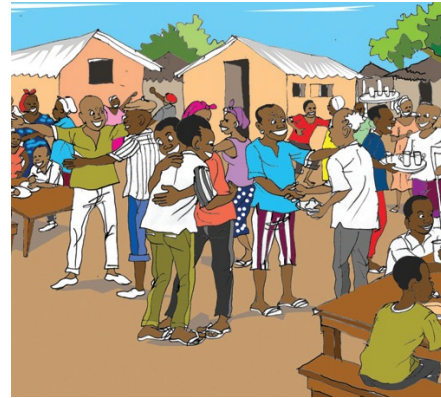




Harmonise your boundaries.

- **Harmonise boundaries with your neighbours.** This process may take many meetings. You may need to make compromises and think creatively to come to solutions that you and your neighbours can agree to.
- **Peacefully resolve land conflicts when harmonising your boundaries.** It may be helpful to call in a neutral mediator to make sure all people tell their side of the story and together find a resolution that everyone is happy with. These discussions work best when you go to the site of the conflict.
- Once you and your neighbours have agreed on your boundaries, **mark your agreed boundaries with local markers** such as special trees, big rocks, rivers etc.

You may want to put your boundary agreements in writing, with community members signing as witnesses



Good luck! And remember...

- Your community has the right to own, manage and use your land.
- Make sure everyone in your community is included in all discussions – including elders, women, youth, and minorities.
- Take time to fully discuss everything and consider everyone's opinions.
- Remember the value in long-term peace, stability, and land access for your community and your children.
- If in doubt, you can always refer to a trusted NGO for advice.



How to Protect Your Community's Land and Natural Resources



If you need advice or assistance, contact Namati:

31 Murray Town Road, Freetown

076814344;

076926090; 078717335

Or Silnorf:

Makeni-Magburaka Highway

P.O. Box 5

Makambo/Makeni

076715232; 033412188;

088413527; 078732131

Illustrations by Leslie Lumeh



If an Investor approaches your community...

Remember, your community always has the right to say no to an investor.

1. **Tell the investor that you will not take any action until you have independent legal assistance.** Contact Namati, Silnorf or any trusted NGO to help obtain legal assistance.
2. **Do not sign any documents** until you have received legal assistance.
3. **Do everything out in the open** and involve the whole community to discuss the investor's plans.
4. Your community may want to **form a temporary committee** of landowners, land users, women and traditional leaders. Tell the investor to communicate only with this committee or other representatives and any other communications will be considered invalid.
5. **Do not allow the investor to survey the land** before your entire community has met and agreed to let them use your land. If you agree, **require community members to be present** during the survey.

6. **Remind the investor your land is not for sale.** It is against the law to sell land to foreigners.

7. **Educate yourselves about the proposed investment.** Get as many details as you can about the plan, including how much money the investor expects to make and potential impacts and benefits on your community.

8. **Do not accept any money or other form of payment** until you have signed a final lease agreement.

9. **Ask and negotiate for what you want.** If you agree to let an investor use your land, remember they will make money each year. Instead of a one-time payment, ask them to pay your community with rental payments or as a shareholder (in addition to building schools, roads, or creating jobs). **Contact an NGO you trust** and get their advice.

10. **Don't rush** any decisions. Hold as many meetings as you need and make sure that the whole community is involved.



In the meantime, to build your community's capacity to protect your land and natural resources, you should:



Organise your community.

- **Form a committee** of landowners, land users, women and traditional community leaders to make decisions on land use and management. Decide how members will be elected or selected.
- **Develop rules for how this committee will operate and make decisions.** For example, your rules should make sure the committee consults with the broader community before making decisions about your lands and natural resources.
- Work together to **draw a map** of your community's land and natural resources.
- Sit together as a whole community and, using your map, **make rules for how you will all use and manage community lands and natural resources.** To do this, you may want to think of all the rules you have now, the rules you had in the past, and new rules you may want in the future to help your community grow and prosper.