

**AGILIS PARTNERS' 13 JULY 2021 RESPONSE TO THE BUSINESS & HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTER'S INQUIRY ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF FORCED EVICTIONS IN KIRYANDONGO, UGANDA**

Dear Andrea and Ana:

Thank you for your recent email. We are writing to respond to the allegations you mentioned.

***Agilis has never forcibly evicted individuals. To this day, households who did not agree willingly with Agilis for compensation and resettlement remain peacefully on Agilis's Land.***

In March 2017, Agilis acquired Ranch 20 & 21, a property in Kiryandongo District, Uganda, from private individuals. At the time, other individuals were residing illegally on the property.

After extensive consultation with local leadership and the occupants throughout 2017, Agilis entered into voluntary resettlement agreements with the illegal occupants who decided to leave Ranch 20 & 21 in 2018. To ensure the resettlement agreements were voluntary and beneficial to the occupants, Agilis adhered to the following best practices for resettlement:

- In a census, Agilis registered all occupants of the land and the assets they owned. Legal counsel reviewed the census outputs, in collaboration with local leadership, and confirmed that no individual had legal ownership or access to the land.
- A third-party surveyor confirmed the assets owned by the occupants. The surveyor then valued the assets by referring to the Kiryandongo District Local Government Valuation Rates which set out the valuation for assets. This process was established and sensitized to the occupants through our extensive community engagement practices prior to our development of the property.
- Agilis then proposed the surveyor's valuation to the illegal occupant. If the individual agreed to the compensation proposed, an agreement for the compensation was executed between the occupant and Agilis. The agreements were witnessed by the Local Government, an advocate, and a translator, where necessary.
- If the individual did not agree to the compensation proposed, the individual could object through a formal redress process or choose to remain on the land. To this day, multiple households remain on the land because Agilis and those households have not agreed to a final compensation rate.

Since the negotiated resettlements in 2017, Agilis has been a force for good in Kiryandongo. We have created employment for over four hundred families. We provide conservation agriculture extension services to the community, including the former occupants of the land who remain in the area. Through this programming, farmers are equipped with climate-smart agronomic know-how to maximize their household incomes and improve their resiliency. Agilis purchases grain from farmers in the area at above-market prices.

Please refer to our previous communications to your organization about these allegations [here](#).

***Agilis is not involved with the arrests of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) at a neighboring property. We condemn violence against and intimidation of HRDs.***

Regarding the June 21st article entitled "Fresh arrests of land rights defenders...", there are no allegations leveled against Agilis:

**AGILIS PARTNERS' 13 JULY 2021 RESPONSE TO THE BUSINESS & HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTER'S INQUIRY ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF FORCED EVICTIONS IN KIRYANDONGO, UGANDA**

- Agilis is uninvolved in the purported arrests of HRDs that allegedly occurred on land owned by a neighbor company. The article to which you have requested our response does not allege Agilis's involvement.
- Agilis has never transacted with any of the individuals arrested for fraud mentioned in the article. The article to which you have asked that we respond does not allege Agilis's involvement in any fraud.

Agilis condemns violence against HRDs. The article's authors seek to impugn Agilis Partners without making specific claims against Agilis. The authors detail alleged indiscriminate acts of others and suggest our involvement because we are neighbors to the accused firm.

***There are conflicts between cattle keepers and smallholder farmers in our community. Agilis is seeking to mediate these issues. None of the cattle keepers are Agilis's agents. Agilis is not employing cattle to evict illegal occupants.***

Through our redress mechanism established during the 2017 negotiated resettlement with the illegal occupants of Ranch 20 & 21, Agilis Management has been made aware of on-going conflicts involving cattle keepers and the smallholder cultivators in our community. As recently as 5 July 2021, Agilis conducted a community meeting involving members of the community, two residing local chairpersons (LC1s), Agilis security and community relations staff, the District Internal Security Officer (DISO) and the DISO's Deputy to address a recent dispute.

During this meeting, it was determined that conflicts are arising between smallholder cultivators in the community and the cattle keepers in the community. The conflict involves access to water sources within the community. The cultivators and the cattle keepers engaged in a violent dispute.

Under the guidance of the DISO and local leadership, Agilis, the cattle keepers and representatives of the community are developing a plan whereby community cattle keepers may access water available on Agilis's farm without disturbing the peace of the smallholder cultivators in our community.

The allegation that Agilis is employing cattle to evict people residing illegally on Ranch 20 & 21 is false and, again, leveled against Agilis without evidence. We are working with the community to ensure the conflicts between cattle keepers and cultivators are peacefully resolved.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have additional queries.

Sincerely,

Agilis Partners