue of land very seriously as demonstrated by their comprehensive [Guidelines on Land and Land Rights](#) which has been in place since 2015. But it has also gone further to enact fundamental change on the ground by partnering with NGOs, governments and global donors to transform the landscape of tenure rights in their operating countries. One such partnership which is now delivering tangible results is a project around Illovo’s Maragra plantation in Mozambique which involved a partnership with TerraFirma, Indufor and Cloudburst, funded by USAID.



*In discussion above are Carolina Daniel Zunguene, a food crop farmer from Tchuri Association the in Munguine area with Armando Júnior Zuana, a local facilitator employed to work directly on the project (and whose father is a member of the Cooperativa Hluvukani Varime – see below). All images © 2018 USAID*

<sup>1</sup> <https://landmatrix.org/en/announcements/2016/10/04/analytical-report-land-matrix/>





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## The project

As part of USAID's [Responsible Land-Based Investment](#) pilot in 2017, the Maragra project targeted approximately 1,600 farmers in the area surrounding the plantation to put Illovo's Guidelines on Land and Land rights into practice. The project had three main objectives:

1. Raise awareness among farmers about their rights under Mozambique's land laws;
2. Record the rights of smallholder farmers through an open, participatory process of community land mapping;
3. Create a robust grievance mechanism for community and farmers association members

TerraFirma, a local land and natural resources consulting firm, worked with growers in the Lhuvukani farmers' cooperative near the plantation to first sensitize them to their land rights and the project, and then to digitally map the property lines of growers' land, in consultation with neighbours, government officials and the wider community. Once this transparent process was completed, growers now have the opportunity to secure formal land tenure documentation. Illovo provided in-kind resources to the partnership such as management support to the cooperative while Indufor and Cloudburst provided expert advice to the partnership.

## Results

The partnership has been a significant success in helping growers understand and formalise their land rights, offering them greater security with legal land tenure and a route to greater prosperity by securing offtake for their produce. More than 1,600 people have received legal land certificates and have a greater understanding of their rights – over 65% of whom are women growers, a particularly vulnerable group who hold less power due to societal norms and gender bias. The project has also helped growers and communities in making DUAT applications – a formal land tenure right which is recognised by the Mozambique Government.

Other benefits from the partnership included:

- Increased capacity and understanding of land rights at community and company level
- Increased technical skills in participatory mapping for community members (half of whom are women) & creation of database for future changes
- A draft grievance mechanism based on international best practice that can be adapted for local application across Illovo countries of operation
- Improved relationships with communities and growers and a better understanding of the issues they face





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Most importantly, the success of the project provides a model for which the cooperative can continue this work for future members, having been trained how to use the mapping software and run the process. For Illovo more broadly, this partnership has been invaluable to understanding the complex problems arising from land and how to address them. They intend to build on this learning, as well as those from other partnerships, to achieve greater long-lasting change for all of its growers across southern Africa.

Gavin Dalgleish, Group Managing Director, Illovo Sugar Africa says: *“We can only continue to operate in our grower communities if they benefit from us being there and having legal and secure land tenure is a critical component of that. The issue of land has become a material risk for our business and partnerships like this one in Mozambique will be instrumental in addressing this complex and historical problem. The benefits of this project are a positive step forward and we are determined to build on this success to become a thought leader on land rights and achieve our ultimate long-term ambition of an ethical and sustainable sugarcane supply”*

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#### **About Illovo Sugar Africa**

Illovo Sugar Africa (Pty) Ltd is Africa’s biggest sugar producer and has extensive agricultural and manufacturing operations in six African countries. The group produces raw and refined sugar for local, regional African, European Union (EU), United States of America (USA) and world markets from sugar cane supplied by its own agricultural operations and independent outgrowers who supply cane to Illovo’s factories. High-value products manufactured downstream of the sugar production process are sold internationally into niche markets. Installed electricity generating capacity, fuelled by renewable resources, annually provides around 90% of the group’s energy requirements. The group is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Associated British Foods plc (ABF), a diversified international food, ingredients and retail group operating in 48 countries. ABF’s global sugar interests in the UK, Southern Africa, Spain and China are managed by AB Sugar.

