

# Land Re-Classification and Conflicts Proliferation in Selected Villages of Kasulu District Kigoma Tanzania

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## **Abstract**

*This study examined how land re-classification following the de-gazettement of Makere South Forest Reserve has shaped land governance failures and the proliferation of land-use conflicts in Kagerankanda Ward, Kasulu District. Guided by a political ecology framework, the study sought to: analyze how allocation procedures influence community perceptions and conflicts; assess the contribution of boundary ambiguities to land disputes; and examine how unmet livelihood benefits fuel grievances and mistrust toward authorities. A mixed-methods case study design was employed, drawing on household surveys (n=120), key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary reviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative evidence underwent thematic analysis and triangulation. Results indicate that opaque land allocation procedures, elite capture, and inconsistent implementation of the presidential directive intensified mistrust and competing claims between communities and state agencies. Boundary ambiguities, contradictory maps, and coercive enforcement further escalated tensions, while unmet livelihood expectations particularly employment opportunities deepened perceptions of exclusion. The study concludes that land-use conflicts in the area stem from structural governance failures. It recommends harmonization of boundaries, transparent allocation processes, strengthened accountability mechanisms, participatory planning, and inclusive benefit-sharing frameworks to rebuild trust and enhance equitable land governance.*

**Keywords:** Land Governance, Land Conflicts, Corruption in Land Allocation, Community Participation

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Land reclassification following de-gazettement of protected areas is a deeply political process, involving struggles over access, authority, and resource control. In Africa and the Global South which comprises Latin America, Asia, and Oceania often characterized by lower income levels, emerging economies, and historical marginalization. Such

reconfigurations often intensify rural tensions and social conflicts, disrupting property relations (Cotula et al., 2009). When land previously under state or conservation control is redistributed without transparency or accountability, local communities develop perceptions of dispossession, leading to mistrust and grievances (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012). Empirical cases from Kenya (Boone, 2014), Mozambique (Gallagher et al., 2019), and Tanzania (Sulle, 2020) show that promised livelihood benefits rarely materialize; instead, outcomes include illegal occupation, violence, and disputes. While scholars agree on the need for transparent governance, debates remain over whether conflicts originate from weak administrative capacity or entrenched patronage networks that favor certain groups.

A second strand emphasizes elite capture and market-driven land governance. Studies from Nigeria (Deininger & Byerlee, 2011), Ethiopia (Cotula, 2013), Malawi (Borras & Franco, 2012), and Cambodia (Alden Wily, 2018) reveal how administrative discretion, high transaction costs, and politically mediated fees systematically exclude the poor and customary land users, privileging elites and external investors. These processes reflect unequal power relations embedded within state institutions, rather than neutral markets. In Tanzania, land allocation practices favor investors over customary landholders, reinforcing inequality and conflict (Olwig, 2019; Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021).

A third focus critiques boundary demarcation and enforcement, especially when driven by technocratic approaches. Research from Uganda (West et al., 2006), Rwanda (Schmidt-Soltau & Brockington, 2007) and Tanzania (Neumann, 1998) shows that boundary surveys without local participation undermine livelihoods and provoke resistance. Ambiguous boundaries lead to evictions and coercion, triggering retaliatory encroachment and ongoing conflict (German et al., 2011; Gallagher et al., 2019). While reforms and participatory planning can mitigate conflicts (Ribot & Larson, 2012), scholars warn that unless patronage networks and power asymmetries are addressed, conflicts will persist (Sulle, 2020). The case of Kagerankanda illustrates how de-gazettement, elite capture, and boundary ambiguities interact to sustain land conflicts in Kasulu District. The general objective of this paper was to explore the extent to which land re-classification has influenced land governance failures in Kagerankanda Ward, Kasulu District. This general objectives was achieved by the following specific objectives: (i) to analyses the extent to which land allocation procedures shape community perceptions and conflicts proliferation in the selected study ward, (ii) to assess how

boundary ambiguities contribute to land-use conflicts among land use actors in the study localities and (iii) to examine the extent to which unmet livelihood benefits drive community grievances and mistrust toward district authorities in the land governance in the study area.

## **2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study employed Political Ecology as its theoretical framework to address how land re-classification has influenced land governance failures in the study area. Political ecology is an interdisciplinary analytical framework that examines the interactions between political, economic, social, and ecological processes, with particular emphasis on how power relations shape access to, control over, and use of natural resources. The framework emerged in the 1970s and 1980s from the convergence of cultural ecology and political economy, and is commonly associated with scholars such as Eric Wolf, Piers Blaikie, Harold Brookfield, and later Paul Robbins. Blaikie and Brookfield (1987) formally articulated political ecology to explain environmental change and resource degradation by linking local land-use practices to broader political and economic structures, particularly in developing-country contexts. Since then, the framework has been widely applied in studies of land tenure reforms, conservation, agrarian change, and natural resource conflicts across Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

A central premise of political ecology is that access to land and natural resources is mediated by institutions and power-laden decision-making processes that often privilege certain actors while marginalizing others. This premise directly guided the study's analysis of how land allocation procedures shape community perceptions and the proliferation of conflicts in Kagerankanda Ward. From a political ecology perspective, land re-classification is not treated as a neutral administrative exercise but as a political process embedded in district-level authority, legal frameworks, and historical land relations. By examining who controls land allocation decisions, whose interests are prioritized, and how local communities interpret these processes, the framework helped explain how perceived injustices, exclusions, and procedural unfairness generate conflicts and mistrust. Similar applications have shown that bureaucratic land reforms frequently provoke contestation when they undermine customary systems or exclude local participation (Blaikie, 2008; Lund, 2016).

Political ecology also emphasizes spatial control, territorialization, and ambiguity as key drivers of resource conflicts, making it highly relevant

for assessing how boundary ambiguities contribute to land-use conflicts among different land-use actors. Boundaries are understood not merely as technical demarcations but as political constructs shaped by competing claims, historical narratives, and institutional weaknesses. Situating boundary disputes within broader processes of land re-classification, decentralization, and state authority enabled the study to trace how unclear or contested boundaries intensify competition among farmers, pastoralists, and state actors. Existing political ecology scholarship demonstrates that such ambiguities often stem from mismatches between statutory and customary tenure systems, creating persistent governance failures

### **3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study employed a mixed-methods case study design to examine how land reclassification following the de-gazettement of protected areas has reshaped governance arrangements, access to land and natural resources, and the emergence of local conflicts in Kagerankanda Ward, Kasulu District. A case study approach was considered appropriate because it allows for an in-depth analysis of complex, context-specific interactions between political, institutional, and socio-ecological processes (Yin, 2018). Consistent with a political ecology framework, the mixed-methods design enabled the integration of qualitative insights on power relations, perceptions, and governance practices with quantitative evidence on land-use change and conflict dynamics (Robbins, 2012; Creswell & Clark, 2018).

Kagerankanda Ward is geographically located at approximately 4°39'36" South Latitude and 30°40'8" East Longitude. The ward was purposively selected due to the significant land-use transformations that followed the de-gazettement process, which have intensified tensions between local communities and conservation authorities. These transformations have altered customary land access arrangements and reconfigured institutional authority over land, creating conditions for contestation and conflict (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012). As such, Kagerankanda provides a critical empirical setting for examining how governance failures and unequal power relations contribute to persistent land-related conflicts in rural Tanzania.

Data were collected from 120 respondents purposively sampled from the target population using different data collection tools such as household surveys, key informant interviews, focus groups, and document reviews. Quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive statistics, while

qualitative data underwent thematic analysis, with triangulation to ensure validity and reliability. Ethical standards, including informed consent and confidentiality, were as well strictly observed.

#### 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented as answers to the research questions addressed by this study which essentially were concerned with the nature and character of the respondents, ways in which land allocation procedures influences community perceptions and conflicts; examination of the role played by boundary ambiguities in contributing to land-use conflicts among different land use actors and the extent to which unmet livelihood benefits has fostered community grievances and mistrust and conflicts proliferation.

##### 4.1 Socio-Demographic Features of the Respondents

This study started by analysing socio-demographic features of the respondents such as age, sex, education, and income and occupation as these were important indicators of the respondent's nature of their perceptions, decision-making, and access to resources (Adams & Hutton, 2007) of which its understanding was crucial in the identification of vulnerabilities and power dynamics that contribute to governance issues (Cotula et al., 2009). Results of the data analysis regarding the socio-demographic features of the respondents were as depicted by Table 1.

**Table 1:** *Socio-demographic features of the respondents*

Data set	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	121	2	8	5.62	1.490
Sex	121	1	2	1.25	.434
Occupation	121	1	5	1.74	1.196
Education Level	121	1	4	2.02	.632
Marital status	121	1	5	1.44	1.007
Longevity	121	1	8	3.60	2.737
Ethnicity	121	1	3	1.33	.597
Birth District	121	1	10	3.93	3.291

**Source:** Field data, 2025

Data in Table 1 illustrates that majority of the respondents involved in this study were predominantly native to the area. Their ages ranged from 2 to 8 on a coded scale with a mean score of 5.62 (SD = 1.49), indicating that the majority were mostly adults in mid-productive age groups. Males slightly outnumbered females (mean = 1.25, SD = 0.434) not because males were populous but because of the sampling design employed. Additionally, majority of the respondents were occupationally agro-

pastoralists as farming and herding were dominant displaying a mean score of 1.74 (SD = 1.196). Educational wise, the respondent's majority had only attained basic education the (average score of 2.02 and SD = 0.632) which is normal for the rural communities. Marital status (mean = 1.44, SD = 1.007) also indicates that the majority were married, while the average years lived in the area being 3.60 (SD = 2.737) which again reflect a long-term settlement. Furthermore, ethnicity scores (mean = 1.33, SD = 0.597) indicates the prevalence of limited diversity, with most belonging to the dominant local group though birth districts tended to vary widely (mean = 3.93, SD = 3.291).

In short, the findings indicate that land-use governance failures foster conflict by exposing communities to boundary disputes and tenure ambiguities. Long-term, native residents with strong customary ties rely heavily on farming and herding, making them vulnerable to land disputes. Low education levels limit understanding of formal land systems, allowing powerful actors to exploit institutional weaknesses. Internal competition for land, rather than inter-ethnic conflict, is heightened by unclear access rules. These demographic traits highlight a governance environment marked by weak institutions, poor integration of customary systems, and high land dependence, all contributing to persistent and escalating land-use conflicts. The conclusion aligns closely with other empirical studies (see Boone, 2014; Cotula, 2013) succinctly indicates that long-term settlement, strong customary attachments, and livelihood dependence on farming or herding heighten sensitivity to land reallocations and fuel conflict where governance is weak. Similar researches by Benjaminsen & Svarstad (2021; German et al., 2011) establishes that low education limits communities' ability to engage with formal land-administration systems, widening gaps between statutory and customary tenure and enabling elite capture or administrative manipulation. Overall, the patterns observed by this study are consistent with broader empirical evidence demonstrating that weak, fragmented, or exclusionary land-governance structures systematically intensify land-use conflicts in rural, livelihood-dependent communities (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Sulle, 2020).

#### **4.2 The Political Ecology Settings of the Land Use Conflicts**

Documentary records from Kasulu District Council indicate that in 2017 the Government of Tanzania authorized the allocation of 10,012 hectares from Makere South Forest Reserve to the villagers of Kagerankanda ward. This directive was intended to resolve long-standing land pressure and provide space for farming and grazing. However, subsequent

documentation reveals inconsistencies in the implementation. Minutes from district planning meetings show that 5,387 hectares of the allocated land were reabsorbed by the District Council for administrative planning and re-distribution, leaving only fragmented sections accessible to villagers. Parallel correspondence from Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) indicates that the same land continued to be managed as protected forest under GN 718 of 2018, despite the presidential directive.

Village records from Kagerankanda further reveal repeated complaints filed by residents between 2018 and 2023 regarding boundary uncertainty and TFS enforcement actions. Several letters submitted to the Ward Executive Officer describe confiscation of crops, livestock, and farm tools, with villagers requesting clarification on the “true boundary” dividing the reallocated land from the reserve. These documentary grievances align with survey notes from the 2018 boundary demarcation exercise, which indicate incomplete marking and contradictions between maps held by the district and those held by forest authorities. The lack of a unified boundary map led to overlapping claims by TFS, TAWA, district planners, and village leadership.

Key informant narratives provided reinforce the picture emerging from official records. Villagers recount that although they were Promised Land, officers on the ground continued to treat them as “invaders,” demanding payments ranging from Tsh 20,000 to 50,000 per acre for access. Some informants reported paying even larger sums up to Tsh 200,000 without receiving an official plot or any receipt. These testimonies, corroborated by village meeting minutes documenting complaints of bribery and extortion, depict a governance environment where environmental regulation becomes a tool for rent extraction rather than protection. Informants also describe episodes of confrontation, including the destruction of TFS camps, which they attribute to accumulated frustration arising from confiscations, arrests, and violence during enforcement operations such as Operation 21 Days.

These accounts paint a big picture of the political ecological condition of the study area that indicates the existences of several elements of state failures that contributed to land use conflicts. Based on this, respondents were asked in multiple responses to provide opinion on who such situation contributed to the conflicts proliferation over resources use in the study area. Analysis of their opinions was as depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Respondents perception on land governance issues leading to conflicts

<b>Conflict Issue</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Farms encroachment	48	40%
Favouritism	36	30%
Trespasses and restricted Pastures	30	25%
Employment	7	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field data, 2025

Information presented in Table 2 captures different political ecological issues that define conflicts proliferation in the study area. They range from land allocation and farm encroachments, boundaries ambiguities and corruptive practices and as well as discontent of the local communities arising from unmet livelihood benefits accrued from parting their ancestral land to conservation businesses.

### **4.3 Impact of Land Allocation Procedures on Community Perceptions**

The ambiguous in land allocation procedures experienced in the study localities were presented in the contexts of the farm encroachment. Majority (40 percent) of the respondents involved in this study perceived this problem as the leading cause behind land use conflicts proliferation in the study area. Both the state and the community perceived each other as the intruder. When President Magufuli announced that over 10,000 hectares would be released for community farming, villagers understood this as recognition of their long-standing presence and rights. However, the subsequent reallocation by the district authorities created confusion and resentment. Because boundaries were poorly communicated and enforcement inconsistent, villagers felt that state crackdowns, crop destruction, and livestock seizures were unjust acts of state encroachment on land they believed they had legitimately been granted. Meanwhile, state actors framed continued farming activities as illegal expansion into protected zones, reinforcing their perception of villagers as deliberate encroachers.

These conflicting interpretations deepened mistrust and turned land governance into a cycle of accusations and force. Community members viewed the shifting boundaries, illegal fees, and aggressive policing as evidence that the state weaponized the concept of “encroachment” to exclude them, favour outsiders, and extract rents. Authorities, observing increasing settlement, herding, and farming within the reserve, interpreted

these as deliberate violations threatening conservation. Because the land allocation lacked transparency, participation, and stable demarcation, both sides came to view each other through the lens of encroachment. Thus, farm encroachment is not merely a physical act but a symbol of overlapping claims, procedural failures, and competing narratives of legitimacy in Makere South.

These findings resonate strongly with the findings established by a study conducted by Bhusal et al., (2018) in Nepal's Terai whose results indicated how decades of centralized forest policies, poorly communicated boundaries, and weak enforcement produced cycles of eviction, local resistance, and eventual moves toward community forestry as a way to rebuild trust and clarify rights. Similarly, large-scale analyses done by Pacheco & Meyer, (2022) from the Brazilian Amazon demonstrate that unclear or undesignated public tenure regimes tend to increase land-clearing and conflict, while secure and well-defined tenure reduce unauthorized expansion of the society dynamics like what happened in the study locality when presidential promises were later reinterpreted by local officials. Similarly, recent ethnographic research done by Santini (2025) in Kenya's Maasailand documents how formalization processes and uneven demarcation (e.g., subdivision of communal ranches or reclassification of community lands) generate enclosures, elite capture, and perceptions of state-led dispossession that mirror Makere South's escalation from disputed allocation to policing and mutual delegitimization.

In all cases it is obvious that unclear and inconsistently enforced land allocation procedures turned farm encroachment into a contested symbol of legitimacy, deepening mistrust between the state and community. Poor communication, shifting boundaries, and competing interpretations of rights fuelled a cycle of accusation and conflict, much like cases reported in Nepal, the Brazilian Amazon, and Kenya. Overall, the Makere South experience illustrates how ambiguous tenure systems amplify land use conflicts and undermine cooperative governance.

#### **4.4 Favoritism, Trespasses and Land-Use Conflicts in the Kagerankanda ward**

Favouritism in land allocation remains a central driver of land-use conflicts in Kagerankanda Ward. 35 percent of all the interviewed respondents perceived the subsequent reallocation of the land reapportioned following the presidential order by district authorities as

discriminatory and captured by elites. As one farmer, *Mr. Bukuru Mahebhule (KI-03)*, lamented,

*“We applied for the land Magufuli promised us, but officials gave most of it to people who are not even from our villages.”*

Another villager from Mvinza, *Ms. Rehema Kagherobha (KI-08)*, added,

*“Some officers kept telling us to pay ‘something small’ to be considered, but even after paying, we received nothing.”*

These accounts were noted to be consistent with the ACT Wazalendo (2023) fact-finding report, which documented allegations of land being allocated to influential outsiders while locals were denied access. Such patterns illustrate how opaque bureaucratic decisions have deepened perceptions of exclusion and intensified local grievances.

Contested trespasses which were in part shaped by unclear boundaries and inconsistent enforcement were noted to have further escalated tensions between communities and conservation authorities. Respondents asserted that their legitimate livelihood activities have been wrongly criminalized due to shifting reserve demarcations. As *Mr. Juma Kinyentama (KI-11)* stated,

*“If the President gave us this land why does TFS now arrest us for farming on it?”*

However, analysis of the state documents paints yet a contradictory picture, framing villagers as persistent encroachers. For example, the official report on “Operation Twenty-One Days” (URT, 2014) describes the presence of “invaders” within protected forest zones—a categorization that villagers strongly reject. This divergence between community experiences and state interpretations reflects broader institutional failures in communicating, legitimizing, and enforcing boundaries.

These tensions were thus manifested in severe human rights concerns and violent confrontations. Testimonies reveal patterns of excessive force, arbitrary arrests, crop destruction, and confiscation of livestock. One survivor, *Mr. Amos Bubaha Nkuki* interrogated by this study had these to say;

*On 13 October 2021, at around 11 a.m., I was ambushed on my 10-hectare farm in Kagera Village by a group of 12 men of which were five TFS guards and seven were village militia all from Kagerankanda village. They accused me of farming inside the Makere South Forest Reserve; while labourers fled, I was beaten with sticks and clubs until I bled. Thereafter I taken to a nearby farm where I was tortured, forced to pick up burning*

*coals with my bare hands, step on fire with my bare feet, and repeatedly kicked and insulted. They later left me in severe burns, lasting injuries, and permanent deformities in my fingers and abandoned in the wilderness. They also confiscated my bicycles and phone.*

The respondent further claimed that after being left in wilderness in agony he had to crawled in severe pains until he was rescued by the passing cyclist who helped him reach his home in the village. For five months he survived on traditional treatment, unable to work, and a year later he remained in pain, with burn scars that still triggered fever and chills, relying on the support of local businessman and fellow farmer, Selemani Wandwi, who provided medical care at home. Additionally, analysis of the documentary records also shows retaliatory violence by village members, including the burning of TFS camps and killing of officers in 2022 (ACT Wazalendo, 2023). Such reciprocal violence signals the collapse of trust and demonstrates how contested land claims can escalate into cycles of aggression and counter aggression.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that favouritism in land allocation and contested trespasses are mutually reinforcing drivers of conflict in the study ward of Kagerankanda. The convergence of community testimonies and documentary evidence exposes the consequences of non-transparent land governance, ambiguous boundaries, and coercive enforcement. When residents perceive state institutions as favoring outsiders and criminalizing local livelihoods, while authorities interpret local land use as intentional illegality, land governance becomes a site of mutual delegitimization.

The findings from Kagerankanda Ward illustrate how favouritism in land allocation, ambiguous territorial demarcations, and coercive enforcement mutually reinforce land-use conflict, as villagers perceive post-reallocation processes as elite-captured, exclusionary, and riddled with informal payments, while state authorities frame local land use as deliberate illegality. These dynamics mirror global empirical patterns in which non-transparent land governance generates reciprocal delegitimization and cycles of violence. For example, Benjaminsen and Bryceson (2012) document similar tensions in Tanzanian conservation hinterlands where shifting boundaries and militarized enforcement criminalize local livelihoods; Alden Wily's (2011) cross-country analysis of Africa shows that opaque land adjudication routinely privileges politically connected outsiders, producing grievances over dispossession. Borras et al. (2011), examining land conflicts in Southeast Asia and Latin

America, demonstrate how state-backed land reallocations catalyse community resistance and retaliation when perceived as favouring elites. Taken together, the Kagerankanda case aligns with global evidence showing that when land governance lacks transparency, accountability, and participatory legitimacy, communities and state agents enter spirals of accusation, resistance, and violence that undermine both conservation and local rights.

#### **4.5 Influence of Unmet Livelihood Benefits on Community Grievances and Mistrust**

Employment-related conflict arose when community expectations regarding job opportunities connected to conservation, land management, or new agricultural ventures were unmet. Although this factor was only raised by 5 percent of all the respondents was noted by this study to still hold water as the majority of the interviewed key informants were of the opinion that the district's land reallocation—especially its support for large-scale farming by external stakeholders—would have created local employment opportunities. However, when such opportunities did not materialize it contributed to the increased frustration among village residents. This mismatch between expectations and outcomes generated claims of discrimination and further deepened villagers' perceptions of bias.

Employment issues were also tied to broader dissatisfaction with governance processes. Because villagers felt excluded from decision-making regarding land allocations, they expected at minimum to benefit from resulting employment. When outsiders secured both the land and the jobs associated with it, the perception of double exclusion emerged. This fuelled resentment, especially given that local unemployment levels were high and many villagers relied on seasonal or casual labour to sustain their households. As such, the absence of employment opportunities compounded the socio-economic vulnerabilities already caused by land scarcity.

Finally, employment-related grievances also signalled a breakdown in trust between communities and district authorities. Villagers felt that authorities used development narratives to justify land reallocation, even though the benefits did not reach local households. The perceived prioritization of outsiders reinforced the belief that the land governance system operated against rather than for the community. Employment issues thus represented a broader conflict driver rooted in unmet expectations, skewed benefit-sharing, and weakening institutional

legitimacy much as resonated with other empirical conclusions of similar nature across many areas of the world. For example, in Ghana (Amoah, 2025) observed that promised jobs from oil-palm projects rarely materialized, favouring outsiders. Similarly, Ethiopian agro-pastoral regions Gebremeskel et al., (2022) reported that experienced displacement without employment benefits, increased conflicts and vulnerability. A global review indicates that across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, communities lose land while investor projects provide few jobs an act which in turn fuel grievances over exclusion and unequal benefits (Yang & He, 2021). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that employment conflicts are structural outcomes of inequitable land governance, not isolated incidents.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the above discussion the study concludes that land-use conflicts in Kagerankanda Ward stem from systemic failures in land governance, characterized by inconsistent implementation, overlapping claims, and unclear boundaries due to contradictory maps and institutional claims. These conditions foster uncertainty, coercion, and mutual illegitimacy between the state and communities, resulting in heightened tensions and conflict. Additionally, the research has highlighted that opaque land allocation procedures, favoritism, and inconsistent enforcement of boundaries exacerbate tensions, leading to cycles of mutual delegitimization, violence, and mistrust. Furthermore, unmet livelihood expectations, especially regarding employment from conservation and large-scale farming, deepen grievances and feelings of exclusion, undermining institutional legitimacy.

To address these challenges, it is recommended that state agencies ought to harmonize boundary delineations, communicate a unified land-use plan, and establish participatory governance forums that legally protect community rights and clarify institutional mandates. Addressing these issues requires transparent allocation criteria, audits of past decisions, prosecution of corrupt practices, and the creation of community–state monitoring bodies to rebuild trust. Additionally, state authorities ought to adopt inclusive benefit-sharing frameworks that prioritize local employment, and integrate livelihood programs into land interventions. There is also a need to establish coordinated, transparent, participatory governance reforms that align state actions with community rights and development needs.

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